

FORGOTTEN FOES

BY DM TUZ

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Artwork by DM Tuz

BHELRAETH, THE FLAYED KING

In the times of the endless wars fought among the Monarchs of Altland, each sign of weakness was an opening for the strong to exploit. Even in the rare times of relative peace, all it took was a small misfortune to serve as a signal for others to break the peace and strike. It was common wisdom that a true monarch needs to project strength and resolution to their people and the world to maintain peace and sovereignty, lest you will be consumed by rivals.

King Bhelrath was no stranger to this wisdom. To project strength to his people and enemies alike, the King took to grand examples of uncompromising harshness. In public displays of brutality King Bhelrath would dispense retribution upon his foes. Flaying would prove to be a most effective method of execution, due to its gruesome spectacle and drawn out agony. The King felt no joy when issuing these executions, but no one could deny their effectiveness. The Kingdom of Bhelrath was feared across its neighbours and realms would go to great lengths to foster good relations to avoid the kingdom's wrath. But while Bhelrath was feared among his enemies, he enjoyed the trust and adoration of his people who saw him as a strict, but just ruler who provided peace and safety. Content with his position, the Kingdom of Bhelrath flourished for years to come.

Alas, it was the nature of the reverence that gave the King his power that would change him. As reverence stems not just from respect and adoration, it also is infused with fear and scorn. Due to the fostered image of a ruthless and cruel tyrant that the King projected towards his neighbouring Kingdoms, the number of souls believing him to be a merciless monster outweigh the number of his own subjects.

The change came slowly. It started with King Bhelrath finding a fascination for the bloodshed he ordered. Continuously he demanded to be the one to exact the sentences each flaying performed by the King would surpass the last one in depravity. He then decreed that the same methods he showed his foes would be extended to his people. These acts began to sway the balance of his image further, as his very people now feared him as well. This only proliferated the King's descent and his name became equal to the very idea of cruelty.

In his bloodlust, the King would seek reasons to exact his unique justice. Small sleights against the King in his court were seen as grave crimes, laws were tightened to unreasonable lengths, and raids against neighbouring lands were issued.

Anything to fill his dungeons and for the bloodshed to never end. And as the King's desire for torment and blood grew, so too his taste became more refined. To match his demands he built extensive halls underneath the castle's dungeon. A place where he could frivolously follow his passion for cruelty.

Trapped in this downward spiral by his obsession, the King was now the very monster he sought to project to his foes. But this monster knew would prove to be the downfall of his very own Kingdom and become a cautionary tale of the modern times.

THE FLAYING CURSE

As the tragedy of King Bhelrath's tyranny was in full motion, an outsider arrived at the kingdom's capital; a witch of the wild and a daughter of the hag Ethel, With Spiders In Her Hair. The daughter knew the Kingdom from the time in which the ruler was just, and expected to meet him on behalf of her mother. When she was brought before the King she found no King anymore. All that was left was a monster bearing a King's skin.

The King was not interested in her proposition. The only thing he could see in her was skin yearning to be released from its flesh. The daughter warned the King to not harm her, lest he would feel the wrath of her mother. But the King was deaf to her warnings and had her led to his sanctum underneath his castle. Within his crimson halls, the King would flay the daughter like the rest.

Ethel's fury struck the Kingdom at the next full moon. Her curse consumed the King, his court, and his castle. King Bhelrath would suffer the same pain that he and his decrees had inflicted upon others. Every moment, every heartbeat of suffering would have to be reexperienced by the King, one at a time, as the King's very skin peeled away. The Hag took his skin and until the King had not served his sentence, the curse would bind him to the crimson halls that witnessed the most deprived of the King's acts.

The King's now exposed flesh burned with the lifetimes of suffering he had inflicted. And as his court and knights were bound to him, they too, were ravaged by the curse, each of them flayed and subjected to an existence of suffering. The cursed castle was now a den of creeping horrors that converged around their fallen King. Without a rightful monarch to lead, the Kingdom of Bhelrath would soon fall as the neighbouring realms had no King to fear anymore. The only thing that would be left from the once proud kingdom was a single, decrepit castle, brought low by the Flaying Curse.

SPREADING THE CURSE

Experiencing entire lifetimes of agony flung the cursed King Bhelrath into delirium that flayed any shed of humanity the King once had and the legend of the Flayed King is all that remains. The only relief the King could find from the pain, or at least so he thought, was the touch of skin upon his flayed body. The poor unfortunate servants that were trapped within his castle became his prey. Soon though the King found himself out of skins after salvaging all that he could. Skins would rot away, while he and his agony would remain. The King tried to break the curse again and again with all of his regal power, but it was to no avail. Too much of his once magnificent power had left him, as reverence faded long ago and changed to an image of a defeated monarch.

While the King was unable to break the curse, he learned more about it and was able to change parts of its nature, with a malicious goal to either end the curse or himself in due time. It is not known whether the King was aware of the conditions of his curse. It was uncertain whether he was aware that his actions would just add more to the suffering he had to bear to be free from the curse. Too great was the agony for the King to endure any longer. The King split his curse to be spread from beyond his castle to the world outside and the Flaying Curse was released.

EXCORIATED ONES

The pitiful wretches that slither in the dark corners of the accursed Castle of Bhelrath were once noble servants who failed their King. Even before the curse befell the King and his castle, Bhelrath at the height of his tyranny had little patience for failure. The King used his acquired proficiency of flesh forming and flaying to decimate courtiers in gruesome examples. This practice ran rampant within the castle once the curse arrived, as the King in his delirium saw anyone's presence with a whole body of skin as a grave insult to his changed form.

One would expect an excoriated one to harness hatred for their monarch, but as they were spineless sycophants in life, in this decrepit form they too yearn for nothing more than to return into their king's good graces. Desperate, they throw themselves at all intruders with fleeting bravado, hoping that their service could make the king restore their old noble self.

The curse preyed upon their desperation and desires for success, causing them to fall into agonizing pain and intense tantrums at any failure to re-earn their good graces.

EXCORIATED ONE

Small undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	13 (+1)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +0, Stealth +5

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages Understands Common but can't speak

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Agonizing Failure. If the excoriated one misses both attacks of its multiattack or misses its corrupting touch attack, it takes 5 psychic damage.

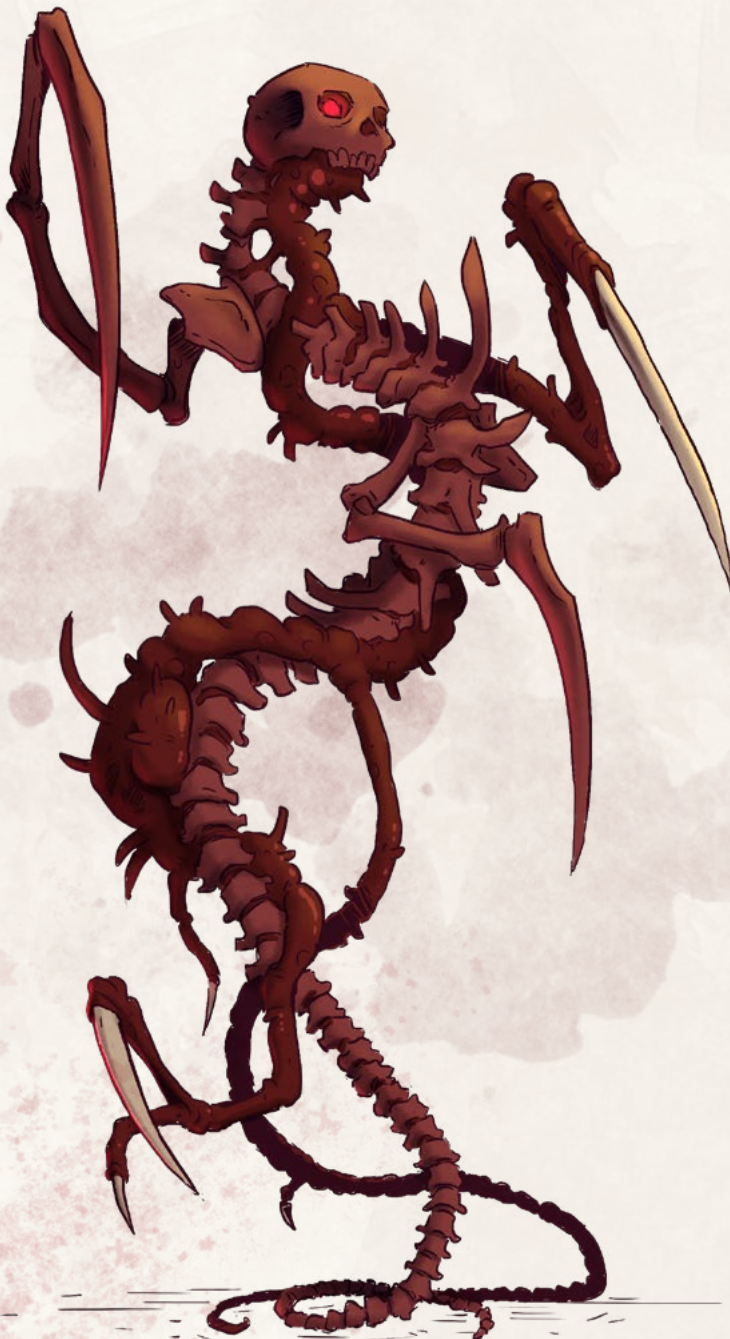
Fleeting Conviction. As long as the excoriated one is not missing hit points, it has advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The excoriated one makes two attacks with its scythe claws.

Scythe Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Corrupting Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage and the creature must succeed a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be afflicted by the Flaying Curse.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

BLEEDING KNIGHTS

The stalwart knights of Bhelrath were renowned warriors and feared for their ruthless efficiency by their foes. The knights only knew absolute victory with any semblance of resistance destroyed. Anyone that stood against them would be vanquished and made a gruesome example for others, as was the decree of their King. So feared were the knights that the mere announcement of their deployment would cause entire cities to surrender in droves to avoid suffering a bloody conquest by their hands.

The knights of Bhelrath, as all knights, are tied to their King. When their King was afflicted with the curse, so were they. Due to their bond with their armor, the knights had no skin to be flayed. As a result the Flaying Curse turned towards the knights' innards and liquified them. The wrecked bodies of the knights are only held together by their armor like a carapace. Crimson blood continuously escapes the armor where it is chipped, only to immediately coagulate and mend the knights' carapace.

Though nothing of their noble form remains, the wracked knights are still fiercely loyal to their King. These fallen knights patrol the castle and surrounding ruins in constant vigil of would-be invaders. Much of Bhelrath's Kingdom had fallen to the enemies, but the castle would remain. That is the bleeding knights' creed.

VARIANT: BLOODLETTER KNIGHT

A few selected knight of the court were initiated in the sadistic art of torture by the King. The wickedness of these knights made them a host for the Flaying Curse.

A bloodletter knight has 85 (10d8 + 40) **hit points** and access to the the following additional action:

Exsanguate (recharge 5-6). The bleeding knight impales itself with its weapon and sprays its corrupted blood in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 28 (8d6) necrotic damage and contracts the Flaying Curse. On a successful save a creature takes half as much damage and is not afflicted by the curse.

A bloodletter knight has a **Challenge** of 4 (1,100 XP).

BLEEDING KNIGHT

Medium aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (0)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	11 (0)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, exhausted

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Languages Understands Common but doesn't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Clotting Armor. When the bleeding knights starts its turn with more than 0 hit points and lost hit points since the beginning of its last turn, it gains 5 temporary hit points.

Cursed Blood. A creature that consumes or handles the blood of the bleeding knight is exposed to the Flaying Curse (DC 14).

Death Throes. When the bleeding knights dies it spatters blood wildly. Each creature within 5 ft. of the bleeding knight must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 7 (2d6) necrotic damage and contracts the Flaying Curse, on a successful save the creature takes half as much damage and is not cursed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bleeding knight makes two greatsword attacks and uses Corrupting Gore.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

Corrupting Gore. A creature within 5 ft. of the bleeding knight must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

PATREON | DMTUZ

PRIEST OF RAT'S FEAST

Representatives of the clergy were no strange sight in King Bhelrath's court. As it was common practice, the priests were spiritual advisors and assured the King's adherence to the Monarch's Virtues. It was not rare for the priesthood to object to King Bhelrath's harsh practices, but as they were targeted at the Kingdom's foes they would relent sooner or later.

Clashes with the priesthood became frequent though when the King descended into his cruelty and extended his methods to his people. The King's scorn for the priesthood grew, as they attempted again and again to deny him to indulge in bloodshed. These tensions came to a head when the King had the entire clergy of his court seized. The King had the priests fed to the dungeon's rats, but not before peeling their skin to allow the rats easy access to the tender flesh. The priests were consumed by the voracious rats in an unprecedented act of the King's malice.

When the Flaying Curse took hold of the castle, the hag's magic changed and mutated the dungeon's rats for within their bodies and blood lingered the priest's grudge and agony. The vermin formed accursed rat kings that carried the priests' disdain, despair, and pain experienced in their final moments.

These monstrosities prowl upon anything lost within the castle's dungeons, may it be servants of the King, knights, or unaware explorers.

PRIEST OF RAT'S FEAST

Large aberration (shape changer), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +6, Religion +3

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing
Damage Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 16

Languages Understands Common but doesn't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Accursed Mass. A creature that touches the priest, hits it with a melee weapon attack while within 5 ft. of it, starts its turn in the priest's space, or enters the priest's space the first time in a turn must succeed a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be cursed for one minute. A cursed creature subtracts 1d4 from any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw. A cursed creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its turn, but does not subtract 1d4 from the save.

Shapeless Form. The priest is a shape changer and can move through and occupy other creature's spaces and vice versa. The priest can move through any opening large enough for a tiny beast.

Spider Climb. The priest can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Vermin Mastery. The priest can communicate with rats, giant rats, labyrinth rats, and rat swarms.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The priest of rat's feast makes 2 bite attacks.

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Grudgefilled Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) necrotic and the next attack roll targeting the creature before the end of the priest's next turn has advantage.

Rat Feast. The priest of rat's feast makes a bite attack against each creature in its space. Each creature that is hit is exposed to the priest's accursed mass.

Spellcasting. The priest's casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 14) and without material components:

1/day: *Bestow Curse*

Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz



THE FLAYING CURSE

A humanoid creature can be afflicted by the Flaying curse by a variety of means. Infection by fighting the courtiers in and outside of Castle Bhelrath, ingestion of corrupted blood, or exploration of Castle Bhelrath can all lead to an affliction of the curse.

The Flaying Curse is a growing curse, starting at stage 1 and progressing to stage 5, each stage representing a more severe state of the curse. Commonly when a creature becomes afflicted with the Flaying Curse, it starts at stage 1. A creature suffering from the Flaying Curse rolls a Constitution saving throw at the dawn of every morning. The DC for the saving throw is equal to the saving throw rolled when the creature initially contracted the curse. On a successful save, the curse does not progress and remains at the current stage. On a failed save the curse progresses to the next stage and the new effects of the curse are immediately effective. Each mechanical effect from the previous stage of the curse's progression still affects the creature at later stages until the creature is cured or dies.

Stage 1. The afflicted creature's skin shows spots of irritation and discoloration. The creature experiences discomfort and itching. This will cause the creature to scratch itself at a high frequency, causing sore spots or even bleeding to occur on some parts of its body. At this point of the curse, the creature suffers from no additional effects.

Stage 2. The afflicted creature's skin begins to become loose on its flesh. Some spots of skin, especially in the face area, appear drooping while the itching and discomfort intensifies, to the point that the creature feels like parts of its skin do not belong. These parts of skin are veiny and are sensitive to the touch. The creature's entire skin breaks easily, causing the creature to be covered in many scabs due to the itching. A creature at this stage of the curse has disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks if the other party can see the creature, due to the cursed creature's unsettling appearance and involuntary scratching. Additionally, because of involuntary self harm, the creature takes damage equal to its character level (or hit dice) when it finishes a long rest. This damage cannot be prevented, but can be healed.

Stage 3. A singular line of irritated skin begins to manifest over the cursed creature's entire body. Some parts of this discolored skin features bloody scabs along the line. The creature's hair begins to fall out and its fingernails bleed frequently. The cursed creature's body becomes frail. Its maximum hit points are reduced by an amount equal to the creature's character level (or hit dice). Greater Restoration can reduce the lost hit point maximum for 24 hours or until the creature finishes a long rest.

Stage 4. The red line along the creature's body is pronounced and constantly bleeding. Some parts of the creature's skin are peeling off along the line, causing heavy bleeding. The creature's entire body is now incredibly sensitive and touching can cause excruciating pain to the creature. The creature's hair and fingernails have fallen off the creature and no longer grow. Whenever the creature takes damage it has disadvantage on the next ability check or attack roll it makes before the end of its next turn.

Stage 5. The cursed creature's skin peels itself off as it splits open along the red line on its body and magically takes flight towards Castle Bhelrath, leaving behind the creature completely flayed. The creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the creature immediately dies of shock. On a successful save the creature is reduced to 1 hit point and is left without skin. No spell short of regeneration or wish can restore its skin. Until the creature's skin is recovered or the curse is broken, the creature must whenever it takes damage succeed a Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of its next turn. The DC is equal to 15, or half of the damage taken, whichever is higher.



Bhelrath, the Flayed King
Artwork by
Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

TREATING THE CURSE

- While the Flaying Curse is at stage 1 and 2, it can be broken with the use of the *Remove Curse* or *Wish* spell. Once the Flaying Curse moves to stage 3 and beyond, the spell *Remove Curse* can only break the spell when a creature expends a 5th level spell slot in addition to casting the spell and uses a white pearl that is worth 1000 gold as additional material component, which the spell consumes. At stage 5, the curse can only be broken if the lost skin is reattached to the creature, or its skin has been restored by other means.
- A creature can also break the curse by transferring it. To do so the creature must use the entirety of a humanoid's skin that has been removed no longer than 24 hours ago and etch a hag incantation into the new skin. The curse will then transfer to the skin and it will fly off to Castle Bhelrath. A character can learn the secret incantation to transfer the curse from a hag, or another source of occult knowledge.
- The Flaying Curse of any creature suffering from it will immediately break if the Flayed King is slain.

THE PLAYED KING

Large aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Proficiency +5

Saves Str +10, Con +10, Wis +6, Cha +9

Skills History +8, Intimidation +9, Medicine +8, Perception +6

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed

Senses truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Celestial, Infernal

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Bolstering Reverence. The Played King gains 14 (4d6) temporary hit points at the beginning of his turn.

Reverence Armament. The Played King's attacks are magical and deal an additional 9 (2d8) necrotic damage (included in the attack). Additionally the Played King can use a bonus action to summon the Scepter of Bhelrath into his hand.

Skin Cloak. Attacks made with the Played King's skin cloak can not be impacted by disadvantage and can't gain advantage.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the Played fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Innate Spellcasting. The Played King's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +8 to hit). The King can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *Bestow Curse*, *Command*, *Detect Evil and Good*, *Detect Magic*, *Sending*, *Thaumaturgy*
1/day: *Geas*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Played King uses makes three attacks; two with its Scepter of Bhelrath, and one with his Skinning Claw.

Scepter of Bhelrath. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10+5) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

LAIR: THE CRIMSON HALLS

The Crimson Halls were constructed by King Bhelrath to be his private torture chamber. There he could explore his new found fascination with inflicting pain and suffering upon others undisturbed. The halls are a maddening expanse of crooked architecture. Spiked pillars and instruments of sadistic design are found within the blooddrenched halls that are still echoing with the screams of the King's victims.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting the Played King in his Crimson Halls, the Played King can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Played King takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

Call Sycophants. The Played King summons 2d4 Excoriated ones (they arrive at the entrance of the area). They roll for initiative and use a reaction to move up to their speed.

The King's Will. The Played King casts *Command* targeting all creatures of his choice within the Crimson Halls.

Forgotten Foes: The Played Court

Scepter of Bhelrath (Ranged). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Skinning Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage and if the target is a creature, it must succeed a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or is afflicted by the *Playing Curse*. A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more is afflicted with the *Playing Curse* at stage 2.

Playing Wave (Recharge 5-6). The Played King unleashes a condensed wave of the curse that afflicts his body. Each creature within a 30 ft. cone originating from the Played King must make a DC 18 saving throw. On a failed save the creature takes 54 (12d8) necrotic damage and half as much on a successful one. A creature killed by this damage is immediately played. A creature afflicted by the *Playing curse* makes the saving throw with disadvantage and on a failed save the curse progresses to the next stage.

Skin Cloak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Played King can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Played King regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Move. The Played King moves up to half of his speed without provoking opportunity attacks. If the Played King rides the crimson orb he flies up to half of his flying speed without provoking opportunity attacks instead.

Skin Cloak. The Played King attacks with his skin cloak.

Relentless Claw (2 Actions). The Played King moves up to his speed towards a creature the Played King missed with his *Skinning Claw* attack since the beginning of his last turn and makes a *Skinning Claw* attack against it.

Proliferate Curse (2 Actions). The Played King forces a creature afflicted with the *Playing Curse* within 20 ft. of himself to make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the creature's curse progresses to the next stage.

Crimson Orb (2 Actions). The Played King conjures an orb of blood and rides on it. Each creature within 5 ft. of the King must succeed a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The King flies up to 20 ft. as part of this action and gains a flying speed of 60 ft. until the end of his next turn.

Crimson Flood. A flood of corrupted blood flows through the bloodsoaked halls. Each creature in contact with the ground must succeed a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) necrotic damage and contract the *Playing Curse*.

Tortured Echos. The tortured echoes of the King's past victims sound with intensity in a 20 ft. radius centered on a space anywhere within the crimson halls. Each creature within the area must succeed on a DC 18 saving throw. On a failure a creature has disadvantage on all ability checks and attack rolls until the end of its next turn. A creature that is immune to being frightened succeeds the saving throw automatically.

EFFECTS

The Crimson Halls are the nexus of the *Playing Curse* spread. Mere proximity to this accursed area has ill effects on creatures:

- A creature that finishes a long rest within Castle Bhelrath contracts the *Playing Curse* (DC 13).
- Each saving throw a creature makes against the growth of the *Playing Curse* at dawn has its DC increased by 2.

AURMADIL

In the old times of clashing kingdoms, the continuous grind of warfare was an ever present challenge to overcome. Many formidable kingdoms were brought low by their inability to maintain the enduring conflicts. A kingdom with even the most prestigious warrior culture and most grandiose armies would surely fall if not supplied properly. Thus resource management was a key for a monarch to succeed. The war for supremacy was not a sprint, but a marathon.

Queen Hafnir was monarch of a small mountain kingdom. The military might of her realm was formidable, but spread thin at all times. The size of her kingdom, as well as the riches suspected to lie hidden within the mountains made her realm an appealing target for invasion. If it would not have been for the mighty mountain fortresses and the bitter weather that was common in the Kingdom of Hafnir, her realm would have surely been conquered.

The Queen found herself in a predicament; she was unable to expand her realm, as it was besieged by enemies, and her kingdom could not flourish as her subjects were spread too thin to dedicate manpower and tools excavating the treasures her kingdom held. As things were, the Kingdom of Hafnir would remain in a state of stagnation and unrealized potential, doomed to fade into irrelevance in the tapestry of history - a fate most vexing for a monarch.

Queen Hafnir called upon her court mages. She knew of the numerous horrors created by other monarchs for warfare well - many of which had to be fended off by her troops. While she was uninterested in using these monsters for warfare, she was inspired. If one could create beasts of war, one surely would be able to create creatures of labor? She tasked her court mages to get to work and create simple workers; dull in mind but self sufficient, self proliferating but subservient, and durable but not docile. The crown wars spawned many abhorrent monsters, but seldom has it created thralls such as these. After years of research, her court mages presented to the Queen the Aurmadil.

SERVANTS OF THE GILDED GODDESS

The Aurmadil are simple but resilient insectoid creatures. Intelligent enough to use tools and follow instructions, but not enough to question said instructions or to have a need for varied stimuli. They are able to procreate quickly and can subsist on a humble diet or of their own kin if need be. To entice these creatures to naturally seek out precious ores, they were given senses to detect the presence of these. Once released into the dark mine shafts underneath the kingdom, the Aurmadil went to work quickly. The Queen was pleased to see that the Aurmadil exceeded her expectations; the enhanced senses of the Aurmadil allowed them to navigate the shafts without light at all, their hard carapaces protected them from occasional tunnel collapses, and their unique physiology allowed them to traverse through the narrow tunnels quicker than any human worker could. The Aurmadil soon spread far and wide under the mountain realm into an extensive network of mining shafts and cave systems, as the Kingdom above was allowed to finally flourish.

What the queen was unaware of though was that despite their lowly minds, the Aurmadil still created a primitive culture. The queen found herself worshiped by their cre-

ation. Further though, the Aurmadil began to revere gold, that was so plenty within the mountain. The natural draw that the Aurmadil felt towards the metal was interpreted as purpose - a kind of divine mandate that became the center point of their being. Excavate gold and other riches of the earth, offer it to the Gilded Goddess, as the creatures referred to the Queen, and earn her blessing and favor. The Queen readily accepted this circumstance and in return bestowed the Aurmadil with tools, knowledge, and the occasional gifts which were all greatly cherished by her servants.

This arrangement bore an unexpected consequence; with the Aurmadil practicing their worship of their Gilded Goddess by offering her the gold she desired, the metal became the medium through which the Aurmadil channeled their reverence. Being lesser creatures, a single aurmadil's worship bore little weight, but due to their numbers, the focused reverence was able to manifest in a spectacular way. The gold that the Aurmadil diligently mined became infused with power. Gold while being precious and malleable was far from sturdy. But the gold the Aurmadil presented the Queen was glistening, powerful, and resilient. It became a most valuable trading commodity allowing the Queen to finally secure allies and expand her territory. The Kingdom of Hafnir would experience a time of prosperity and expansion, all thanks to the Queen's unseen minions, the Aurmadil.

ABANDONED SERVANTS

As time passed, Queen Hafnir was able to spread her influence to neighboring realms. The gold of Hafnir was highly sought after. This brought further attention to the mountain kingdom as an object for conquest. Thanks to the many trading partners though, the Queen had secured a myriad of loyal allies who now formed a sturdy bulwark against any invader. The Queen and her kingdom became untouchable and the Aurmadil continued their work with unwavering diligence until their tunnels spread far beyond Hafnir's reach.

But no monarch reigns forever. Treachery befell the Kingdom of Hafnir, as the Queen was brought low by her children who grew greedy in the time of prosperity. Her heirs succumbed to infighting and the once carefully crafted web of allies and trading partners fell apart, exposing the mountain realm to its enemies once more. Within a matter of years, the Kingdom's prosperity fostered over centuries was undone. All that was left was a realm divided by greed, soon to be consumed by its foes.

The Aurmadil knew little about the events of the surface - only that one day, the Stairs of the Goddess, the large shaft connecting the Queen's castle to the Aurmadil, collapsed. It was the last the Aurmadil saw of their Gilded Goddess. They were left wondering what they had done to cause their goddess to turn away from them. With little other purpose the Aurmadil had, they soon began continuing their work once more. Perhaps if they were to amass enough gold they could earn back the favor of their goddess ...

Ever since, the abandoned Aurmadil continued in their search for gold. The central colony now without the guidance of the queen fell apart and the Aurmadil spread out into the cavernous undergrounds of the world, continuing their divine mission.

AURMADIL SOLDIERS

The vast tunnels the Aurmadil carved out underneath the Kingdom of Hafnir did not remain uncontested for long. They soon found themselves confronted with creatures of the depths and incomprehensible horrors. In her wisdom, Queen Hafnir was prepared for the eventuality of her creations to defend their mining endeavors. Their dedication to their purpose made the Aurmadil defiant and far from defenseless. The Queen bestowed the Aurmadil with the knowledge of weapon craft, as well as her approval to use part of excavated gold as material. So, soldiers were deployed to protect their territory from the invading horrors, wielding precious golden weapons in their task.

Being granted the blessing of their Goddess to wield weapons made out of their revered gold, serving as a soldier was seen as a great honor among the insectoid servants. To mark their elevated position, the soldiers' carapace are decorated with gold emblems as a sign of their rank and divine ward against the encroaching evil.

The soldiers of the Aurmadil are armed and dedicated, ready to protect their twisting tunnels with great prejudice.

AURMADIL SOLDIER

Medium monstrosity

Armor Class 17 (natural armor, 19 if rolled into a ball)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 25 ft. (50 ft. if rolled into a ball)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 13

Languages Aurmadil, Understands Common but can't speak it

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Gold Sense. The aurmadil can sense if gold is within 60 ft. of it. It is aware of the direction in where the gold is located, but cannot pinpoint its location.

Roll Out. As an action, the aurmadil can roll into a ball. While rolled in a ball the aurmadil has a +2 bonus to its AC, becomes blind beyond its blindsight, has a speed of 50 ft., and is immune to bludgeoning damage caused by falling. Additionally the aurmadil gains access to new actions. The aurmadil can uncurl as an action or bonus action. Once it does so, it's remaining speed for its turn becomes 0. When an aurmadil that is rolled into a ball is knocked prone or dies, it uncurls.

Rolling Charge. If the aurmadil hits a creature with a rolling slam attack moving at least 20 ft. straight towards the creature, the creature must succeed a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the creature is knocked prone the aurmadil can move through its space and make another rolling slam attack as a bonus action against another creature until the end of its turn.

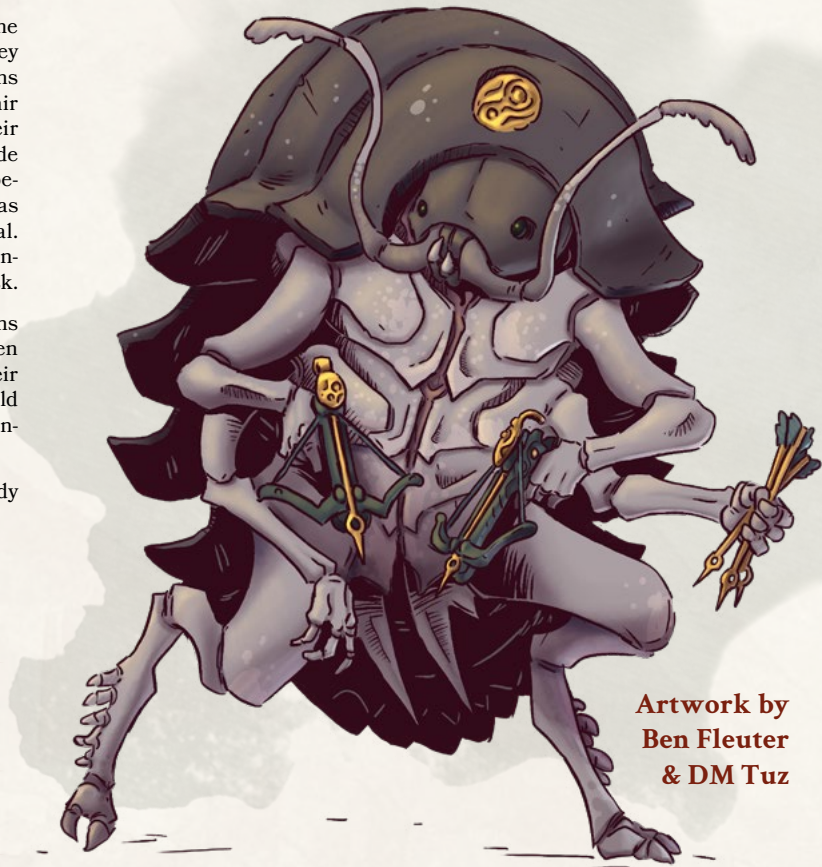
ACTIONS

Multiattack (When not rolled up). The aurmadil makes two attacks. The aurmadil can roll up in place of the second attack.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) slashing damage.

Golden Handcrossbows. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Rolling Slam (Rolled Up). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10+2) bludgeoning damage.



Artwork by
Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

AURMADIL WORKER

Medium monstrosity

Armor Class 16 (natural armor, 18 if rolled into a ball)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 25 ft. (50 ft. if rolled into a ball)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)	10 (0)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Aurmadil, Understands Common but can't speak it

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Gold Sense. The aurmadil can sense if gold is within 60 ft. of it. It is aware of the direction in where the gold is located, but cannot pinpoint its location.

Roll Out. As an action, the aurmadil can roll into a ball. While rolled in a ball the aurmadil has a +2 bonus to its AC, becomes blind beyond its blindsight, has a speed of 50 ft., and is immune to bludgeoning damage caused by falling. Additionally the aurmadil gains access to new actions. The aurmadil can uncurl as an action or bonus action. Once it does so, it's remaining speed for its turn becomes 0. When an aurmadil that is rolled into a ball is knocked prone or dies, it uncurls.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) slashing damage.

Pickaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

Rolling Slam (Rolled Up). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10+1) bludgeoning damage.

AURMADIL GOLDSMITH

With gold being a most venerated material of presumed divine origin, the Aurmadil handle it with great care. Working with the divine metal is a great privilege and must be earned by merit, so none of the precious gold may be spoiled by a fool's hand.

The goldsmith's of the Aurmadil are the best craftsmen Queen Hafnir's insectoid servants have to offer. Each of their four hands is skilled and precise, capable to shape and smith the Aurmadil's gold emblems. Weapons created by their venerated goldsmiths do not leave their shrine-like craft benches before they reach perfection by a master's touch, as it would be considered heresy to create anything of lesser quality from the gifts of their Goddess.

If faced in combat, the goldsmith's know to protect themselves and their workshops. They wield their tools with lethal precision to fend off invaders. In cases of larger incursions of their tunnel homes, goldsmiths will be fighting alongside their kin. Their insectoid brethren ascribe a touch of the divine to the goldsmiths because of their constant handling of the precious gold. This reverence manifests itself in the goldsmiths who in rituals inscribe blessed runes upon the golden emblems the Aurmadil proudly carry on their shells. These runes channel this reverence back into the Aurmadil who are so strong in their belief that their blessings become reality, empowering the soldiers and all diligent Aurmadil who take up arms against those who impede upon their sacred task.



Artwork by
Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

AURMADIL GOLDSMITH

Medium monstrosity

Armor Class 17 (natural armor, 19 if rolled into a ball)

Hit Points 39 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 25 ft. (50 ft. if rolled into a ball)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Aurmadil, Understands Common but can't speak it

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Gold Sense. The aurmadil can sense if gold is within 60 ft. of it. It is aware of the direction in where the gold is located, but cannot pinpoint its location.

Roll Out. As an action, the aurmadil can roll into a ball. While rolled in a ball the aurmadil has a +2 bonus to its AC, becomes blind beyond its blindsight, has a speed of 50 ft., and is immune to bludgeoning damage caused by falling. Additionally the aurmadil gains access to new actions. The aurmadil can uncurl as an action or bonus action. Once it does so, it's remaining speed for its turn becomes 0. When an aurmadil that is rolled into a ball is knocked prone or dies, it uncurls.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (When not rolled up). The aurmadil makes three weapon attacks.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Hammer & Chissle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning or piercing damage.

Rolling Slam (Rolled Up). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) bludgeoning damage.

Goldcraft. The aurmadil goldsmith enhances another aurmadil within 5 ft. of itself with one boon for 1 minute. Once an aurmadil is enhanced, it can't benefit from any aurmadil goldsmith's Goldcraft for 24 hours. The goldsmith can choose to bestow one of the following boons:

- **Alacrity.** The aurmadil's speed is increased by 10 ft., it has advantage on Dexterity saving throws, and opportunity attacks against it are made with disadvantage.
- **Destruction.** When the aurmadil hits with an attack, it deals an additional 4 (1d8) damage.
- **Protection.** The aurmadil gains a +2 bonus to its AC and gains 10 temporary hit points.

AURMADIL LAUNCHER

Strangely enough, blueprints for a peculiar warmachine made their way into the hands of the Aurmadil. Without the concept of siege warfare, the insectoids were at first puzzled over this peculiar machine. But they trusted the wisdom of their Gilded Goddess and were determined to utilize this machination.

The heralds of the Aurmadil agonized over the purpose of this machine, until, as if by divine providence, workers came across an underground crevice too large to cross. The Aurmadil's trust in the queen was rewarded. Their Gilded Goddess delivered once again.

Aurmadil Launcher

Huge Object (Complex Warmachine)

Armor Class: 15

Hit Points: 110

Damage Immunities: poison, psychic

Crew: Commonly, an aurmadil launcher is operated by 10 aurmadil. 8 aurmadil workers serve as the launcher's method of transportation, with each of them operating as a wheel while rolled up. Two aurmadil on top of the launcher operate the warmachine, with one aiming and commanding the aurmadils below to line up the weapon, and the other to operate the launching mechanism. The 8 workers can collectively move the launcher 40 ft. or turn the aurmadil launcher up to 180° as an action. At least 4 workers are needed to move the aurmadil launcher at all.

The aurmadil launcher catapults aurmadil over underground fissures, cliffs, or into the heat of battle. Before it can be fired, the launcher must be loaded and aimed. An aurmadil must enter the launcher and roll up as an action. To fire the launcher a creature must spend an action to operate it.

Bombing Bug. The loaded aurmadil is launched at a point within 480 ft. of the aurmadil launcher. Upon impact, each creature within 5 ft. of the landing aurmadil must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage and if the creature is medium or smaller size, it is knocked prone. On a successful save a creature takes half as much damage and is not knocked prone.

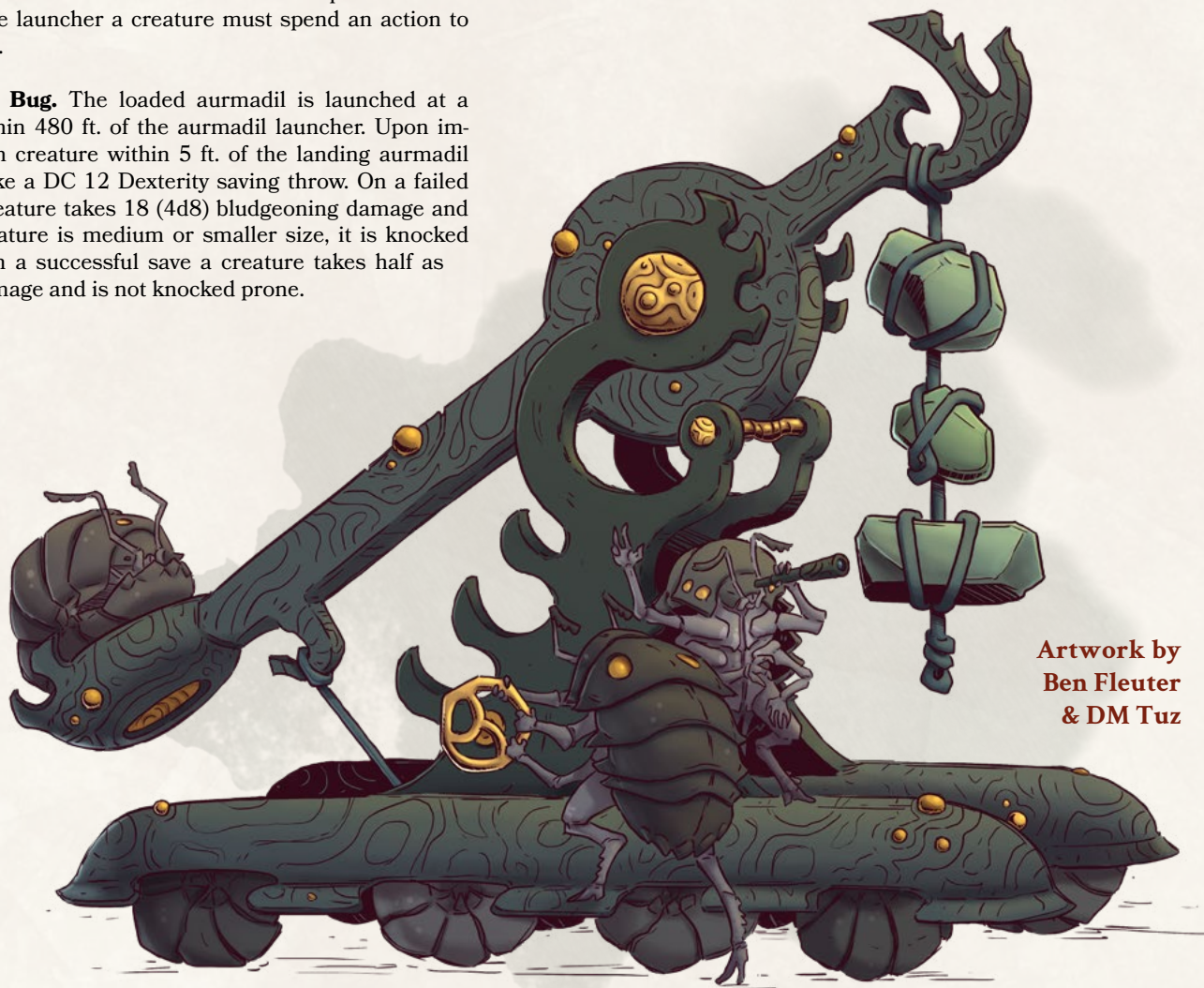
Forgotten Foes: Aurmadil AURMADIL HERALD

Few Aurmadil were allowed the greatest honor of direct correspondence with Queen Hafnir. These chosen were the link between the Aurmadil and their Gilded Goddess and deliverers of her edicts. From these initial few who the Queen chose to meet directly, spawned a cast of priesthood among the Aurmadil. Heralds, as they would refer to them, who carry the word of the Goddess. As they were in direct contact with divinity, they were regarded as the highest among the Aurmadil and thus richly clad in gold to mark their station. The Aurmadil accepted the heralds as the highest authority aside from the Goddess herself. Their elevated rank allowed the heralds to channel reverence and perform divine magic and miracles, further securing position as leaders and priests of the Aurmadil.

The Aurmadil heralds made it a custom to cover their eyes after audience with their goddess, unwilling to have any other sight tarnish the memories of their queen's visage. This custom evolved into the heralds willingly blinding themselves, citing that their sight is only reserved for the goddess herself. The reverence the heralds accumulate compensates for their loss of sight, as it manifests in a heightened gold sense innate to their kind. Where common Aurmadil are able to just sense the proximity of gold, the heralds can see it by divine sight.

With the Queen's disappearance, the duty of managing the amassed gold was taken over by the heralds. At their discretion is gold distributed among the Aurmadil, or stored away in grandios temple vaults. It is their belief that once enough gold has been amassed, the Gilded Goddess will make contact with them once more.

In battle the heralds lead the Aurmadil who fight zealously knowing that the herald's divine aid all but assures their victory in combat.





Artwork by
Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

AURMADIL HERALD

Medium monstrosity

Armor Class 18 (natural armor, 20 if rolled into a ball)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 25 ft. (50 ft. if rolled into a ball)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +5

Damage Resistances Poison

Senses blindsight 10 ft. (blind beyond), passive Perception 15

Languages Aurmadil, Understands Common but can't speak it

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Shielding Incense. The herald wields two golden censers. As long as the herald wields at least one censer, it is surrounded by a thick cloud incense. As long as the herald is covered by incense, any attack made against the herald further than 10 ft. away is made with disadvantage.

Improved Gold Sense. The aurmadil herald can sense if gold is within 120 ft. of it and can pinpoint its location.

Roll Out. As an action, the aurmadil can roll into a ball. While rolled in a ball the aurmadil has a +2 bonus to its AC, becomes blind beyond its blindsight, has a speed of 50 ft., and is immune to bludgeoning damage caused by falling. Additionally the aurmadil can't use weapons or implements, but gains access to new actions. The aurmadil can uncurl as an action or bonus action. Once it does so, it's remaining speed for its turn becomes 0. When an aurmadil that is rolled into a ball is knocked prone or dies, it uncurls.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (When not rolled up). The aurmadil herald makes three weapon attacks.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Censer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the end of the herald's next turn.

Rolling Slam (Rolled Up). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) bludgeoning damage.

Spellcasting. The aurmadil herald casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 13) and using its gold censers as spell implements:

At will: *light, poison spray, thaumaturgy, word of radiance*

1/day each: *aid, bless, command (3rd Level), fog cloud, locate object, stinking cloud*

DESIGNER'S NOTE: IMPROVED GOLD SENSE

While the Aurmadil Herald's statistic state that the creature is blind beyond its blindsight, the Aurmadil Herald is in most circumstances not truly blind. The herald's Improved Gold Sense allows it to pinpoint the exact position of gold within 120 ft. of itself. If any creature, such as a common adventurer, were to approach the herald, it would become aware of their approach, due to the gold that the adventurer has on their person. So as long as a creature carries any amount of gold on itself, such as an adventurer, or another Aurmadil, an Aurmadil Herald is able to see them as long as they are within 120 ft. of it.

AURMADIL LOOT

The Aurmadil's emblems that define their rank within their society are created from the valuable gold that they mine for day in and day out. Aurmadil workers on the other hand can always be expected to carry a few gold nuggets with them. To represent this wealth of loot that can be found in Aurmadil encounters; whenever you roll any amount of gold found by players after encounters with Aurmadil, roll twice and choose the higher result. Alternatively you can decide to put in the additional work and place **aurmadil emblems**, worth 50 gp a piece, and **aurmadil gold nuggets**, worth 10 gp a piece, weighing 1 pound each, into the loot pool of every encounter.

AURMADIL WEAPONS

Many weapons Aurmadil wield are created from the reverence infused gold they mine. In most common cases it allows their gold weapons to be just as sturdy as weapons made out of hardened steel. A weapon made out of Aurmadil Gold has the same statistics as a regular weapon, except that it is ten times as valuable as its common version and is magical.

Further, players that may raid an Aurmadil armory will find a heightened amount of magic weapons. Due to the reverence within the gold, weapons created from pure Aurmadil Gold can qualify as magical +1, or +2 weapons or ammunition. Alternatively, if you prefer to stay away from handing out too many weapons that increase your player's to hit and damage bonus, you can use the following common magic weapon:

GOLD FEVER CURSE

The Aurmadil fiercely protect the gold stored in their temple vaults, as any robber would not only obstruct their divine mission, but also delay the reunion with their goddess. To steal from the Aurmadil is to face their undying grudge. Reverence not only manifests itself in blessings, but also in banes and curses. Those that take from the Aurmadil unjustly will be afflicted by their curse.

Any character that steals, pillages, or takes gold from the Aurmadil may be exposed to a unique curse: the Gold Fever Curse. Objects made from the Aurmadil's renowned gold that are given to characters willingly never carry this curse. It is at the dungeon master's discretion which items are affected by this curse, though it is suggested to reserve this curse for either high valuable items such as magical weapons, or items that were obtained under particularly vile circumstances by a character.

Effect: A character exposed to the curse must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw at the dawn of each morning as long as they carry stolen Aurmadil Gold on their person, or when they attempt to part with the gold, by trading it or otherwise giving it away. On a failed save the character becomes unwilling to part with the Aurmadil Gold, or any gold for that matter, under any circumstances. They develop a compulsive need to handle objects of gold and to look at it. Until the curse is broken, the character will jealousy hoard any gold they own, even unwilling to purchase essentials with it, and will lash out at anyone that attempts to take it from them.



THE HIDDEN GARDEN

In the war torn landscape of Altland's history, few stood as stalwart amidst the chaos as the Kingdom of Alverk, known for its mastery in artifice and warcraft. Its undeterred armies of golems and warmachines continuously braved the constant assaults of its enemies. Tenaciously, the metal armies of Alverk would grind any foe into submission. Though, the Kingdom's success was not shouldered by its armies alone. If it was not for the tactical and inventive mind of the monarch King Alverk himself, the Kingdom would have long since fallen and be just a footnote of history.

King Alverk was a stoic monarch of keen intellect and above all else a masterful craftsman who had his hand in the construction and design of his warmachines that formed the backbone of his military might. Under his skillful guidance his realm saw unprecedented prosperity and growth. But as stoic as he presented himself to the world, the burden of the crown wore heavily on King Alverk. Each of his decisions had to be carefully contemplated, lest he would lead his kingdom to ruin. The ceaseless pressure upon his mind and soul was tremendous. To bring himself solace when his leadership was tested the most, he retreated again and again to a secret project of his: his hidden garden, the Verdant Sanctuary.

The Verdant Sanctuary was a hidden piece of green land that King Alverk, who usually found himself surrounded by blazing furnaces and roaring battlefields, tended to with great passion and love. Over years of work, he shaped this land into his very own place of comfort. It was by merit of the garden's tranquil beauty that allowed the King to remain composed and resolute.

As his Verdant Sanctuary grew in size, King Alverk found himself in a vexing position. With greater size the garden demanded a greater amount of tending and attention by the King. He found himself pulled between his monarch duties and his love for his garden. Fate smiled upon the monarch when a strange mineral was brought before him. The prospectors who presented the mineral had harvested it off a great tree's roots, found in the heart of an ancient forest. Intrigued, the King ordered that this mineral must be inspected. His court mages deciphered the mysteries of this mineral expediently; this mineral could store and release natural energies. Fascinating as it was, it was impractical to see use in the field of battle where one would only find fire and death, and was dismissed. King Alverk, though, saw the true potential of this mineral as the solution to his unknown predicament.

The King returned to his sanctuary once more, bringing material and inspiration for a new type of constructs. They would be powered by this new mineral he named primalite, and become the King's helping hands to tend to his beloved garden: his garden guardians.

MACHINES OF CARE

For the first time in his life, King Alverk would construct machines not for the purpose of warfare, but of preservation and protection. He created the tenders for his Verdant Sanctuary.

As a seasoned warsmith of unparalleled skill, the King was quick to create the first constructs with simple instructions: protect the garden and tend to its needs. The primalite within their construct bodies would supply their animus and the abundant life of the garden would power them. The King was pleased to see the success of his design. The reciprocity between the machine and the garden was ensured; as the machines kept the garden alive, so did the garden keep the machines empowered and working.

In the following years, the King refined and perfected his garden guardians, creating them with different forms and purposes. At last, the guardians performed their tasks completely without the King's directions and the King could indulge in the beauty of his garden fully and untroubled. And the King did: He would return to his garden in times of exhaustion or unease, the garden would remain his ever available sanctuary.

At the twilight of the monarch's life, the King, weary in spirit of a lifetime of responsibility and broken in body by the burden of a monarch, sought out the garden for the final time. To his kingdom, he vanished, leaving behind his throne and his crown, to be claimed by his capable children. His sanctuary was his new home and in time, his final rest. With peace of mind he left, knowing that not only his Kingdom would be cared for, but his garden that he loved so very much would remain forever. Of all of his constructs created by his hand, King Alverk cherished none more than his garden guardians, who would ensure that his garden would stand splendid and flourishing evermore.



LESSER GARDEN GUARDIAN

Medium construct

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft., 30 ft. flying (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +2

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

False Appearance. While the garden guardian remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from garden decoration, such as a potted plant, or a bush.

Sacrifice. The garden guardian can use an action and regain a use of its **Lesser Verdant Infusion** and use it as part of the same action. When the garden guardian uses this feature it is incapacitated for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes one melee weapon attack and three slam attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage.

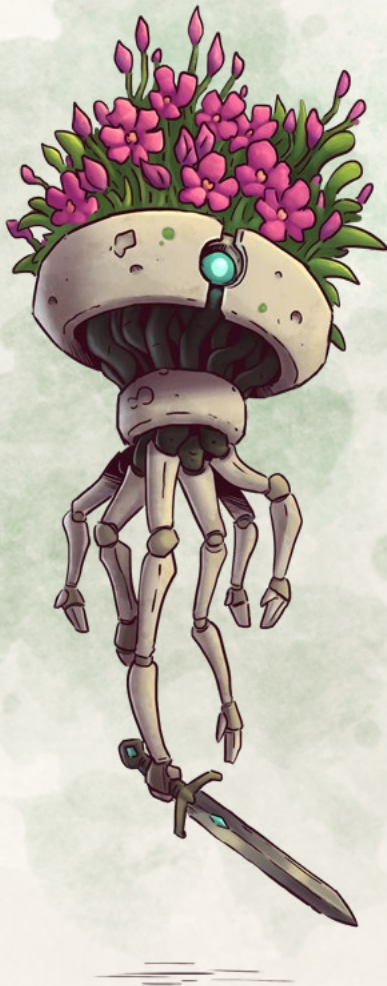
Lesser Verdant Infusion (1/day). The guardian touches a plant creature or point within its reach. If the guardian touches a plant creature, that creature regains 16 (4d6+2) hit points and is no longer poisoned. If the guardian touches a point, all normal plants within a 10-foot radius centered of the area flourish and grow. The area becomes difficult terrain until the plants are trimmed or destroyed.

Despite the abundance of the animating primal energy, the guardians will remain motionless outside of their regular rounds so as to not disturb the tranquility with gratuitous commotion. Even in rest, garden guardians add to the beauty of the garden thanks to the King's ingenious design.

VARIANT: SPELL STORING CONSTRUCTS

As an alternative flavor, you as the DM can choose the garden guardians to be created for a different purpose than the maintenance of a secret garden. To reflect this new purpose, you can exchange the effect of the lesser and greater guardian's **Verdant Infusion** action.

The effect of the **Lesser Verdant Infusion** is estimatedly equal to a 1st level spell, while **Greater Verdant Infusion** is equal to a 3rd level spell. Choose two or three of the appropriate spells for your guardians to cast with their Infusion action. With this easy adjustment you can veer off the presented flavor for whatever purpose you need.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

GARDEN GUARDIANS

Serving as the backbone of the garden guardians, these constructs are regularly patrolling the garden for lesser tasks of maintenance and care. Designed with different purposes in mind, the guardians were created in lesser and greater size. Where the lesser guardian is able to nimbly maneuver and reach the crowns of the garden's tallest trees, the greater guardian performed tasks of heavy labor. Both designs, complementing each other, ensure the garden's needs are tended to.

The primalite within their construct bodies does not only serve these guardians as a power source. Due to the close proximity to the garden's exuberant vitality, these guardians were created to not just absorb this energy, but to also hoard and release it if need be. Akin to a feat of primal magic, the garden guardians can dispense their energy and cause plants to sprout and flourish where they once withered before. As this feat is directly linked to the very power that animates these constructs, an overuse of this ability will cause them to fall into inactivity. The prime directive of the guardians is the Verdant Sanctuary's protection and maintenance, so they will not hesitate to give up their power for the garden. But the garden provides for these machines in reciprocity and they will be able to return to their duties in due time.

GARDEN WELLSPRING

During the garden's creation, the King became keen to the different phenomena of the natural world. He developed a thorough understanding of the circle of life and each role within the greater entity of the garden. One observation that captivated him was how small forms of life gathered around greater beings, such as mighty trees. Animals would find their homes in their branches, moss would grow upon their bark, and humble mushrooms would grow within their shadows. As so much life would flourish around the tree, so would the tree become a wellspring of primal energy. Though, effective as the trees' dispense of primal energies were, by their very nature they were immobile.

Garden wellsprings are mighty constructs created with the purpose to house these life giving trees. Upon their many sturdy legs, the wellspring slowly but surely transports trees and bring them where their life-giving energies are most needed. They were built with power and durability in mind, as each of the trees they transport is of great value for the garden.

With the use of these wandering bastions of vigor, the King was able to expand the magnitude of his garden greatly. Wherever these constructs would wander, a green path of flourishing plants would soon follow, and their very presence was able to turn even the most blighted ground into fertile soil.



Greater Garden Guardian
Artwork by Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

GREATER GARDEN GUARDIAN

Large construct

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (9d10 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +3

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

False Appearance. While the garden guardian remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from garden decoration, such as a fountain, a dais, or a flower bed.

Verdant Leak. When the guardian is reduced to 0 hit points and still has a use of its **Greater Verdant Infusion** for the day, it uses **Greater Verdant Infusion** without using an action or reaction before being destroyed or incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 16 (2d10+5) bludgeoning damage.

Greater Verdant Infusion (1/day). The guardian emits a life giving wave in a 20-foot radius centered on itself. Each plant creature in the area gains 16 (4d6+2) hit points and is no longer poisoned. Each incapacitated lesser garden guardian in the area with more than 0 hit points is no longer incapacitated. Additionally plants in the area grow and flourish, causing the area to become difficult terrain until the plants are trimmed or destroyed.

Forgotten Foes: Garden Guardians

Garden Wellspring

Gargantuan construct

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 155 (10d20 + 50)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	3 (-4)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +4

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses tremorsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 17

Languages Understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Crawler. The garden wellspring has advantage on saving throws against being knocked prone and difficult terrain does not impede its movement.

False Appearance. While the garden wellspring remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a ruined building.

Siege Monster. The garden wellspring deals double damage to objects and structures.

Verdant Overflow. A plant creature that starts its turn within 60 ft. of the garden wellspring regains 10 hit points and has resistance to necrotic damage until the beginning of its next turn. Additionally an incapacitated lesser garden guardian that starts its turn in the area with more than 0 hit points is no longer incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The garden wellspring makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 25 (4d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

Life Giving Pulse (1/day). The wellspring releases a pulse of life giving energies in a 60 ft. radius centered on itself. Each creature that is not a construct or undead in the area regains 23 (4d8+5) hit points and is no longer poisoned. Each creature that is not a construct or undead and died since the end of the wellspring's last turn in the area is returned to life with 1 remaining hit point.

Additionally, any lesser- or greater garden guardian in the area regains one use of their lesser- and greater verdant infusion.



Garden Wellspring
Artwork by Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

GARDEN GUARDIAN CARETAKER

Large construct

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (11d10 + 44)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (0)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +3

Skills Nature +9, Perception +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities exhaustion, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 16

Languages Understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Command Garden Guardians. The caretaker can share information with any garden guardian construct (greater or lesser) within 120 ft. of itself nonverbally, allowing them to be aware of any creature the caretaker is aware of.

Plant Awareness. The caretaker is aware of all plants and plant creatures within 60 ft. of itself as if it can see them. It is aware of the creature's hit point maximum and current hitpoints, as well as its nutritional needs.

Withering Weakness. When the caretaker takes fire or necrotic damage, it can't use its **Spellcasting** action until the end of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The caretaker makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) bludgeoning damage.

Spellcasting. The caretaker casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 14) and using its plant growth as an implement and requiring no material or verbal components:

At will: *druidcraft*, *mending*, *mold earth*

1/day each: *detect poison and disease*, *plant growth*, *protection from poison*, *revivify* (can only target plant creatures)

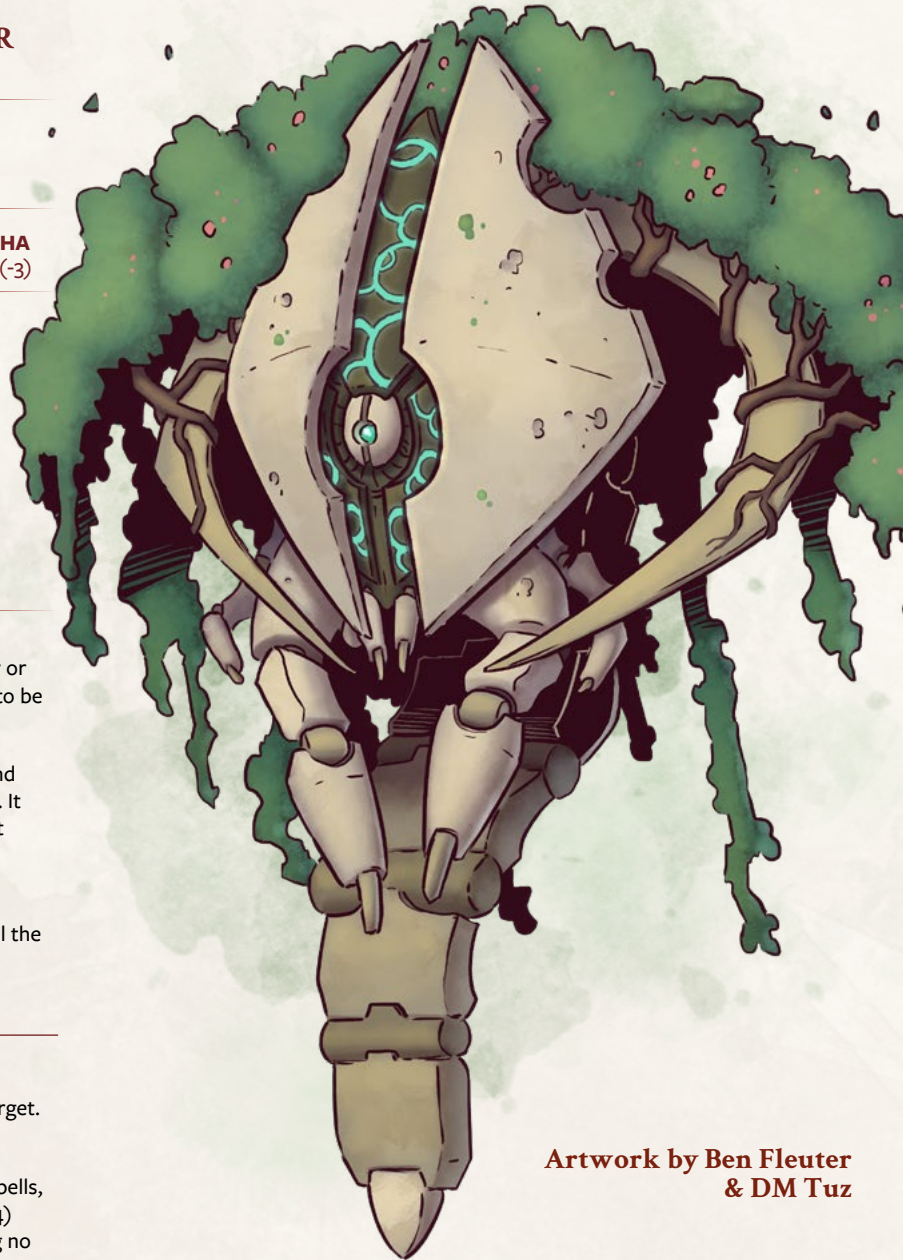
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The garden guardian caretaker can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The garden guardian caretaker regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The caretaker makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Garden Tangle. A creature within 120 ft. of the caretaker in contact with the ground must succeed a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be restrained by sprawling weeds until the end of the caretaker's next turn. The weeds can be attacked (AC 10, 5 HP, vulnerable to fire and slashing damage, immune to psychic damage) or broken if the restrained creature uses an action and makes a successful DC 14 Strength check.

Command Guardians (2 Actions). A lesser or greater garden guardian within 120 ft. of the caretaker moves up to half of its speed and makes a single melee weapon attack, or moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

GARDEN GUARDIAN CARETAKER

Created to manage and direct the garden guardians, the caretakers are equipped with the greatest amount of autonomy among the King's secret creations. Where the other garden guardians can only conceive simple directions, the caretaker is capable of thought. While still basic in its intellect, a caretaker possesses a thorough understanding of nature and its balance.

The caretakers are tasked to monitor and observe the garden to ensure its health and growth. Once their watchful eyes identify an issue it will alert lesser constructs to move out and perform whatever task the caretaker deems necessary to rectify the issue.

The caretaker is the peak of King Alverk's garden guardians. To deepen its connection to the plants around it and to tap deep into the primal energies within, the caretakers each are endowed with rich plantlife upon their shells. Due to their close connection to nature, the caretakers can use the primal energy around them to the point of performing outright primal magic.

It is by the feat of the caretakers that the care of the garden has been ensured long since the death of King Alverk and will ensure the verdant sanctuary's continued existence.

LAIR: THE VERDANT SANCTUARY

The verdant sanctuary was the secret escape from King Alverk's royal duties. It was built over the centuries of his reign, hidden away from sight of even his closest confidants. This masterpiece is a garden of unparalleled beauty and tranquility spans over hundreds of acres, featuring plots of breathtaking flower fields, mighty trees that house delightful singing birds, and elegant structures of kingly design. A well needed haven of peace for the monarch who grew ever so tired of war and destruction.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting a garden guardian caretaker (or another powerful fey or plant creature) in the verdant sanctuary, the caretaker can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), a caretaker takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

Pulling Vine. A vine lashes out at a creature from the ground. A creature not higher than 20 ft. off the ground must succeed a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 20 ft. into a direction of the caretaker's choice. A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more also falls prone.

Reciprocity. As the tender protects the garden, the garden envisions the tender. The caretaker regains the use of one spell and can use spells even if its Withering Weakness trait was triggered (if the creature using the lair action is a fey or plant creature, the creature regains 4d8+8 hit points instead).

Thorn Path. Sprawling thorns grow in a 60 ft. line that is 10 ft. wide within the garden. The area becomes difficult terrain and when a creature moves into or within the area, it takes 2d4 piercing damage for every 5 feet it travels. The area remains until the caretaker uses another lair action.

Tranquil Beauty. A creature in the garden must succeed a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save a creature is mesmerised by the tranquility of the garden and is unable to do harm until the end of its next turn, meaning that it cannot make attacks, cast spells that target hostile creatures, or ready actions. A creature that is immune to being charmed succeeds the saving throw automatically.

Once a caretaker (or another creature) takes a lair action, no other creature can take lair actions until the beginning of the next round.

EFFECTS

The verdant sanctuary is a great garden of abundant beauty. Due to the monarch's great efforts, the garden is a self contained realm hidden away from the world at large, but those that intrude upon this majestic landscape may be faced with unique effects:

- Beast and plant creatures that take a short rest in this area regain any lost hit points at the end of their rest, without having to expend hit dice.
- Any spell cast by a druid or ranger in this area is treated as if it were cast at one level higher.
- Creatures that traverse the garden take twice as much time to do so as the overwhelming beauty of the garden slows them down. Creatures that are immune to being charmed are not affected.

Forgotten Foes: Garden Guardians

- Plants grow at an accelerated rate in this area, roughly at thrice the normal amount.

Once all garden guardian caretakers in charge of the verdant sanctuary are destroyed, the verdant sanctuary will descend into a chaotic overgrowth that will ultimately culminate in the collapse of the carefully constructed garden over the course of one year. All that will remain of the once tended garden will be a rampant monster infested wilderness.

ASSOCIATED CREATURES

The garden guardians are not the only creatures that can be found in the Verdant Sanctuary. As well as the garden has been tended to by its construct protectors, other creatures may have very well become part of the hidden garden, such as beast or plant type creatures. Plant type creatures in particular could have been introduced by the monarch himself and are now just as tended to as the surrounding flowers and plants.

Because of its secretive and wondrous nature, the verdant sanctuary can also be an ideal spot for fey to manifest. Perhaps a dryad or a chamrosh^{UM} found their way from the Far'way* into the sanctuary and became enchanted by its tranquility and beauty.

On the contrary, not all creatures that arrived in this garden are welcome. Perhaps part of the verdant sanctuary have become infested with outside creatures, such as goblins, kobolds, or similar troublemakers. Of course the garden guardians do not tolerate their presence and players traversing the area could encounter an ongoing territorial conflict between the invaders and the guardians.

As mentioned in the Lair Actions section, not only caretakers can make use of the Verdant Sanctuary's lair actions. A powerful fey or plant monster can become the new master of the verdant sanctuary, and by default, also become the new master of the garden guardians.

Far'way: The Far'way is the plane of ideas and home of the fey.
UM: Unbound Monsters

KING ALVERK'S FATE

It is kept vague as to what happened to the King after he retired and disappeared into the garden. Perhaps he spent his final years surrounded by the beauty of his beloved garden and adventurers might find his remains at the center of a quiet grove. Or the King might be still alive due to the garden keeping him invigorated in return for his years of care and love.

In case you want to feature the King as an entity to be encountered in the Verdant Sanctuary, consider using the Ancient Monarch^{UM} monster to represent him.

THE MOON BUTTERFLY

Even the slightest edge over one's foe could be the difference between victory or fall, may it be information, insight, or fortune. As such the mystical art of divination was a commonly used tool in the age of warring kingdoms' ever-changing landscape. Few legendary oracles rose to prominence, gifted with unmatched clairvoyance. The appearance of these oracles would be of momentous consequence for the world at large.

Conversely, many realms decided to dabble with the art of divination themselves, as they would not want to grow reliant upon these mysterious oracles, which were commonly capricious entities that knew no loyalty. As a discipline of the arcane, various monarchs delegated their most capable court mages to see to the task of divining, but not so the King of Gludeo.

The realm of Gludeo held great knowledge over the occult and the celestial bodies, as since ancient times the royal line of Gludeo did not turn to earthly omens, but turned towards the sky instead. The earliest tribes of humans within Altland believed the stars to hold many secrets which could be unlocked by one who could read the shifting firmament above. Thus, the realm of Gludeo fostered a great understanding of astrology, which was taught within the royal line from generation to generation.

King Gludeo found himself facing an unprecedented crisis for his Kingdom. Same as his predecessors before him, the King consulted the stars for guidance within the royal observatory. Night after night, King Gludeo searched through the nightly sky to no avail. It appeared that for the first time in the King's life, the stars gave no answer. With a heavy heart and the crisis ever so pressing, the King resigned to the fact that the stars could not help him. With one last solem glance the King turned night's sky during this full moon night. While the moon has been a frequent subject of astrological research, the moon and its phases bore seldom relevance to signs and omens. But it was at that moment, the King saw dancing colors upon the pale orb, that beckoned him. Upon a closer inspection, the King realized these colors were not dancing frivolously. The longer the King observed their mesmerizing dance he could hear wordless whispers manifesting in his mind. They promised knowledge and guidance. King Gludeo was no fool. He knew due to his occult studies that there existed many entities that called deception and deceit their trade. To test the entity, the King demanded proof that the entity held knowledge, and the entity delivered.

The entity presented not only the best kept secrets of the Kingdom of Gludeo, but also most sensitive information about the rival kingdoms that threatened the King's realm. The entity then simply told the King to do with this information as he pleased, and that it would meet him again on the next full moon. By the time of the next full moon, the King had overcome the crisis and forced the foes into submission, all thanks to the knowledge given to him by this moon entity. Again the King entered his observatory and made the first of many contacts. A covenant between the monarch and the entity was forged that night.

The King would heed the words of the entity, which offered him guidance and near omniscient insights of things past and things to come. The entity would become the King's trusted advisor to help make the King's ambitions become reality and the King would come to refer to this new ally as the Moon Butterfly.

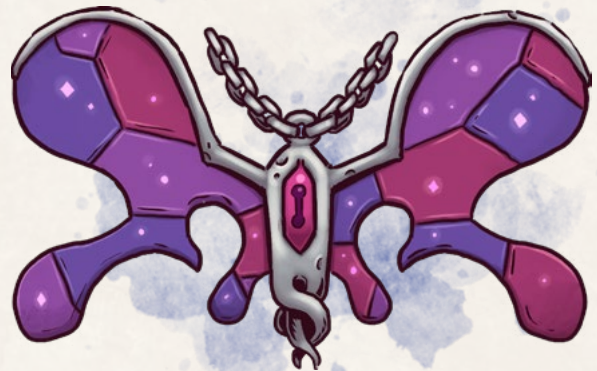
THE MOON KIN

The Moon Butterfly is an ominous being which dwells upon pallid planes of the moon. From there it calmly observes events unfolding upon the world, constantly searching for beings that captivate its attention. It seeks for beings of power, position, or potential. Beings that it can guide to upheaval the world's stage, for better or for worse. The Moon Butterfly's motivations to do so are as unfathomable as its origins.

From its distant realm, the Moon Butterfly studied the happenings of the world. Through this observation it gained transcendent insight upon the material world, which allows it to clearly see the machinations of events set in motion and their eventualities. It is with this knowledge through which the Moon Butterfly guides a creature it decided to aid. But advice and insight are not the sole extent of the Moon Butterfly's assistance. The Moon Butterfly is not the only entity existent on the pallid planes. It commands strange creatures of its own design, created from its own essence, each an extension of the Moon Butterfly's influence, called the Moon kin.

The Moon kin are the spawn of the Moon Butterfly, strange creatures of otherworldly physiology and mind, which heed the demands of their creator to aid whichever creature enjoys their master's favor. To perform their task without fail, the moon kin were purposefully shaped by the Moon Butterfly and blessed with a sliver of their creator's alien magic.

To command its spawn, the Moon Butterfly would provide occult rituals to manifest these beings within the material world, or if need be, send heralds that could open the way for its kin.



FRIEND OR FOE?

One cannot know the true motivation of the Moon Butterfly. As the Butterfly does not care about the concept of good or evil. What it seeks is change and those who can bring it. Thus one can only hope that one's goals align with this entity's whims.

As an ally, the Moon Butterfly can be a great provider of knowledge and offer guidance, but will only do so as far as the resulting events will be in its own interest. It can appear as quite benevolent if one's own success and well being are within the Moon Butterflies plans. Yet the entity might turn away and disappear once one has played their part, for the moon entity is elusive and selective with whom it associates.

Despite its apparent benevolence, as an enemy, the Moon Butterfly is a ruthless foe, willingly exploiting any sensitive information at hand. Though, it rarely interferes directly, instead using either its kin or pawns to deal with those who meddle with its ambitions.

MOON LANTERN

Gently floating across the pallid planes, akin to a jellyfish, the moon lanterns serve as beacons for their kin. Often the first to arrive if moonkin are summoned, the lanterns serve as guiding lights to guide their kin through the dimensional weaves to their destination, especially if amassed in large numbers. Swarms of moon lanterns, drifting through the air herald the arrival of more advanced moonkin.

The moon lanterns serve a further purpose though. As commonly the first moonkin to arrive they prepare the site for the arrival of their brethren. They scout the location, accounting for the presence of hazards, other creatures within the vicinity, or if present, the one the moonkin were sent out to serve in the name of their creator. To ensure smooth communication, the moon lantern can attach themselves onto creatures to transmit the creature's thoughts to their kin. To do so, the moon lantern lines up its tail with the spinal cord of the creature. The moon lantern as such serve as a network of telepathy to ensure that commands reach where they are needed.

Void Dweller. The moon lantern does not need to breathe or eat and can safely traverse the void between planets.

MOON LANTERN

Small Aberration (Moon kin), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 14 (4d6)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	11 (0)	5 (-3)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 14

Languages Understands Common, Draconic, and Deep Speech

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Alien Mind. The moon lantern has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, and having its mind read.

Beacon. Other moon kin can sense the presence of a moon lantern within 2 miles and can teleport to a moon lantern without error. Moon lanterns can communicate with other moon kin telepathically within 120 feet.

ACTIONS

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (3) bludgeoning damage.

Daze. A creature within 60 ft. of the moon lantern must succeed a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or take 3 (1d6) psychic damage and be dazed until the end of the lantern's next turn. A dazed creature subtracts 2 (1d4) from any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw it makes.

Attach. The moon lantern attaches itself onto a willing creature or a creature that it has grappled. While attached the moon lantern grants the creature it is attached to telepathic communication with any creature within 120 ft. of itself.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

MOON LANTERN (FAMILIAR)

Tiny Aberration (Moon kin)

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 1 (1d4 - 1)

Speed 0 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 13

Languages Understands Common, Draconic, and Deep Speech

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Alien Mind. The moon lantern has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, and having its mind read.

ACTIONS

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (2) bludgeoning damage.

Dazzle. A creature within 60 ft. of the moon lantern must succeed a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or take 3 (1d6) psychic damage and the moon lantern is invisible to the creature until the end of its next turn.

MOON HOUND

As a primitive form of the moon kin, the moon hounds are ferocious creatures imbued with cunning instincts. The moon hound is a commonly summoned moonkin for those chosen by the Moon Butterfly, as it is a flexible servant. Superior to other beasts of war or guard animals, the moon hound was given enough cognisance to parse simple commands. With its jagged rows of teeth that clench upon its victims, a creature will find itself quickly trapped within the moon hound's eel-like jaw. Escape, though a possibility, is not a preferable option; once the jagged teeth have embedded themselves within the flesh would rip and tear, leaving a creature maimed and devastated.

To subdue or misdirect, the moon hounds also possess innate eldritch powers. Upon releasing a distorted screech from within their alien throats, the moon hound is capable of producing visual sounds that dazzle the eyes and mind. Thanks to the moon hound's cunning, they know fully well to exploit such an opening. A creature flummoxed by this colorful bark will be either quickly surrounded or brought low by the moon hound before its senses recover.

Void Dweller. The moon hound does not need to breathe or eat and can safely traverse the void between planets.

MOON COMMUNION

The Rite of Moon's Communion is an ancient ritual of unknown origin. Perhaps it was by design of the Moon Butterfly that mortals came into possession of this occult knowledge?

The Rite of Moon's Communion describes a set of elaborate rituals to allow a mortal being to contact the Moon Butterfly. Eight versions of this ritual exist, each only effective in one of the phases of the moon. Each version of the Rite of Moon's Communion's instructions reflect their corresponding moon phase and thus vary greatly from one another, in both required materials and prescribed sequence of activities. The versions are commonly written in a way that omits the existence of other versions of the same ritual.

Once completed, a creature performing the ritual will fall into a comatose state, as its consciousness is transported into the otherworldly realm of the Moon Butterfly. The creature will find itself upon a pallid wasteland underneath an eternal night's sky. Dominating the overwhelming night's sky is a planetoid emanating an eerie glow. Shortly after the creature's arrival, the Moon Butterfly will appear before the creature, though the Moon Butterfly might decide to assume a less overwhelming form when engaging with a lesser creature.

When the creature ends the communion, or if the Moon Butterfly decides to send the creature back, the creature will awake back in its physical body.

MOON HOUND

Medium Aberration (Moon kin), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +2

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Understands Common, Draconic, and Deep Speech

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Alien Mind. The moon hound has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, and having its mind read.

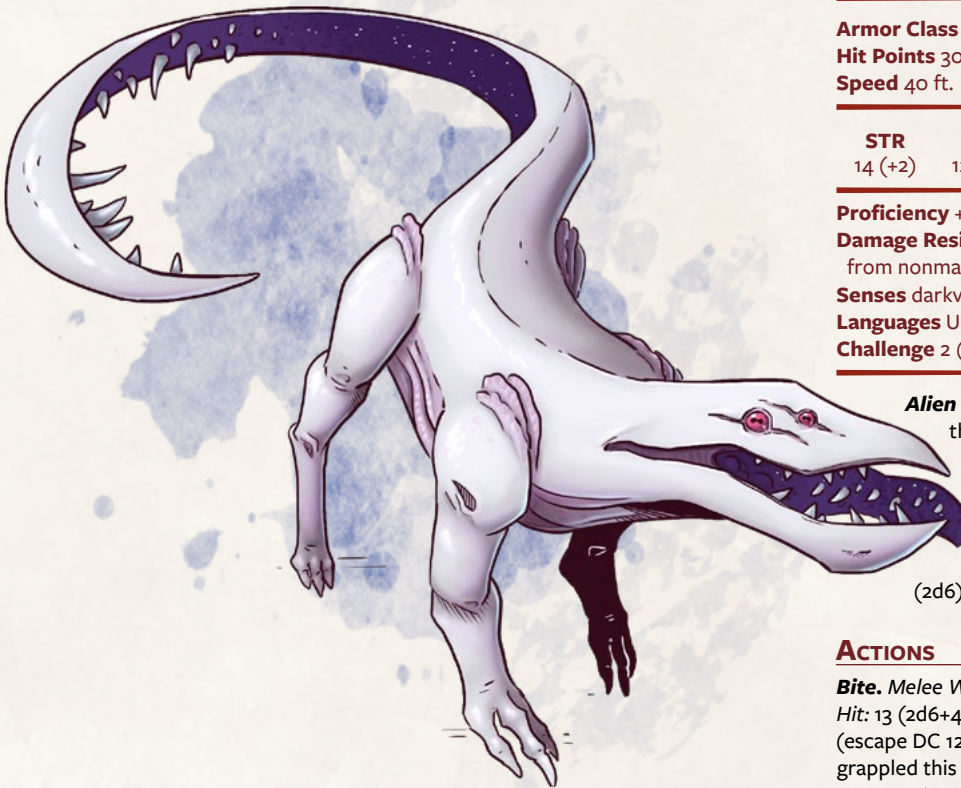
Ripping Jaw. A creature that escapes the moon hound's bite with a successful ability check or through forced movement takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6+4) piercing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). The moon hound can have only one creature grappled this way and until the grapple ends, the moon hound can't use its color bark and can make bite attacks only against the grappled creature.

BONUS ACTIONS

Color Bark. A creature within 20 ft. of the moon hound that can see it must succeed a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save the creature is blinded until the end of the moon hound's next turn.



Artwork by Ben Fleuter & DM Tuz

MOON MAIDEN

Medium Aberration (Moon kin), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)

Proficiency +3

Skills Insight +6, Perception +6

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 120 ft. passive Perception 16

Languages Understands Common, Draconic, and Deep Speech

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Alien Mind. The moon maiden has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, and having its mind read.

Lunar Illumination. If both of the moon maiden's moon bolts hit the same target, it becomes hulled in otherworldly light until the end of the moon maiden's turn, causing it to shed dim light in a 10 ft. radius.

As long as a target is hulled in otherworldly light, any attack roll against the target has advantage if the attacker can see it, and the target can't benefit from being invisible or hidden. The moon maiden cannot gain advantage on its attack rolls from this effect.

Magic Weapons. The moon maiden's attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The moon maiden fires two moon bolts.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 +1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Moon Bolt. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 +4) radiant damage and the next attack against the target made by another creature before the end of the moon maiden's next turn is made with advantage.

Spellcasting. The moon maiden casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 15) requiring no material or verbal components:

At will: *dancing lights*, *minor illusion*

1/day each: *calm emotions*, *detect evil and good*, *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *nondetection*, *sending*

VARIANT: EXPANDED MOON MAIDEN MAGIC

The moon maidens are capable of field a diverse selection of spells. If you want to customize an encounter featuring a moon maiden, consider expanding her spells with the following spells:

1/day each: *alarm*, *bestow curse*, *glyph of warding*, *hallow*, *mass cure wounds*, *remove curse*, *scrying*

Artwork by Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

MOON MAIDEN

Perhaps the most humanoid and graceful of the moonkin, the moon maidens sing their eerie melodies across the pallid planes.

As an advanced species of the moon kin, the moon maidens wield eldritch magic, which they utilize to aid their kin or decimate their foes. Once summoned, other lesser moon kin find themselves drawn to them and will flock around the maidens, guided by the maiden's otherworldly tunes. This circumstance places the moon maidens as natural leaders and intermediates within the moon kin's hierarchy.

Untypical for the Moon Butterfly to show favoritism, it appears to be fond of the maidens, finding comfort within the sound of their melody and reminiscing of ages past.

Void Dweller. The moon maiden does not need to breathe or eat and can safely traverse the void between planets.

MOON TUTOR

In the eventuality direct and continual guidance is needed, or a hopeful individual was discovered whose potential has yet to be unlocked, the Moon Butterfly has created the moon tutor. The moon tutor is counted among the highest of the Moon Butterfly's creations. It is imbued with a sliver of its creator's essence, allowing the tutor momentary glimpses into the unfathomable machinations of the world.

Unlike the other of its kin, the moon tutor is capable of traversing the planes without the need of summons or the help of its creator. A moon tutor commonly seeks a creature chosen by the Moon Butterfly to serve as a guide and, as its name implies, tutor it. Once the moon tutor makes contact, it will engage in an occult ritual with the creature, upon its completion the moon tutor will be allowed entrance into the creature's mindscape. Within this state the moon tutor exists within the creature's mind, only seen by the creature that made the pact. This allows the moon tutor direct communication with the creature and sets the stage for its tutelage.

MOON TUTOR

Large Aberration (Moon kin), typically chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 170 (20d10+60)

Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)

Proficiency +4

Skills Arcane +8, History +8, Insight +9, Investigation +8, Nature +8, Religion +8

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses truesight 60 ft. passive Perception 15

Languages Telepathy 120 ft., Common, Draconic, and Deep Speech

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Alien Mind. The moon tutor has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, and having its mind read.

Magic Weapons. The moon tutor's attacks are magical.

Tutelage. A humanoid creature can join in an mystical pact with the moon tutor. To do so the creature must conduct a 1 hour long ritual during a full moon. Once completed the moon tutor is summoned to guide the humanoid.

As long as the moon tutor guides the humanoid, it is always aware of the exact location of the humanoid as long as it is on the material plane, is invisible to any creature except the humanoid it tutors and can't physically interact with creatures and objects around it.

A humanoid under the moon tutor's guidance adds 2 (1d4) to any attack roll or saving throw it makes and can use an action to use the moon tutor's spellcasting action, using the moon tutor's spellcasting DC, but concentrating on the spells itself.

At the end of the humanoid's turn, or when it falls unconscious, the tutor can decide to stop guiding the creature. When the humanoid dies, the moon tutor stops guiding it automatically. When the moon tutor stops guiding the humanoid, it either fully manifest in the material world, or returns to its own domain.

A creature under a moon tutor's tutelage will benefit not only from the tutor's wealth of knowledge, but also its eldritch magic. However, the breadth of knowledge and magic is only as deep as the tutor allows.

In the case in which the creature fails in the task foreseen by the Moon Butterfly, or worse, turns actively against it, a moon tutor will immediately leave, taking the boons it provides along with it. But the tutor is not a passive entity. As it still observes the material world, it might deem to manifest itself from the creature's mind if needed. While the moon tutor possesses a great intellect and mind, it is very well capable in defending itself, or the creature it meant to tutor, with weapons that rend the material and the immaterial alike.

Many great and influential people left their mark upon the tapestry of history. The existence of the moon tutors might leave one wondering, if these great feats were done on their own accord, or under the guidance of these otherworldly beings, all in the service of the mysterious Moon Butterfly.

Void Dweller. The moon tutor does not need to breathe or eat and can safely traverse the void between planets.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The moon tutor makes two attacks: One with its claws and one with its tail.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) psychic damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) bludgeoning damage and the moon tutor chooses the following:

- the target is grappled, escape DC 15.
- if the target is a creature it must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Attendance. The moon tutor teleports to an unoccupied space within 60 ft. of the humanoid it guides.

Spellcasting. The moon tutor casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 17) requiring no material components:

At will: minor illusion, prestidigitation

1/day each: hypnotic pattern, legend lore, mass suggestion, modify memory, plane shift (moon tutor only), teleport (self only)

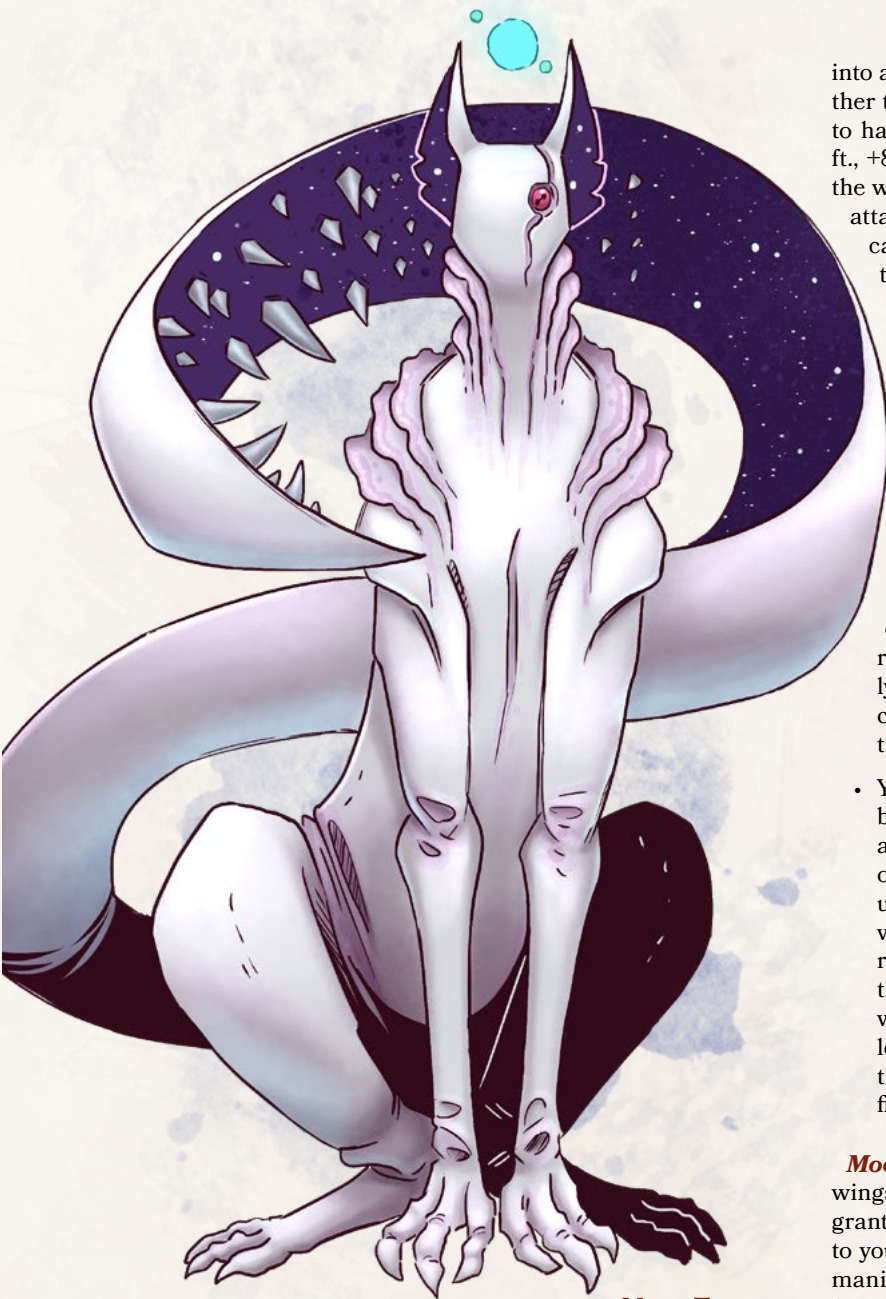
BONUS ACTIONS

Dazzling Light. The moon tutor exerts otherworldly light in a 20 ft. radius. Each creature in the area of the moon tutor's choice that can see the tutor must succeed a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) psychic damage and be dazed until the end of the moon tutor's next turn. A dazed creature subtracts 3 (1d6) from any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw it makes.

VARIANT: MOON TUTOR SUMMONING

As the moon tutor serves as a direct connection between a chosen creature and the will of the Moon Butterfly, the moon tutor can call upon lesser moon kin to be summoned from the Moon Butterfly's domain.

Summon Moon Kin. The moon tutor summons 8 moon lanterns, 4 moon hounds, or one moon maiden at unoccupied spaces within 120 ft. of itself. If the moon tutor dies, all moon kin summoned by it are banished back into their domain.



Moon Tutor
Artwork by Ben Fleuter
& DM Tuz

BOONS OF THE MOON BUTTERFLY

In place of divination and information, the Moon Butterfly is also capable of bestowing a great variety of boons unto creatures that it wants to be successful in changing the world, for better or for worse. Unless stated otherwise, any boon can only be used once before it expires.

Absolute Clarity. You can use an action to manifest absolute clarity. When you do, you are no longer blinded, feared, or charmed, and gain a truesight of 120 ft. for 10 minutes, meaning that you can always see a creature's true form and illusions no longer affect you. Further, for the duration you gain a +10 bonus on any active or passive Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) checks you make. For the duration of absolute clarity, your eyes are illuminated in an otherworldly glow.

Guiding Moonlight. You can use an action to conjure a glowing butterfly shaped wisp for 1 hour. This wisp sheds bright light in a 20 ft. radius and sheds dim light for an additional 40 feet. You can order the wisp to snuff its light or illuminate as a bonus action. For the duration you can use a bonus action to direct the wisp to fly 40 ft.

Forgotten Foes: Moon Kin

into a direction of your choice, but it will never leave further than 60 ft. from you, or you can use a bonus action to have the wisp make a ranged spell attack (range 60 ft., +8 to hit) against a target that you can see. On a hit the wisp deals 13 (2d8+4) radiant damage and your next attack against the target is made with advantage. You can order the wisp to attack a total of 10 times before the effect of the wisp ends early.

Lunar Weapon. A weapon of your choice is bestowed with otherworldly light. This otherworldly light has 6 charges, each expended charge dims the otherworldly light. As long as the weapon has charges, it emanates dim light in a 20 ft. radius, which can be suppressed or reactivated using a bonus action. You can expend the charges in the following ways:

- You can expend a charge by raising your weapon and plead for it to guide your way. Choose a location or an object. For the next hour, whenever you rise your weapon, it will shine a ray of otherworldly light in the direction of the location or object you chose. You can expend two charges to choose a creature instead.
- You can use an action to expend a charge and fire a beam of otherworldly light from your weapon. This is a ranged spell attack that you make with that weapon (using the same modifier the weapon normally uses) with a 60 ft. range, or the range of the weapon, whichever is higher. On a hit the target takes 7 (2d6) radiant damage and the next attack roll targeting the creature has advantage and is treated as if made with a magical weapon. If you have a feature that allows you to make more than one attack when you use the attack action, you can use one of these attacks to fire a beam from your weapon.

Moon Light Wings. You can use an action to manifest wings of otherworldly light for 10 minutes. The wings grant you a flying speed of 40 ft. or flying speed equal to your movement speed, whichever is lower. When you manifest the moon light wings, each creature within 20 ft. radius that can see you must succeed a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be blinded until the end of your next turn. For the duration of the wings, you can use an action to beat them and each creature in a 15 ft. cone that can see you must succeed a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be blinded until the end of your next turn. You can beat the wings up to 6 times before the effect of the wings ends early.

Total Eclipse. When you stow away an object on your person, store it somewhere such as a chest, or hide an object anywhere, you can use this boon to make the object undetectable to anyone but yourself. Until you retrieve the item, it cannot be found by searching or divination magic of any kind. Other than yourself, only a creature with true seeing or a creature that you task to retrieve it will be able to find the object.

Therion

The battles in the name of Altland's monarchs were not fought by man and machine alone. A wide array of beasts were present on the battlefield: Powerful knight bond steeds, ferocious hounds, swift avian messengers. Many species of animals found in Altland today originated from these days. Shaped through generations of selective breeding, all in the name of the monarchs' struggle for power.

The fight for succession was fierce and as the wars among the monarchs intensified, so did their measures to seek victory. With the rise of biomancy, the manipulation and mutation of living creatures by magic, new venues of birthing impossible creatures were opened. Many of these creatures still taint Altland's wilderness as a dark testament of the monarch's megalomania.

Malegor, was a realm struggling for survival since its founding. Born out of the fragments of a fallen kingdom, a mere speck in the shadow of their neighboring rivals. With scraps of territory deemed unworthy of conquest, Malegor avoided the sight and ire of the great monarchs and most worldly affairs. Hiding in the deep wilderness in an attempt to build their own seat of power.

Ecydnia of Malegor, first of her name, found her young nation in a pathetic existence. Even though the wilderness cowed her people from the eyes of rivals, it was a hostile environment. Marauders, horrors of the murky woods, and feral beasts would never allow her Kingdom to flourish. Only with struggle and sacrifice, the queen was able to establish a fortified capitol.

Alas, Malegor's weakness could not go unnoticed forever. Before her realm reached stability, it was besieged once more by rivals. Yet again, Queen Malegor found herself at the brink of annihilation. However, the wilds that hindered Malegor's prosperity would prove just as deadly for their approaching enemies. Hindering the invasion into a foreboding crawl.

Queen Ecydnia looked upon the beasts that had plagued their lands with new eyes, unmatched horrors her people had learnt to defend themselves against would now become their shield. With little time to lose, she set breeders and mages to work. Desperate to utilize its borrowed time, the Kingdom of Malegor engaged in an act of reckless evolution and profane mutation.

When the queen's enemies closed in once more with intent of absolute conquest over the meek nation of Malegor, its capital opened its gates. As its mighty portals opened, Queen Ecydnia unleashed the fruit of her labor. Beasts unseen by this world flooded into the wilds. Creatures that would by sheer malice and lust for wanton destruction lay waste to her enemies. A scourge upon Altland whose name would be remembered in infamy and become synonymous with the very idea of monsters.

That day marked the day in which the therion were released upon the world.

Forgotten Foes: Therion

Unnatural Mutants

Breeding a new species by conventional means required time, a luxury that Malegor did not have. The art of biomancy was required for their Kingdom's last hope of salvation. While Queen Ecydnia counted numerous capable transmuters within her court who were key to the capital's expedient construction, Malegor's knowledge of biomancy was basic at best. Regardless, by necessity, Ecydnia put them to the task.

To create protectors of her kingdom, Ecydnia had hunters prowl the surrounding wilds of Malegor in search of its abundant beasts. The creatures were trapped, their dens were raided for their young, and carcasses were collected. Anything to provide Ecydnia's transmuters with the necessary material.

The most vile beasts were forcefully merged again and again in hastened evolution. Beasts and monstrosities were combined for their most lethal traits with callous abandon, and the resulting chimeras observed and tested. In what could only be described as nature's mockery the therion emerged from a heap of wretched rejects.

The therion were presented to Ecydnia of Malegor, who recoiled from her own creation. True monsters, impossible to control or tame, but with an unmatched savagery and might. By any sane mind, the therions would have been considered a failure, a mistake to be undone - but the Queen was committed. The moment the therion were released unto the world, the Queen ordered the gates of Malegor to be shut and barricaded. She turned away from the world that sought her realm's demise and the therion were her parting gift.

A Scourge Made Flesh

The Kingdom of Malegor succeeded: the therion now infesting their wilds drove out their attackers, but in return made them prisoners. Surrounded by monsters of its own design, Malegor faded away, but their creation endured.

The therions became the undisputed rulers of Malegor's surrounding wilds, slaughtering any native beast that did not escape. With alarming speed, the therions proliferated and soon began to spread beyond their original territory becoming a reviled bane of Altland.

Therion are akin to an infestation. They are not creatures meant to be and are impossible to exist in harmony with any of nature's creations. Wherever they appear, the land suffers, as they disturb the delicate balance of nature with their voracious hunger and ill disposition. It is their flawed creation though, which deters them from overrunning the world at large. As an incidental counterbalance to their spread, therions are short lived mutants and just as hostile to their own kin as to common animals.

As detested monsters, therions are eradicated by man with impunity wherever they are found. Alas, the wilds of altland harbor many dark corners for them to breed and spread anew. Thus therions have become a harsh fact of life for those that wander far off the shelter of civilization.

GALBEASTS

The cluxorian, or galbeast as they are known today by the frontier settlers and farmers, is a stout therion, built not unlike a hog, that features a large head with fangs to match its size. Back when the mages of Malegor were under the hopeful idea of domesticating the therions, they chose the strain which spawned the galbeasts as watchers.

Its bulky frame and huge maw allow the galbeast to expel deafening howls and screams, used to intimidate enemies and startle prey. The galbeast is a watchful creature and considered timid among the therion - though calling it anxious would be more appropriate. As such they are quick to react with ear-piercing screeching at the slightest sign of danger, or to simply mark their territory.

Fortunately, their raucous nature allows one to detect their habitats with ease. Unfortunately it makes little difference for local farmers who are pestered by the incessant howling of these vexing fiends.

Galbeast Screecher. Spawning from the galbeast's strain are particularly cacophonous deviants known as screechers. These deviants possess a larger frame to host its abounding lungs and their throats are rubbery akin to frogs. A screecher bloats to a bizarre size before unleashing a shattering yowl, powerful enough to kill a man exposed to it.

GALBEAST (CLUXORIAN)

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3

Condition Immunities deafened

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 13

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Senses. The galbeast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 9 (2d6 +2) piercing damage.

Bay. The galbeast releases a piercing bay that is audible within 400 feet. All creatures within 10 ft. of the galbeast that can hear it must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be deafened until the end of the galbeast's next turn. A deafened creature has disadvantage on the first ability check or attack roll it makes during its turn.



CRYPTBEASTS

Eurynian, or more commonly called Cryptbeast, is a creeping breed of therions that are notorious scavengers and a bane to frontier gravekeepers. With its sturdy claws, a cryptbeast can dig open a grave in seconds and easily break open even sturdy oak caskets to feast upon the exhumed corpse. The cryptbeast cares little over how rotten a morsel is. Bones still make for a welcome feast, the cryptbeast's crushing bite allows it to effortlessly snap and grind bones.

Untypical for therions, cryptbeasts tolerate the presence of their kin and descend in flocks upon unguarded graves. Though, in cases where the carrion is in short supply, cryptbeasts will quickly turn towards the living and each other alike.

Despite their scavenger nature, cryptbeasts are still capable hunters. With ease a cryptbeast can move close to its target undetected and quickly overwhelm it with the ferocity so innate to the therion. A cryptbeast is also not deterred by attacking larger prey alone. Its jaws are host to an infectious rot due to its unsavory diet. One targeted bite is all the cryptbeast needs to turn even the largest prey into just another carcass to feast upon in due time.

Necrovore. A rare deviant spawning from the cryptbeast is the necrovore. This deviant prefers carrions over all else, particularly the kind animated by necrotic energies. The undead are an unlikely prey for any creature and their consumption leaves the necrovore changed. Ever so close the necrovore wanders the line between life or death, able to momentarily wander into spectral spheres and prey upon even bodiless undead.

CRYPTBEAST (EURYNIAN)

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	11 (0)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Senses. The cryptbeast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cryptbeast makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d6 +2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage and the creature must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the creature takes the poison damage and any form of healing restores half as much hit points to the creature until the end of the cryptbeast's next turn

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d4 +2) slashing damage.





LEUCORIANS

Incidents in which communities at the frontiers report about man eating beasts can be regularly traced back upon the deeds of this strain of therion. Entire settlements have been abandoned out of fear of these predators who even seasoned hunters do not dare to pursue.

The Leucorian, while an uncommon type of therion, is a feared predator that spreads terror upon regions where it appears. Recognized by its unmistakable white mane, the leucorian possesses unrivaled skill of tracking and hunting its prey among its mutant breed. Once set on a target, it will relentlessly pursue and stalk it until its lethal fangs pierce its victim's neck.

Unlike common predators, this therion finds itself in a perpetual hunt. It is on a steady search for prey, feasting upon kills in a voracious manner and needing little rest. It will not remain at a kill for longer than needed and it will leave what it did not devour to scavengers. The mauled carcasses it often leaves behind suggests this beast hunts not just for necessity, but sadistic pleasure.

Apex. Leucorians are solitary beasts that only in exception choose to roam and hunt with a mate. But as beasts, twisted as they are, they are subject to the primal order. A leucorian that preserves at the top of a territory to a venerable age will become an apex. An apex leucorian is a masterful hunter putting the rest of its adept kin to shame. This difference is acknowledged and in a rare event for therions, lesser leucorian will submit to the apex and form a pack. The formation of such a pack spells doom for any living being within its sight.

LEUCORIAN

Large Monstrosity

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (9d10 + 27)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4, Survival +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Keen Senses. The leucorian has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The leucorian makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws. If both attacks hit the same creature, it must succeed a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 15 (2d10 +4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 9 (2d4 +4) slashing damage.

Maul. The leucorian makes two bite attacks against a prone target, if both bites hit, the creature's movement speed becomes 0 until the end of the leucorian's next turn.

GRIGORIAN

The grigorian is a therion of incarnate rage. This roaming monstrosity is in a constant state of agitation. Always on the move, the grigorian will see any other creature it finds as a rival that must be slaughtered. With mighty tusks it will rip and tear flesh and with its muscular legs it will crush bone and shell.

Only in mating season will grigorian gather. These gatherings will result in massacres as the grigorians will break out into lethal bouts. These fights result in the absolute devastation of the region. Left standing, towering over the mangled heaps of their kin, will be the strongest who earned their right to procreate. As such, the grigorian, while remaining low in number, will grow stronger with each generation, leaving farming communities smaller, and fewer in turn, and the cyptbeasts well fed.

Siege Beasts. In the face of such unbridled destructive power of the grigorian, some souls seek to make use of such might. Stolen from their dens at a young age, these beasts are contained for the entirety of their life while animalistic rage boils until finally, plated with crude armor hammered into their very flesh, these siege beasts are released to a path of indiscriminate destruction.



GRIGORIAN

Huge Monstrosity

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126 (12d12 + 48)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Greater Dash. When the grigorian uses the dash action, it's speed increases by 20 ft. until the end of its turn.

Keen Senses. The grigorian has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The grigorian makes two attacks: one gore attack and one trample attack.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (3d12 +6) piercing damage.

Trample. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 +6) bludgeoning damage plus 18 (4d8) additional damage if the target is prone.

Overrun. As part of this action, the grigorian moves up to its speed in a straight line. It makes a trample attack against each creature the grigorian passes through. A creature that is hit must succeed a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

GALBEAST SCREECHER

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3

Condition Immunities deafened

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 13

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Senses. The screecher has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 9 (2d6 +2) piercing damage.

Screech. The screecher releases a terrifying screech that is audible within 600 feet. All creatures within 10 ft. of the screecher that can hear it must succeed a DC 13 Constitution saving throw take 7 (2d6) thunder damage and have disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls until the end of the screecher's next turn.

REACTIONS

Warding Shriek. When a creature enters a space within 15 ft. of the screecher it shrieks. If the creature can hear the screecher it must succeed a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the turn. To use this action, the screecher must see the creature.

CRYPTBEAST NECROVORE

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., burrowing 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Senses. The necrovore has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Magic Fangs. The necrovore's attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The necrovore makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 6 (1d6 +3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage and the creature can't regain hit points until the beginning of the necrovore's next turn.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d4 +3) slashing damage.

Ghost Walk. The necrovore disengages and until the end of the necrovore's turn, it is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage made with non-magical weapons and can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. If it ends its turn inside an object, it takes 11 (2d10) force damage and is pushed 5 ft. into an unoccupied space. If the necrovore is still within an object after this movement, the necrovore dies.

Maul. The apex leucorian makes two bite attacks against a prone target, if both bites hit, the creature's movement speed becomes 0 until the end of the leucorian's next turn.

Apex Takedown (Recharge 4-6). The apex leucorian moves up to its speed and then makes a bite attack against a creature in reach. Up to two other leucorians can use a reaction to move up to their speed towards the creature and make one bite attack against it. A creature knocked prone by this attack has a movement speed of 0 until the end of the apex leucorian's next turn.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The apex leucorian can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The apex leucorian regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Claws. The apex leucorian attacks with its claws.

Detect. The apex leucorian makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Maul. The apex leucorian makes a bite attack against a prone creature in reach.

Move. The apex leucorian moves up to half of its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Rallying Howl (2 actions). Each leucorian (including the apex) within 60 ft. of the apex that can hear it gains 10 temporary hit points and move up to half of its speed towards the apex without provoking opportunity attacks. If a leucorian in the area that can hear the apex is charmed or frightened, it repeats the saving throw against the condition using the same original DC. On a save the leucorian is no longer charmed or frightened.

APEX LEUCORIAN

Large Monstrosity

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 146 (16d10 + 48)

Speed 40 ft., climbing 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +4

Saving Throws Str +9, Wis +7

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +7, Survival +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 17

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Keen Senses. The leucorian has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Legendary Resistance (1/day). If the apex leucorian fails a saving throw, it can succeed it instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The apex leucorian makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 +5) piercing damage and the creature must succeed a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 +5) slashing damage.

GRIGORIAN SIEGE BEAST

Huge Monstrosity

Armor Class 17 (armor plating)

Hit Points 168 (16d12 + 64)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	2 (-4)	11 (0)	4 (-3)

Proficiency +4

Saving Throws Str +10, Con +8

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 14

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Death Throe (1/day). When the siege beast is reduced to 0 hit points, it uses recharges and uses its rampage before dying or falling unconscious.

Keen Senses. The siege beast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Siege Monster. The siege beast deals double damage to Objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The siege beast makes two attacks: one gore attack and one trample attack.

Gore. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (3d12 +6) piercing damage.

Trample. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 +6) bludgeoning damage plus 27 (6d8) additional damage if the target is prone.

Overrun. As part of this action, the siege beast moves up to its speed in a straight line. It makes a trample attack against each creature the siege beast passes through. On a hit a creature takes an additional 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage and must succeed a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Rampage (Recharge 5-6). Each creature and structure within 5 ft. of the siege beast must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save a target takes 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage and half as much on a successful one.

TROLL TAINT

Of all the colorful fey found in the Far'way, there is none as despicable and foul as the trolls. As exiled bastards of the mighty Fomori, the trolls incarnate the idea of corruption and ruin. Where the trolls manifest and set foot, all will be sullied by their very presence. The vile trolls revel in their disgusting nature and experience immense satisfaction in defiling beauty by making it just as repugnant as themselves.

In essence, trolls are a virus that proliferates rapidly, converting anything it touches into more of itself. This is the source of trolls' regenerative ability and is called Troll Taint when afflicting another creature.

The troll taint manifests as rashes and growths upon the skin of living creatures. In time the corruption spreads across the body and introduces mutations along its path. Warts, lumps and matted hair are all changes that culminate into a troll hybrid, capable of spreading the taint itself.

Not even nature is spared, as these mutations affect stone, wood, or soil. Areas trolls claim as their dens are transformed into foul dwellings that are host to filth and taint. One walking the oldest realms of trolls will find themselves wondering whether they are traversing land or the stinking innards of a living thing.

Upon infection with the troll taint, quick action is needed, as the taint knows no bounds. Before it sets root it must be cleansed, lest its corruption becomes ingrained. The ill of the troll taint is known within the world of men and purged wherever it is found. In all but the most extreme cases land once inflicted can be recovered. But within the world of fey, who like trolls, are made of ideas, the troll taint is an existential threat to their very being.

FEY'S BANE

Fey are far more susceptible than mortals to troll taint because of their close kinship. From the humble playful sprite, to the aloof and noble courtier of highest standing, no fey is spared from the corrupting effect of the taint. Entire realms of previous splendor have fallen and were transformed into nightmarish monuments to the troll's foul depravity and filth.

Where the taint would affect an earthly creature's physical form, fey are changed inside and out. It twists and perverts their very being to unrecognizable wretches, leaving them tainted forevermore.

In this horrid new form they are driven mad by self loathing, hatred, and despair. For a fey, there is no greater tragedy than to succumb to the troll's taint, a fact in which the troll revel. Fear of troll taint drives fey to act against trolls with great prejudice, exiling or destroying their fellows and their lands at the first sign of corruption.



TROLL TAINT (DISEASE)

A creature can be afflicted by troll taint by exposure to troll infested areas and creatures. Once infected the sickness will grow and eventually the creature will become a contagious host of the malady. Fey creatures are especially vulnerable to troll taint and risk mutating into malevolent tainted fey once the troll taint reaches its final stage.

The disease targets beasts, fey, humanoids, and monstrosities. A creature suffering from the disease begins to grow warts and pimples on their body, typically concentrated around the area of infection. As the infection grows, the growth begins to spread over the creature's body and mutate the creature into a troll hybrid creature.

At nightfall of each day, or during the first time each day the infected creature stays in darkness for 1 hour or more, the creature must make a Constitution saving throw. The DC is equal to the original saving throw that infected the creature, or 12 if not applicable. On a failed saving throw the creature's Charisma is reduced by 1 to a minimum of 6. If the creature succeeds the saving throw by 5 or more a creature regains 1 Charisma that has been reduced by the disease.

A creature that has lost 3 or more Charisma with this disease, or has its Charisma reduced to 6 or lower, the troll taint becomes ingrained into the creature's being. The creature no longer restores Charisma through successful saving throws against the disease and it becomes impossible to treat it with effects that target diseases. To remove the disease from then on it must be removed with Greater Restoration, or similarly powerful magic, or the creature's Charisma must be fully restored.

FEY AND TROLL TAINT

Fey are particularly vulnerable to the effects of troll taint and run risk of becoming fully mutated into tainted fey. A fey that contracts troll taint and the first time it fails its saving throw against the disease has its charisma reduced by 1d4 to a minimum of 6.

A fey creature that has its Charisma reduced to 6 or lower by the disease transforms into a tainted fey. When transformed the fey's alignment becomes chaotic evil and a spreader of the troll taint disease. The tainted fey will attempt to willingly spread its disease by any means. Once transformed, a tainted fey can only be restored by slaying it and returning it to life with true resurrection, or by the use of a wish. Returning a tainted fey back to life with lesser spells will return it as a tainted fey.

TAINT WING

Small Fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (4d6+3)

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	8 (-1)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +1

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

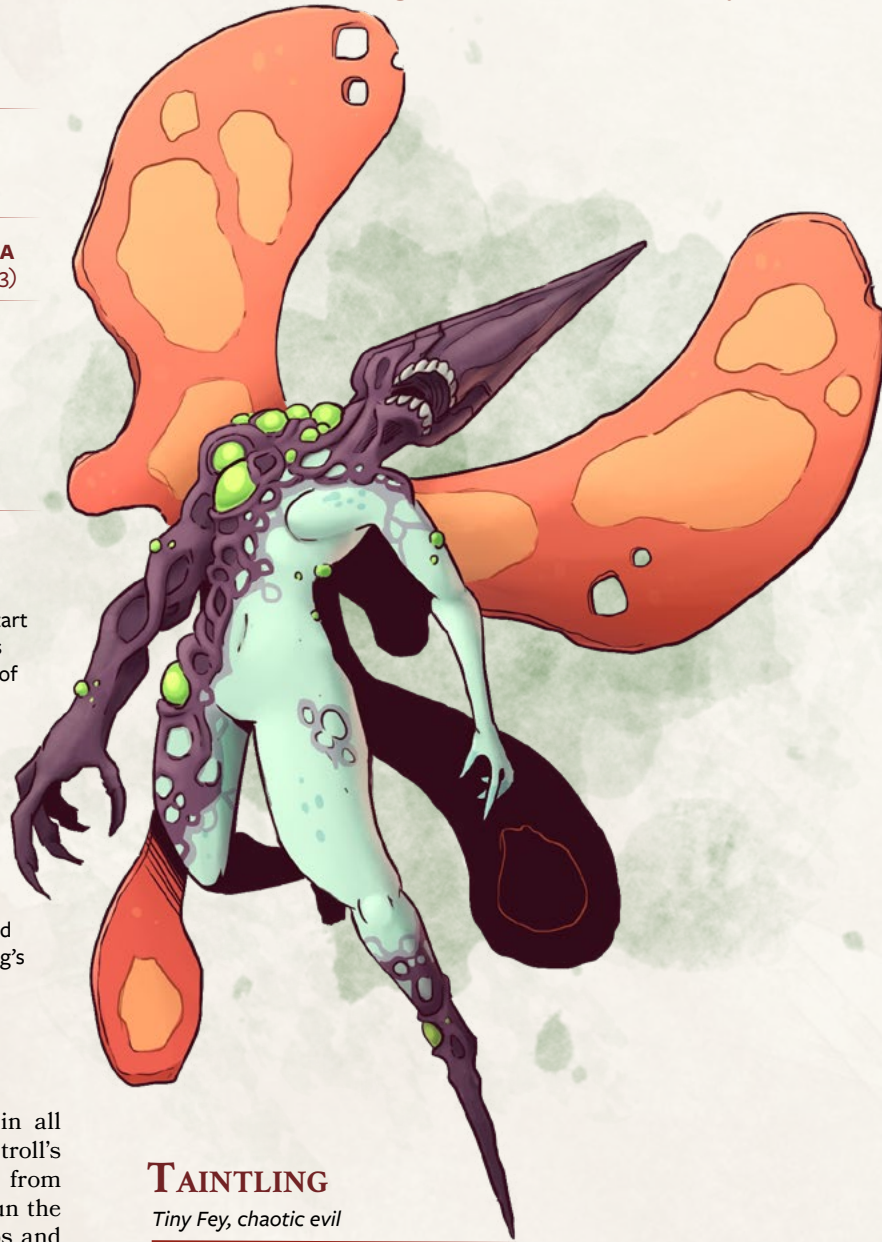
Flyby. The taint wing doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Regeneration. The taint wing regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the taint wing takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the taint wing's next turn.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) poison damage.

Choking Dust. A creature within 5 ft. of the taint wing must succeed a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the creature is poisoned until the end of the taint wing's next turn and contracts troll taint.



TAINT WING

Plenty of playful lesser fey can be found within all realms of the Far'way who are easy targets of the troll's corruption. Curious and foolish sprites found far from the safety of their home and travers the hedges run the danger of falling prey to trolls. With cunning traps and ambushes, trolls catch all manner of oblivious fey with ease and will be exposed to the troll's taint.

Taint wings are those frail fey that fell victim to the trolls' corruption. Diminutive in size but great in malice, taint wings are flying terrors. Their once elegant wings now coated with stinking dust, spreading the taint wherever they fly, and their once fair forms are unrecognizably ravaged. With alacrity and shrewdness, the taint wings act as unsuspecting spreaders.

Once set free, these tainted fey will return to familiar places with the goal of contamination. There they will seek out their former playmates, set to share their fate with their old cliques. As small as they are, a single taint wing can be the origin of a far reaching spread

Taintling. Small in stature and soul alike, the bodies of these former sprites gave little resistance to the troll taint. Those whose bodies cannot withstand the sudden transformation become taintlings, frail wretches barely held together by corruption, seeking to spread their filth before they collapse.

Bereft of all reason, these suicidal creatures throw themselves upon suitable targets, to scratch, bite, and spew. Upon their inevitable demise, they pop like disgusting zits, manic with the glee that the taint is spread.

TAINTLING

Tiny Fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (3d4)

Speed 20 ft., flying 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	17 (+3)	11 (0)	4 (-4)	7 (-2)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +0

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Death Throe. When a creature within 5 ft. of the taintling hits it with a melee weapon attack and reduces it to 0 hit points, the taintling explodes and splatters its tainted flesh. The attacking creature must succeed a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or contracts troll taint.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Splatter. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) poison damage and the target must succeed a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or contracts troll taint. Hit or miss, the taintling dies after the attack.

VILE VIRTUOSO

Medium Fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (revolving performer)

Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (0)	9 (-1)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Saving Throws Cha +1

Skills Perception +1, Performance +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages common, giant, sylvan

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Regeneration. The vile virtuoso regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the virtuoso takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the virtuoso's next turn.

Revolting Performer. The vile virtuoso adds its negative charisma modifier (+3) to its AC and Charisma (Performance) checks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The vile virtuoso makes two attacks; one bite and one slam attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage and the target must succeed a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or contract troll taint.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d8+1) bludgeoning damage.

Disharmonic Melody. The vile virtuoso plays a sickening tune. Each creature that can hear the tune and starts its turn within 20 ft. of the virtuoso or enters the area for the first time during its turn must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage and is poisoned until the beginning of its next turn. Trolls and tainted fey are unaffected.

As long as the virtuoso performs, it must use its action on its turn to continue the performance and can't move more than 10 ft. during a single turn or the performance ends. If the virtuoso is incapacitated or knocked prone, its performance ends immediately. When the virtuoso's performance ends, it can't use its disharmonic melody again until the end of its next turn.

VARIANT: MAD MINSTREL

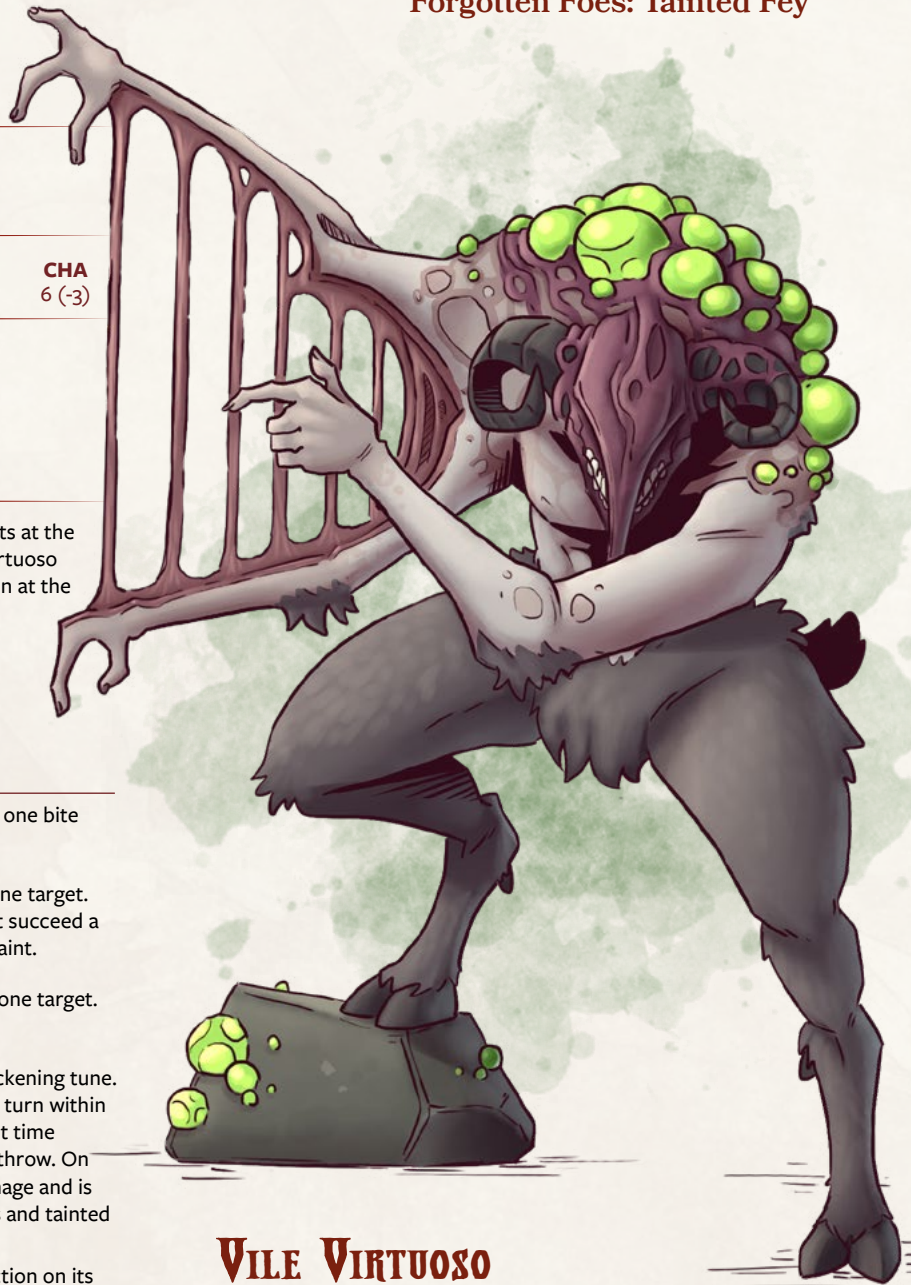
On occasion, musically inclined fey (such as Satyrs) possess bardic magic before their transformation. To reflect this possibility, such a fey transforms into a mad minstrel upon infection by the troll taint. A mad minstrel is a vile virtuoso with the following additional action:

Spellcasting. The mad minstrel casts one of the following spells, using its negative Charisma as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 13) requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion*, *mockery*

1/day each: *blindness/deafness*, *dissonant whispers*, *hideous laughter*, *shatter* (3rd level).

Feel free to change its available spells to other spells of similar level to customize the mad minstrel.



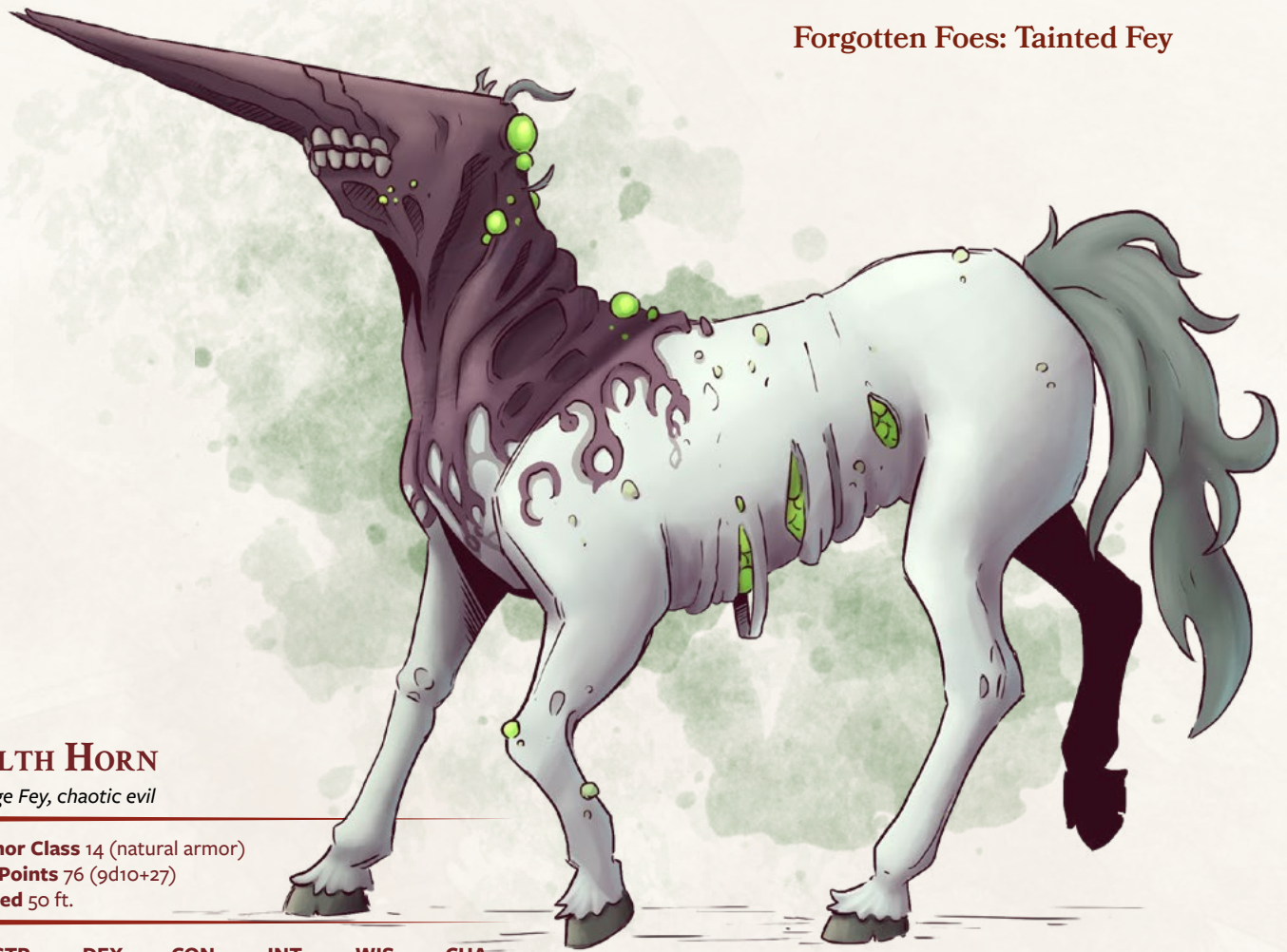
VILE VIRTUOSO

The fey manifesting artistic expressions, born of ideas of melodious harmony, are seen as vexing creatures by most trolls. Mirthful tunes, elegant melodies, and somber dirges all cause trolls maddening agony they seek to quench, or in the cases of the vile virtuosos, besmirched.

Vile virtuosos are musical fey who fell prey to the troll taint. They are transformed into twisted musicians that glorify ear-bleeding cacophony. Abandoning its once dear instruments, the fallen fey fashions new tools of disharmony best suited for their new taste. Grotesque instruments are created from unsavory material and integrated into the virtuosos being, making use of its new malleability. With these the tainted fey composes vile tunes, dissonant and insulting to the senses and soul alike.

Vile virtuosos perform their masterpieces with sadistic joy to unwilling audiences, while considering bleeding noses and violent spasms induced by their horrid music as their applause.

To trolls themselves, the corrupt tunes of the tainted fey are harmless and considered pleasant to their senses. Thus one can find gangs of trolls occasionally keep these tainted musicians within their company, either to herald their approach or as grotesque entertainment.



FILTH HORN

Large Fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (9d10+27)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	11 (0)	17 (+3)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +3

Condition Immunities charmed, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, giant, sylvan

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Magic Resistance. The filth horn has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Regeneration. The filth horn regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the filth horn takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of its next turn.

Tainted Horn. Any creature that touches the filth horn's horn or is hit by it must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or contract troll taint.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The filth horn makes two attacks: one with its hooves and one with its horn.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+5) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage.

Defiling Touch (Recharge 5-6). The filth horn makes one horn attack. On a hit, the attack deals an additional 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and the target contracts troll taint (DC 14). If the target is a fey or plant creature, it takes 48 additional necrotic damage.

Spellcasting. The filth horn casts one of the following spells, using its Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 14) requiring no material components:

1/day: *Contagion*

FILTH HORN

Trolls delight in the corruption of the pure and defilement of the beautiful. The unicorn, a creature of grace and purity, is as such a coveted target for the trolls. Furtive and only found in serene places, the domains of trolls and unicorns seldom cross. Therefore in the rare cases in which a gang of trolls manages to capture one of the fabled unicorns, is cause for great rejoice among their vile kind.

Within the troll's sadistic clutches, a unicorn experiences a degrading martyrdom that it will not leave unscathed. Exposed to their virulent taint, the unicorn transforms into a horrid fey, known as the filth horn. A twisted antithesis to the unicorn, a filth horn is a malign creature of incarnate corruption, that leaves a blighted path wherever it passes.

It's namesake horn, a bundled growth consuming its once fair head, is a focal point of profane magic. Where the wondrous horn once gave life, the filth horn's spike inflicts blight and disease. With its maddened delight, the filth horn generously makes use of its horn to quickly turn once lush sanctuaries into fetid quagmires and wastelands to proclaim as its residence.

The filth horn will protect its newly claimed realm and tolerate no invaders, not even creatures of similar taint as itself. It will drive them out with murderous rage, leaving their broken bodies as a warning to any future trespassers.

TROLL TREE

The splendid trees of the Far'way, slumbering or awake, are common collateral victims of the troll's spreading taint. Trees within the corrupted domains change into foul, gnarled reflections of their once magnificent forms. With fetid dripping sap oozing from their wart riddled barks they continue to add to the lands' corruption long after the troll's passing.

Some trees of exceptional beauty will catch a troll gang's attention and become a new target to sully. It is a long and drawn-out process due to the trees' great vigor and resilience, but inevitably the taint will take hold and ruin their splendor. With the taint comes a foul transformation into what is known as a troll tree.

Troll trees are no longer mere plants, nor are they fully troll. They are horrible carriers of the troll's blight, littered with warts and pus-filled boils that seep from any opening on their wretched forms. Maws manifest along the tree's sturdy trunk and drool tainted liquids, its roots split into sprawling appendages to carry its cumbersome body and foul fruits. While slow, a troll tree is capable of causing great havoc with its sheer strength alone and what is not left destroyed is ensured to be tainted by the dropping fruit that spreads its malaise. If these fruits are consumed by a beast or man they will be instantly afflicted with a terminal level of infection, starting from the inside. Death would be a kinder fate.



TROLL TREE

Huge Fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12+65)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)	3 (-5)	12 (+1)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +4

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses tremorsense 20 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands giant and sylvan but doesn't speak

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Hindering. The troll tree's space is considered difficult terrain for medium or small creatures.

Regeneration. The troll tree regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If the troll tree takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll tree's next turn.

Tainted Fruit. A creature that eats the troll tree's fruit must succeed a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or contract troll taint

and has its charisma reduced by 2 (1d4) until it is cured from the troll taint.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The troll tree makes three slam attacks against different targets.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10+5) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage and the target must succeed a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or contract troll taint.

REACTIONS

Falling Fruit. When a creature deals 20 or more bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage against the troll tree in a single turn, the troll tree drops a fruit on a creature within 5 ft. of itself. The creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 14 (4d6) poison damage and contracts troll taint. On a successful save a creature takes half as much damage and suffers no other effects.

FLAMES OF HATRED

It was written in the old folk songs of the frontier, beware the scorned, those folk filled with despair and grief. Help your neighbor, comfort the widow and do not leave a trail of grudges in your wake friend. For there are things in the darkness that will come knocking at the doors of those with nothing left to lose. And a poor lonely soul, left in despair and howling towards the heavens, robbed of all that it holds dear; Bereft of all it had in this cruel world, only has one thing to hold onto: hate. Burning bright, like a flame in the darkness, fire born from hate beckons a profane flame, a curse manifest that seeks kindling: the Flames of Hatred.

An eye for an eye makes the world blind, and a man will set himself aflame to burn those who have wronged him. This is the nature of the Flames of Hatred, an enigmatic entity that preys on the spite-filled. It serves all who are willing to become kindling for its profane flame, and will stop at nothing to fulfill its fuels last desire.

The Flames only appear to those who think of nothing but revenge in their most desperate hour. Or it shall heed the call of those with genuine malice in their heart, who seek to summon Flame not from desperation, but from pure potent spite. But the reasons matter not, like moths to the flame they are drawn in one by one, and once it appears, it offers the soul beckoning it its heart's desire: retaliation at any cost. In return the individual is consumed by the flame and becomes part of it.

Its nature is that of a curse brought on by an incarnate manifestation. Curses of misfortunes, unexplainable events, freak accidents. Depending on the kindling given, the manifestation of the flames of hatred can become devastating. The forms themselves are often horrifying, giving insight into the flame's history, if not its origin.

There is no method to this vengeance, the flame cares not who will be the recipient of its hate. Once it is born into the physical world it will seek only the demise of the chosen victims. Even if the kindling only wished to snuff out one life, the fires will consume all and any who stand in its path, for it knows neither allegiance nor loyalty. It only covets to be fed, as all flames do.

Forgotten Foes: Flames of Hatred PROFANE FIRE

The flames of hatred's fire are a manifestation of malice and scorn. They are not bound by the limitations of mere flame, burning material thought impervious to heat and fiercely resist attempts to extinguish it.

The profane fire seeks the target of the kindling's scorn, almost predatory in nature, making an escape from the flames an unlikely outcome. In the rare case of survival, the wounds inflicted by the accursed flame blister and deliver long term agonizing pain. The scars that remain form twisting patterns that never truly heal, as the flames corrupt all they touch.

Not even the soil remains spared. Fields reduced to ash by the flames of hatred become barren and ruined for generations. Buildings claimed by the fire leave behind cursed sites. Attempts to rebuild what has been lost are struck with ill fortune to make any effort of rebuilding a fool's errand. The remaining ashes are foul, causing plants to wither and the air to irritate skin and lungs.

Nothing can be salvaged from what these profane flames touch, they are fueled by pure hatred and meant for destruction.

PROFANE ASHES

Rare Wonderful Item (Consumable, Material Component)

The charred remains of those who offered themselves as kindling to the flames of hatred. Now these ashes are infused with the untamed wrath the victim felt in the moment of their fiery death. When you cast a spell that deals fire damage, you can use these ashes as additional material component to cause the following effect:

- Any fire damage dealt by the spell ignores resistance to fire and still deals half damage to a creature immune to fire damage.
- You can reroll any damage dice of the spell that shows a 1 or 2, but have to take the second result.
- The flames created by this spell are a profane flame whose roaring sound echos the tortured screams.



ASCHELINE

Ascheline the Gray Sage, or rather known as Ascheline the Gray, was a hedge mage of old. She knew no loyalty towards any lord, nor showed interest in their conflicts. The local hamlets and townships knew very little of her, believing the Gray Sage to be nothing more than a legend, a circumstance Ascheline was content with.

Things changed when the fringe folk found themselves abandoned by their lords, becoming targets for marauders and creatures of the wild. It was then that Ascheline ended her solitude and chose to protect these abandoned folk. She taught them arcane secrets and alchemical knowledge, enough to ensure the fringe folk's safety and independence. But the war in the region raged on, and Ascheline's presence was needed for more years than she had intended.

King Trovalia observed this development and grew discontent, sending chaplains and heralds with a mission, rally the peasants back into his admiration. At first the fringe folk were unmoved, but his missionaries had silver-tongues and were experienced wordsmiths and schemers. Slowly they planted seeds of distrust against Ascheline. The Sage herself was no woman of words, and it was her inaction against these accusations that allowed the seeds to bloom into betrayal.

The misled fringe folk were turned against their savior; now declared a horrendous witch by the missionaries and burnt at the stake. Betrayed by the people she vowed to protect, Ascheline's blazing soul beckoned the flames of hatred. In the moment of the flame's embrace, an inferno consumed the township and missionaries alike.

Ascheline The Scorned is a commonly sighted manifestation of the Flame of Hatred, if not its avatar. A face through which it approaches souls it deems to make fitting kindling. Where lesser manifestations fail, Ascheline will appear and see that fiery destruction will be delivered

ASCHELINE THE SCORNE

Medium Undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 187 (22d8+88)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)

Proficiency +4

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +4, Cha +8

Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Intimidation +8, Perception +5

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities exhausted, grappled, petrified, poisoned, restrained

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Sylvan

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Blazing Hatred. Ascheline is always surrounded by a roaring blaze. She sheds bright light in 60 ft. and dim light in an additional 60 ft., and whenever a creature starts its turn within 10 ft. of Ascheline it takes 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Magic Weapons. Ascheline's attacks are magical.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Ascheline fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ascheline makes 2 flame lash attacks or makes 3 hurl flame attacks.

Flame Lash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) fire damage.

Hurl Flame. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) fire damage and if the target is a flammable object or structure, it ignites.

Blazing Pyre (Recharges 5-6). A creature under the effect of Ascheline's Kindling Curse within 60 ft. of herself must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the creature takes 28 (8d6) fire damage and is restrained until Ascheline's concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). On a successful save a creature takes half as much fire damage and is not restrained.

As long as the creature is restrained it continues to be afflicted by Ascheline's Kindling Curse, takes 7 (2d6) fire damage at the end of its turns, and a creature that starts its turn within 10 ft. of the restrained creature or enters the area for the first time in a turn takes the same damage. The restrained creature can use an action to attempt a DC 16 Strength saving throw, freeing itself on a success. Another creature within 5 ft. of the restrained creature can use an action to free the creature with a successful DC 16 Strength check.

Forgotten Foes: Flames of Hatred

Spellcasting. Ascheline casts one of the following spells, using her Charisma as the spellcasting ability (Spell save DC 16) requiring no material components:

At Will: *Continual Flame*, *Produce Flame*

BONUS ACTIONS

Kindling Curse. A creature within 60 ft. of Ascheline must succeed a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or is afflicted with the Kindling Curse until the end of Ascheline's next turn (a creature can only be afflicted by one Kindling Curse at a time). A creature afflicted with the Kindling Curse loses its resistance to fire damage and the first time in a turn the cursed creature takes fire damage, the creature ignites, taking an additional 7 (2d6) fire damage and until a creature takes an action to douse the flame, the target takes 7 (2d6) fire damage at the end of each of its turns (a creature can be afflicted by only one instance of ignition at a time).

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ascheline can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Ascheline regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Kindling Spark. A creature within 30 ft. of Ascheline must succeed a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) fire damage.

Move. Ascheline moves up to half of her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Hurling Flame (2 Actions). Ascheline makes a Hurl Flame attack.

Rekindling (2 Actions). An ignited creature within 60 ft. of Ascheline must succeed a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or erupts into a roaring flame and takes 7 (2d6) fire damage and each creature within 10 ft. of the target creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save and half as much on a successful one.

Rebutting Flame (2 Actions). Ascheline makes a Flame Lash attack against a creature that dealt damage to her since the end of her last turn.

ASCHELINE TACTICS

Ascheline will attempt to stay at a distance and bombard her enemies with her flames, targeting creatures under the effect of her kindling curse over others. Once encountered in melee combat she will attempt to disengage using her legendary action move action after using her rebutting flame action. In the unlikely case that Ascheline did not successfully trigger her kindling curse, she will attempt to trigger it using her kindling spark legendary action. In case a creature under the triggered effect of her kindling curse is adjacent to allies, she will make use of her Rekindling legendary action to harm as many creatures as possible.

Ascheline will save her Blazing Pyre action until she identifies the greatest threat within combat. Once identified, she will try to restrain the creature and focus her fire on it, until it is unconscious, after which she will leave the creature to succumb to the pyre's persistent damage.

Since Ascheline is a manifestation of the Flames of Hatred and akin to an avatar, she does not fear death nor does she have a sense of self preservation. She will always fight to the death and go to any length to see to her enemies' demise.



Forgotten Foes: Flames of Hatred *PROFANE CAULDRON*

Having previously met members of the apostate alchemists of the south, Ascheline was knowledgeable in all forms of alchemy. When she became one with the flame of hatred, Ascheline's knowledge became a manifestation of the flame, a profane cauldron.

The profane cauldron that carries the flame of hatred's profaned fire; a cruel grimace is depicted along its soot colored iron body, laughing and eager for destruction to be dispensed. Some say you will hear the thing coming before laying eyes on its ghastly form. It seeks wanton destruction of wide areas, spewing its malice in the form of flame or molten lava bubbling and overflowing from its infernal maw. It will often first cut off any form of escape by leaving a trail of lava around the perimeter of the chosen environment. Anything it burns is left corrupted and accursed.

Born from the grudge of its creator, the Cauldron continuously emanates a flammable dark smoke, torturous and irritating to the eyes and lungs that can leave its victims blinded and scared. Anything enveloped by the smoke will become more vulnerable to the profane fire as soot and cinders cling to bare skin. Prolonged exposure to the skin will leave painful dry cracks along the body and complete dehydration. Those lucky enough to clean the cursed grime from their bodies before the fire could take them are said to be in a constant state of thirst.

As the manifestation continues its rampage, giant black smoke clouds will cover the sky in darkness until the entire area is consumed by choking smoke. Even if the environment survives the blaze, the toxic fumes from the Cauldrons maw will poison all natural resources with its spiteful curse. Even years later, it is said water will blacken and food will instantly spoil on the scorched land.

PROFANE CAULDRON

Medium Construct

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 51 (6d8+24)

Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	9 (-1)	19 (+4)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Resistances fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Common but doesn't speak

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Magical Resistance. The profane cauldron has advantage on saving throws against magic.

Magical Weapons. The profane cauldron's attacks are magical.

Profane Smoke. Another creature that starts its turn within 10 ft. of the profane cauldron loses its resistance to fire damage until the beginning of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8+3) bludgeoning damage.

Fiery Brew. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d10) fire damage.

Fiery Barrage. The profane cauldron makes one fiery brew attack against each creature in a 5 ft. radius centered on a point within 60 ft. of the profane cauldron.

Screaming Smoke. The profane cauldron releases screaming smoke in a 20 ft. radius centered on a point within 20 ft. of itself. The smoke heavily obscures the area for every creature that is not a profane cauldron or Ascheline and remains until the end of the profane cauldron's next turn. Each creature that starts its turn within the smoke loses its resistance to fire damage until the beginning of its next turn.

Forgotten Foes: Flames of Hatred

FLAMING FAMILIAR

As it is common for magic users to possess familiars, Ascheline was no exception. Having learned the ritual by conversing with fey, she mastered the art and became capable of conjuring several familiars at once. They became her eyes and ears within the many communities she provided for.

For the fringe folk, the sight of an ashen colored cat used to be a soothing thing - a sign of Ascheline's protection. Now, they are extensions of the flames of hatred. Burned down to all but their bones, these manifestations appear in unseen places through a sudden flickering flame. Despite their burning appearance; they are stealthy and nimble beings, and worse yet, even better fire starters.

Each of these beings leaves behind a flaming trail of paw prints, capable of growing into a roaring flame. With quick steps this creature can roam undetected throughout a location, and cause a blazing inferno within minutes. Entire towns can be burnt to ashes by this feline before it is detected. Then true challenge is to dispatch this tiny and nimble being before the flames can truly take hold. Often by the time this creature is contained or dispatched, one will find an already unstoppable fiery catastrophe has unfolded.



FLAMING FAMILIAR

Tiny Monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 7 (3d4)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	17 (+3)	11 (0)	4 (-4)	7 (-2)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Acrobatics

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Throe. When the flaming familiar is reduced to 0 hit points, it explodes into a smoldering 10-foot-radius smoke cloud. The cloud heavily obscures the area and a creature that ends its turn in it takes 5 (2d4) fire damage. The cloud remains until the end of the next round.

Igniting Body. The flaming familiar's body sheds bright light in a 10 ft. radius and dim light in an additional 10 feet. When the flaming familiar ends its turn on a flammable object, or flammable surface or liquid, it can choose to ignite it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The familiar makes two attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) slashing damage plus 2 (1d4) fire damage.

THE DANCING HUT

Ascheline's domicile was a secluded hut within the depths of the fringeland's murkwoods, kept safe and secure with wards of her own creation. As Ascheline donned the responsibility for the surrounding fringe folk settlements, she found herself traveling from place to place a lot. Not wanting to deal with all these vexing trips, and to have all her supplies on hand wherever she went, Ascheline made use of an arcane ritual to create living beings from non-living things. Using her very own hut, she created a simple homunculus of tremendous proportions. Now her home could conveniently walk wherever she was needed.

To create her walking hut, Ascheline used her blood to imbue it with life. This link extended when she became kindling of the flame of hatred. The Hut is more creature than object now, covered in an eternal flame as it moves at the will of its creator, its movements like following a rhythm or beat. Some say it is dancing to the beat of Ascheline's broken heart, a vessel for her rage that celebrates the wanton cathartic destruction of everything around it.

Wherever the hut appears, it will dance through towns, destroying buildings and setting everything ablaze, leaving the ruins still smoldering from its presence.

THE DANCING HUT

Gargantuan Construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 116 (8d20+32)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +1, Performance (only dancing) +6

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantine weapons

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but doesn't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Flaming Path. Creatures that end their turn within 5 ft. of the dancing hut take 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Magical Resistance. The dancing hut has advantage on saving throws against magic.

Magical Weapons. The dancing hut's attacks are magical.

Siege Monster. The dancing hut's deals double damage against objects and structures.

Stilt Legs. When the dancing hut falls prone, it takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and it costs it all of its speed to stand up.

ACTIONS

Multiattacks. The dancing hut makes 2 stomp attacks against targets in its space.

Stomp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6+6) bludgeoning damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8+6) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Flaming Dance (Recharge 5-6). The dancing hut breaks out into a devastating flaming dance. Each creature and object within 10 ft. of the dancing hut must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save a target takes 18 (4d8) bludgeoning and 18 (4d8) fire damage and half as much on a successful one. Every flammable object that is not held or flammable structure in the same area ignites in a roaring blaze. Before or after beginning its dance, the dancing hut can move up to half of its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.



REALM OF BEASTS

The kingdom of Malegore sired their horrid Therion into life, sealing themselves away from the world they had set them upon in hopes of outlasting the consequences. With the nightmarish sentinels free to rampage, no soul dared enter the realm. Malegore's mighty black gates remained closed, even as the words reclaimed them, and the kingdom's name was lost to the annals of history. But the fight for domination would continue, and though forgotten, some whispered in corners of the world that Malegore continued to survive in secret, a hidden utopia away from the hell of war, a kingdom of hidden treasures. No-one knew of the true terror behind the black gates.

In truth, as Malegore's enemies drew closer, the transmuters grew desperate, crossing more lines, breaking more taboos. But nothing would create the expected result, only wretched beings of dull mind, nothing more of lumps of animated flesh that expired soon after birth. True Sapience was needed, and in their fear and arrogance, it dawned upon the transmuters that there was one dangerous beast at their disposal with such minds.

Humans.

After the Therion, crafted with the gift of humanity; were released, Queen Ecydnia ordered the gates to be sealed to protect her people from the coming storm. Though she looked upon her creations with awe, she understood the terror she was about to unleash. Bold and proud were the royal transmuters, pioneers in their craft, yet for all their rituals and alchemy, if there had been one among their ranks who had understood biology, they might have stopped the contamination that was soon to follow.

The creation of the Therion had left an amalgamation of waste and flesh. 'Leftovers' left to be disposed of by lesser men who would soon fall ill, before their bodies began to twist and change. Soon the realm was in chaos as a horrific plague mutated all who came into contact with it into horrid monstrosities, beasts similar to the Therion, yet still awfully human. It seemed humanity had been far more moldable an ingredient than anyone had suspected.

Malegore was consumed by the beast blight, every last man, woman and child, until it reached the Queen. With the powers of a monarch she held back the mutation in her body long enough to keep the gates of Malegor sealed. And so, be it desperation or hubris, Malegor was turned into a realm of beasts.



BESTIAL SERF

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	6 (-3)	11 (0)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Skills Deception +2, Stealth +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Ambusher. The serf has advantage on attack rolls against surprised creatures.

Keen Senses. The serf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Unassuming Form. As long as the bestial serf has not attacked with its claws within the past minute, it looks like a common human being.

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Surprise Attack. When the serf fails a Deception check to hide its true bestial nature, it moves up to half of its speed and attacks with its claws.

BESTIAL SERF

An unassuming creature, one might think it a rare soul spared from the mutating sickness that claimed Malegor. But to take serfs for common humans is a fatal mistake. Meek and shy, they do their best to stay out of sight of other bestial inhabitants in fear of becoming prey. However, upon slight aggravation, they manifest large malformed limbs and other sudden bestial deformities to attack. Some particularly cunning serfs might take advantage of their unassuming appearance to lure people into ambushes of their kin, after all fresh meat is so hard to come by for those lowest on the food chain. They will do what they must to survive, and are just as willing to submit and cower for mercy against overwhelming strength, as they are to tear your throat out to escape.

Most bestial serfs live pitiful existences within the ruins of malegor, a kingdom now reduced to an animalistic society of domination and survival. They tend to be found in groups of at least three, hidden away in dens in the more dilapidated parts of the kingdom. But some manage to gain the favor of greater beasts, serving within their bestial court in exchange for protection.

BEAST-AT-ARMS

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 15 (armor scraps)

Hit Points 45 (7d8+14)

Speed 30 ft., climbing 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	4 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Bestial Jump. The beast-at-arms' jumping distance is doubled (30 ft. vertically, 10 ft. horizontally).

Keen Senses. The beast-at-arms has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Leaping Assault. If the beast-at-arms jumps at least 20 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a sword attack on the same turn, it deals an additional 7 (2d6) damage and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The beast-at-arms makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its sword.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d8+2) slashing damage.

BEAST-AT-ARMS

With Malegor finding itself always at the brink of conquest, the population were enlisted into armed service. Men, women and children of the kingdom were trained for combat, giving form to many martial traditions throughout the realm. Even as the bestial scourge took hold and ravaged the minds of the kingdom, the fighting instincts drilled into the people of malegor remained. Now passed down from young to old beast...the tradition lives on.

Though blighted with powerful claws and fangs, the beasts found in Malegor can be encountered wielding the weapons of old. Broken, rusted, barely holding together, these beasts fight with surprising grace and precision that could match any trained man.

The Beast-at-Arms are territorial, Malegor's ancient fear of invaders and the duty to protect their homes forming into a ravenous will to claim their territory. They navigate and climb the walls and towers of the kingdom, using their freakish proportions to leap from one vantage point to another, anyone venturing through the ruins of Malegor will surely encounter packs of their bestial militia. Unlike the lowly serfs, they will attack strangers on sight, often using high positions to leap down onto their prey. Perfect predators of this ruined landscape.



BESTIAL NOBLE

For all their wealth and glamour, Malegor's nobility were not spared from the bestial scourge, turning the once fair and tall grown nobles into twisted, lanky monstrosities. These beasts would remain within the opulent estates of their kingdom, now reduced to labyrinthine dens full of wealth that would never be used. Hoarded by monsters still adorned in the garbs and jewelry of their ancestors.

But even with the minds and souls of beasts, the Noble's hold onto their commanding nature. Through the power of reverence, the lesser beasts of malegor all heed the screams of their malformed aristocrats. The scream to be fed.

It is not uncommon to see lesser beasts in droves delivering fresh kills into the dens as tribute, where the heaps of flesh are greedily devoured by the Nobles in grotesque banquets. One would take care when entering these abominable banquet halls. Compared to the lesser beasts, the Nobles' bodies show more lean flexible anatomy, and they will make use of their long-reaching jaws to quickly snatch up any prey foolish enough to draw near while they feast. They have been known to swallow creatures whole, even their own servants.

It is best to wait until these beasts are full and lethargic, as they will then retreat deep into the grand dens to rest. Though be warned, awakening a noble from its rest will lead to it demonstrating why, despite its strange appearance, it has elevated status over the lesser beasts.



BESTIAL NOBLE

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8+30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	11 (0)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Senses. The bestial noble has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Supple Flesh. The bestial noble has advantage on checks to escape grapples and restrains.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10+4) piercing damage and the target is pulled 5 ft. towards the noble and is grappled, escape DC 14. Until the grapple ends, the noble can't use its bite against another target.

Dine. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one Medium or smaller creature grappled by the noble. *Hit:* The creature is swallowed. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the noble, and takes 7 (2d6) acid damage at the start of the noble's turns.

The noble can have only one creature in its belly at a time and as long as the noble has a Small or larger creature in its belly, its movement speed is halved. Whenever the noble takes damage when it has a creature swallowed, it must succeed a Constitution saving throw or regurgitate the creature, which falls prone in a space within 5 ft. of the noble. The Constitution saving throw is equal 10 or half of the damage taken, whichever is higher. If the noble dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained and can escape from the corpse using 5 ft. of movement, exiting prone.

REACTIONS

Clench. When a creature grappled by the bestial noble fails an attempt to escape the grapple, the bestial noble deals 7 (2d6) piercing damage to the grappled creature.



KNIGHT BEAST

Medium Monstrosity

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d8+44)

Speed 40 ft., climbing 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	4 (-4)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +5

Languages Understands Common, Celestial, doesn't speak

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Bestial Might. The knight beast is treated as if it is one size larger when grappling and it deals an additional dice of its damage with melee weapon attacks (included in the attacks).

Keen Senses. The knight beast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Rallying Presence. Any monstrosity within 30 ft. that can see the knight beast has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight beast makes three attacks: two with its halberd and one with its claw, or three attacks with its claw.

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10+5) slashing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage and if the target is a medium or smaller creature, it is pushed up to 5 ft. away from the knight beast.

REACTIONS

Bestial Rage (1/day). When the knight beast takes damage while it is below half of its maximum hit points, the knight beast moves up to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see and makes two attacks with its claw with advantage.

KNIGHT BEAST

Let it be known that the knights of Malegor never abandoned their kingdom, even as they succumbed to the scourge. As such, knight beasts are creatures of dual nature. A twisted amalgam of armor and fur still governed by knightly virtues, yet possessing the unmistakable instincts of beasts.

Unlike Malegor's bestial soldiers and nobles, these creatures will protect all denizens of the realm, be them lesser or greater. They are never seen hunting other beasts, honor bound to ward off invaders as the queen's watchful sentinels, found at key positions of Malegor. On occasion they hesitate attacking invaders who appear meak and simply lost in the labyrinthine ruins. Preferring to take them to their Queen for judgment.

While they seldom roar or growl as beasts, holding the composure of knights, they wield their weapons with swift beastly savagery. When pushed to the brink of death, a knight has been known to revert to an animalistic fighting stance, using teeth and claws to rip their enemies to pieces. However, do not mistake these foes for animals playing pretend. Despite their beastly nature, the knight beasts are still imbued with their monarch's reverence. Other beasts of Malegor acknowledge them as their protectors, a symbol to rally around and set aside lesser squabbles to unite under the cause of Malegor.

Though they are just as dull in mind as any beast, the Knights understand their beloved Queen's will, and will carry it out without hesitation. Gaining favor with the Queen will in turn gain favor with her Knights.

QUEEN ECYDNIA

The savior and the jailor of this doomed kingdom. The Queen of Malegor fortified the black gates as a final solution, sealing the sickness within her fallen home in hopes of sparing the rest of the world. Ecydnia as Monarch, should have been spared from the scourge. Alas, as her subjects were turned into beasts, the love and worship that granted the Queen her otherworldly power became twisted in nature. And, like Malegor itself slowly succumbing to the beast scourge, so too did the Queen's body. Not through infection of the body, but an infection of title. For a Monarch does not make the Kingdom, the kingdom makes the Monarch. In the wake of her new bestial subjects, Ecydnia took on a monstrous form befitting a Queen of Beasts.

Though changed, the Queen retains her mind, bearing responsibility for what happened, even as the decades pass one by one. The love she holds for her people burns on, fueling her desire to undo

the bestial scourge for both their sake and the rest of the world's. Even if she can not save the generations that have already lived and died as beasts.

But her subject's worship has taken its toll, siring another side of Ecydnia's desires. Something more vengeful, that sees her kingdom as not defiled but strengthened. Malegor now has the power to cut down any foe, why should they willingly imprison themselves to protect those who had once threatened them? Such spiteful thoughts and the growing despair of failing her kingdom has made Ecydnia's mood unpredictable. Though in her golden days as Monarch she would welcome an olive branch of peace with relief, now her more bestial side may see it as a foolish show of weakness.

Ecydnia still refuses to open the gates, but her reasons for doing so have been growing weaker and weaker, day by day, and the Queen knows her time is short.



ECYDNIA, QUEEN OF BEASTS

Huge Monstrosity

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 262 (21d12+126)

Speed 40 ft., climbing 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	19 (+4)	22 (+6)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)

Proficiency +6

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wis +10, Cha +11

Skills Intimidation+11, Perception +10, Persuasion +11, Survival +10

Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages Common, Celestial, Draconic, Infernal, Sylvan

Challenge 18 (20,000 XP)

Blade of Malegor. Ecydnia wields the Blade of Malegor, a magical Great Sword.

Keen Senses. Ecydnia has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Ecydnia fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Regeneration. When Ecydnia begins her turn with more than 0 hit points, she heals 10 hit points.

Sovereign of Beasts. Ecydnia can communicate with any beast or monstrosity as if they share a language.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ecydnia makes three attacks: two with her Blade of Malegor and one with her claws.

Blade of Malegor. Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (6d6+7) slashing damage.

LAIR: THE SEAT OF THE BEAST

With little resources the people of Malegor had to spare in the construction of their monarch's seat of power, they were unable to decorate it with precious metals or fabrics. Nonetheless, the queen's subjects made use of the readily available material found in the wilderness surrounding Malegor and what they were lacking in lavishness, the people compensated with passion for their queen.

Richly detailed woodcarvings, imposing tapestries, and utilisation of bestial bones mark this throne room as Ecydnia's seat of power. It's primal appearance seems now all too fitting for the changed Queen of Beasts, which is sated with her bestial reverence. Here the Queen of Beasts reflects on her mistakes and fights her daily battle with her growing bestial impulses.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting Ecydnia, Queen of Beasts in her throne room, Ecydnia can take lair actions. Once Ecydnia uses a lair action, she must use another lair action before she can use it again. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Ecydnia takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

Bestial Impulse. A creature other than Ecydnia must succeed a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save the creature must use its reaction to make a melee weapon attack against another creature in its range.

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Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6+7) slashing damage.

Beast Claw Barrage. Ecydnia sends forth a barrage of reverence imbued slashes in a 30 ft. long 5 ft. wide. Each creature in the area must succeed a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw. On a fail a creature takes 21 (6d6) magical slashing damage.

Beast Queen's Roar (Recharge 5-6). Ecydnia releases a piercing roar that is audible within 2 miles. Each creature within 20 ft. of Ecydnia that can hear her must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 27 (6d8) thunder damage and is stunned until the end of Ecydnia's next turn. On a successful saving throw a creature takes half as much damage and is not stunned. Additionally, each monstrosity that hears this roar can use a reaction to move up to its speed towards Ecydnia.

REACTIONS

Bestial Rage (1/day). When Ecydnia is reduced to below half of her maximum hit points, she recharges her use of **Beast Queen's Roar** and uses it.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ecydnia can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Ecydnia regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Move. Ecydnia moves up to half of her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Pounce (2 Actions). Ecydnia moves or jumps up to her speed towards a hostile creature and attacks it with her claws. If Ecydnia is below half her maximum hit points she makes two attacks instead.

Crippling Strike (3 Actions). Ecydnia attacks with her Blade of Malegor against a creature. On a hit the creature must succeed a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or has disadvantage on attack rolls and its movement speed is halved until the end of Ecydnia's next turn. A creature that fails the save by 10 or more is stunned until the end of Ecydnia's next turn instead.

Monarch's Composure. Ecydnia quells her own bestial impulses. Until she uses another legendary action she has advantage on attacks on attack rolls using the Blade of Malegor and can't attack with her claws.

Summon Serfs. Ecydnia summons 1d4+1 Bestial Serfs (they arrive at the entrance of the area). They roll for initiative and use a reaction to move up to their speed.

Queen's Guard (1/hour). Ecydnia's wounded scream summons a Knight Beast (it arrives at the entrance of the area). The knight rolls for initiative and uses a reaction to move up to its speed. Ecydnia can only use this Lair Action if she is below half her maximum hit points and once she uses this Lair Action she can't use it again until 1 hour passes.

EFFECTS

Her bestial subject's reverence is channeled within Ecydnia's throne and herself. Humanoids feel the pull to their lesser impulses while beasts become invigorated. The following effects may manifest when approaching her throne:

- Humanoids that spend a short or long rest while within half a mile of the Seat of Beasts are troubled with violent intrusive thoughts and might show a lower threshold for violent acts.
- Beasts and Monstrosities that finish a short rest within half a mile of the Seat of Beasts regain all of their missing hit points.

SPirit CULTS

In the warring age of The Crown Wars, kingdoms were culled from history in the wake of powerful and bloody monarchs seeking to claim the continent for their own. Even in such dark times, the nation of Kastivan was spoken of in hushed fearful whispers. For the coming of the Kastivan Legion meant more than the horrors of war. Like a black incandescent omen rising over the horizon they would descend, free of mortal flesh and bone. Those fortunate enough to survive would claim hell itself had emptied. Fall not to the Ghost Legions of Kastivan they would cry, lest your soul join its undead ranks. A saying that held no truth, after all, the Ascension from the flesh was not as simple as dying.

Kastivan was not the first to dabble in necromancy to fill their ranks, but they were the first to refine it. Unlike the skeletal rotting armies of Memnor, birthed from the dirt and quick to fall apart against the blade. Kastivan's use of the undead had originally been more purposeful in design.

The scholars developed a necromantic ritual to free the soul, giving their Kingdom's most renowned individuals the power to shed their mortal shell and ascend before true death, forever guiding Kastivan to glory as ageless spirits. Squabbles over succession and power became childish memories in the wake of true immortality. All those worthy would ascend into the Kastivan Council, governed by Queen Kastivan herself, first of the ascended.

Alas, though they were immortal, their kingdom was not. Despite its endless spectral legions, at the brink of victory Kastivan would fall like any other kingdom, with the defeat of their Queen. A monolithic Spire now marks the grave of mighty Kastivan, named the Black Thorn by those who remember its use in the Queen's vanquishment.

HEIRS OF KASTIVAN

Kastivan was conquered at last, the spectral court decimated, brought low by its own hubris. Those who were not destroyed spread across the lands and remained in hiding, dreaming of their nation's old glory as the decades turned to centuries. But these courtiers would not dream alone.

As Kastivan passed into legend there were those who sought out these ancient immortal spirits, necromancers seeking power and knowledge in exchange for servitude. And thus, the first of the spirit cults were formed.

With the destruction of Kastivan, much of its knowledge of necromancy was lost. The remaining specters, nobles and politicians, only holding a partial understanding of what their ancient scholars managed to accomplish. But the Cult was not perturbed. They scoured the lands, acquiring any and all tomes and scrolls that bore the Kastivan seal. Through fragmented and incomplete knowledge of the ritual, and the guidance of the immortal specters, the Spirit Cult mastered an imperfect form of the Rite of Ascension.

Their teachings frame the body of flesh and mortality as a prison for the soul that must be freed. Like a butterfly hatching out of a cocoon, so will the human soul escape its body to rise to a greater form. And at each group's center sits a kastivan noble. To the cult, the spirits of Kastivan are holy advisors and keepers of immense power. The nobles are unified in their desire for the return of Kastivan's glory. Though they might not always agree on what the return of Kastivan will look like.

Despite the ritual of ascension now being far from its former brilliance, every attempt is treated as a holy rite. Failures of these rituals create gibbering haunts, barely sentient ghastly apparitions. An easily dismissed sign of unworthiness for the soul that failed to ascend.

SPIRIT DISCIPLE

The ancient ritual allowed a soul to be freed from its flesh in an instant, but the Spirit Cult's understanding of Kastivan Necromancy was crude, limited and incomplete, and thus was the recreated Rite of Ascension.

The followers who take part in this ritual, deemed worthy by the Kastivan Specters they worship; are called Spirit Disciples. Individuals who have begun the preparations for their ascension from the flesh.

The Disciples undergo special training to prepare their Ascension, limiting the risks of the body falling apart or simply dying before the ritual's completion. They walk the edge between life and death, weakening the connection between body and soul by regularly drinking poison tonics that slowly destroys yet conserves the flesh. It is both a spiritual and physical endeavor, requiring a strong will and a zealous mind, until the separation of soul and body has become significant enough that they can control each individually.

Disciples farther along in their training can slip parts of their soul free of its flesh, granting them a second set of spectral arms, or partially stretching their soul out from their body. These members are usually high ranking in the cult, found in key locations, close to their undead masters and using their newfound powers to protect and serve them.



SPIRIT DISCIPLE

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft., as soul: 30 ft., fly (hover) 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3, Religion +2

Damage Resistances poison (as soul: acid, cold, fire, lightning)

Damage Immunities (as soul: poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks)

Condition Immunities (as soul: grappled, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained)

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Deathbloom Poison. The disciple's ceremonial dagger is coated with deathbloom poison. A creature that takes poison damage from the disciple's dagger can't regain hit points until the end of the disciples' next turn.

Slippery Soul. The disciple's soul provokes no opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The disciple makes two weapon attacks; only one of it can be made with its spectral dagger. If the disciple's soul is split from the body, it makes two spectral dagger attacks.

Ceremonial Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 +3) slashing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage.

Spectral Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Soul Split. The disciple expells its soul from its body which emerges in an unoccupied space within 30 ft. of its body and makes one attack with its spectral dagger as part of the same action. The disciples' soul is an extension of itself, so both body and soul are the same creature and if a game effect that effects one part effects the other unless it is immune to it (for example if one creature grapples the Spirit Disciple's body, its soul is not affected). The soul has its own unique resistances and immunities. The disciples's soul can move not further away than 60 ft. of its body and move through creatures and objects as if they are difficult terrain and takes 10 force damage if it ends its turn in an object. While the disciples' soul left its body, the body can't act or move and attack rolls targeting it have advantage. As an action the disciple's soul can return to its body and the disciple can attack with its ceremonial dagger as part of the same action.

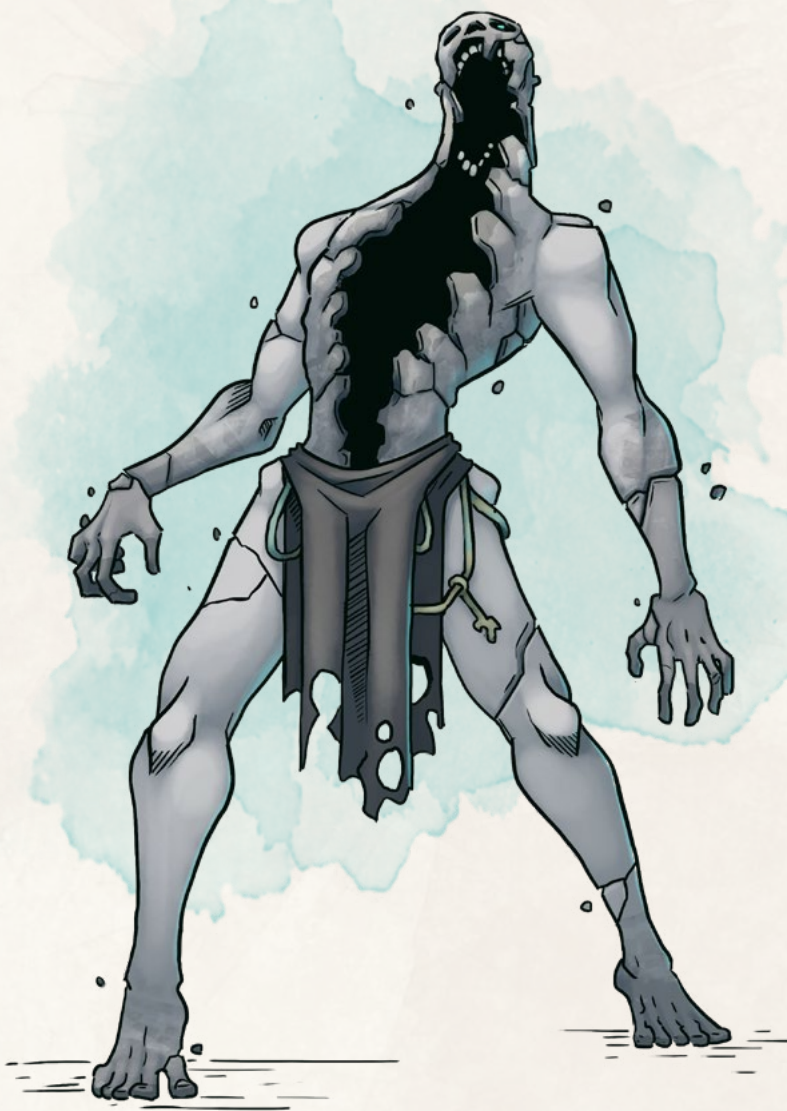
HOLLOW

It is unsurprising that great necrotic energies are used in the Ascension ritual to peel a soul from its fleshly prison. In the time of Kastivan such a process was refined and controlled to reduce unwanted animation of corpses. The cult has no such reservations.

Regardless of success, the flesh is not discarded upon the freeing of the soul, instead the flesh is animated by the residual magic. This undead body is called a Hollow.

Hollows are truly empty shells, meat automatons drenched in necrotic energy. Easy to command and void of soul. However, though powerful these creatures possess an instinct to fill their own emptiness, conjuring a vortex-like pull to consume life from its surroundings.

The Hollows are commonly deployed by the Cults as useful minions, or a first line of defense against those who dare to intrude on their sanctuaries. Not all Hollows are equal though, bodies left behind by powerful individuals will retain that strength. Some souls, if strong enough, will leave a negative imprint, giving its Hollow a semblance of cognition, unlike its lesser ilk. But the greater the Hollow the deeper the emptiness it must fill. Its very presence makes creatures feel as if their souls are being pulled into its gaping void.



HOLLOW

Medium Undead

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	2 (-5)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +2

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 10

Languages Understands all languages it spoke in life but doesn't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Vacuous. When a creature within 5 ft. of one or more Hollows regains hit points, it regains half as much instead.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 +3) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

VENERABLE HOLLOW

Medium Undead

Armor Class 17 (splint armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d8 + 52)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (0)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +4

Saving Throws Int +0, Cha +2

Damage Resistances necrotic

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 12

Languages Understands all languages it spoke in life but doesn't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Turn Resistance. The hollow has advantage on saving throws against effects that turn Undead.

Vacuous Hollow. If another creature within 5 ft. of the venerable hollow regains hit points, it regains none and instead the venerable hollow gains temporary hit points equal to the hit points regained.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The venerable hollow makes two weapon attacks. Only one of which can be a slam attack.

Battle Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 +5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10+5) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 +5) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

Soul Vortex (Recharge 5-6). The hollow syphons the souls of any living creature within 20 ft. of itself. Every living creature in the area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (8d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. The venerable hollow regains hit points equal to half the total necrotic damage dealt.

SPIRIT BINDER

With Kastivan's knowledge of necromancy came the discipline of soul manipulation. As such, they knew how to trap and bind souls.

Having one's soul ripped from their body to become a ghostly minion of Kastivan was a fate that awaited criminals and captured enemies alike. It was reserved for those whose punishment was deemed too great to serve in their mortal life. In some extreme cases this punishment was eternal. Thankfully, the Spirit Cult has not yet rediscovered this method of undead enslavement. But their Kastivan leaders have given them the means to call upon those already imprisoned.

A person who finds access to these spirit slaves can summon countless servants bound to obey their every command. In the Cult these are called Spirit Binders, magic users that specialize in calling upon the indebted souls, wielding them as mighty weapons doomed to fight for a long fallen kingdom.

Each padlock on a Spirit Binder's tattered robes represents one bound spirit, eagerly awaiting to serve, as each act of obedience will bring the soul closer to the release of lasting death. To master the art of spirit binding one must prove themselves a capable necromancer in their own right. As such, one would be wise to not underestimate these mages.



SPIRIT BINDER

Medium humanoid

Armor Class 14 (Mage Armor, 11 without)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (0)

Proficiency +3

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Enlist. When an allied living creature within 30 ft. of the Spirit Binder dies or a creature under the effect of its **Bind Soul** action dies, the spirit binder can use a reaction to bind the creature's spirit and refresh its use of Conjure Bound Spirit.

Spirit Veil. When the spirit binder begins its turn with more than 0 hit points, it gains 10 temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Ghostly Touch. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and the creature has disadvantage on its next attack roll it makes before the end of the spirit binder's next turn.

Bind Soul (Recharge 5-6). A creature within 30 ft. of the spirit binder must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save a creature is paralyzed for one minute or until the spirit binder's

concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). At the end of the paralyzed creature's turn it repeats the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. The spirit binder can use an action to deal 9 (2d8) necrotic damage to the paralyzed creature automatically. The creature is also no longer paralyzed if the spirit binder uses its action to do anything else.

On a successful save the creature takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage and is not paralyzed.

Spellcasting. The spirit binder casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (Spell attack + 6, Spell save DC 14):

At will: dancing lights, message, mold earth, thaumaturgy

1/day each: animate dead, blindness/deafness, mage armor, silence

BONUS ACTIONS

Conjure Bound Spirit (1/short rest). The spirit binder can use a bonus action on its turn to summon one bound spirit in an empty space within 30 ft. of itself. The spirit is an immaterial and can move through objects and creatures. The spirit remains for one minute or until the binder is slain. When conjured the bound spirit can make an attack against a creature in reach with the following attack:

Bound Spirit. *Melee Weapon Attack* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 2d6 necrotic damage.

On each of its turns, the spirit binder can use another bonus action to have one or more spirits it has conjured move up to its speed and make another bound spirit attack.

ASCENDED NOBLE

When Kastivan fell, all that remained were the scattered fragments of their once proud leadership. These phantoms were members of the Kastivan Court. Counts, generals, concierges, given eternal spectral unlfe through Kastivan's Rite of Ascension. With centuries of experience to fall back on, they lead their cabals with a single goal, Kastivan's return. Though, rumors tell of some growing disillusioned with time, and have plans of their own.

Powerful in life their strength only grew in undeath. The Council were creatures of nobility, possessing a perverted power of reverence that could suppress common deterrents against the living dead and rallying them into a frenzy.

But the true existential terror was not their leadership, but their eternal hunger for more power. A side effect of the perfected Ritual of Ascension allowed the ascended to sever the thin thread binding body and soul, allowing a specter to pluck the soul from the flesh, and devour it whole. It is not uncommon for a noble to feast upon those that fail the ascension, an unworthy soul being put to better use. And some forbid further attempts at perfecting the Rite of Ascension, in fear of worst results, or maybe their own gluttonous satisfaction. Or perhaps, they never intended for it to work any other way?

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ascended noble makes two attacks.

Spectral Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (6d8) necrotic damage.

Phantom Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) necrotic damage and the creature can't regain hit points until the end of the ascended noble's next turn.

Reap Soul (Recharge 5-6). The ascended noble makes a spectral strike against a living creature. On a hit the attack deals an additional 30 necrotic damage and the creature has disadvantage on attack and saving throws until the end the noble's next turn. If this attack reduces the creature to 0 hit points the creature dies and the noble reaps its soul. The creature cannot be resurrected by any means other than a wish as long as the noble is not destroyed, or releases the soul as an action. A released soul does not ascend to the upper planes if it can find it's body within 24 hours of its release. A soul that finds its body can enter it and the creature returns to live with 0 hit points.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ascended Noble can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Ascended Noble regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Reappear. The ascended noble becomes invisible and moves up to half of its speed. At the end of the movement it becomes visible.

Phantom Bolt. The ascended noble makes a Phantom Bolt attack.

Rally the Dead (2 Actions). Up to 3 undead creatures within 20 ft. of the ascended noble gain 10 temporary hit points and are immune to being charmed, frightened, or effects that turn Undead until the end of their next turn.



ASCENDED NOBLE

Medium Undead

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 121 (22d8 + 22)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	21 (+5)

Proficiency +5

Saving Throws Dex +9, Wis +9, Cha +10

Skills History +7, Intimidation +10, Perception +9, Persuasion +10

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhausted, grappled, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Celestial, Infernal

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The noble can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If the noble fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Turn Defiance. The noble and any allied undead within 60 ft. of it have advantage on saving throws against effects that turn Undead.

MURKWOOD HORRORS

The verdant seas of trees covering the world have been respected since ancient times, prized, yet feared by humanity. Many creatures have called these untamed forests home. Hunters have braved their depths for resources, trailblazers have cut roads through serpentine valleys in the name of progress. But there are some forests deemed too wild, too evil to be explored. Dark places whispered in warning to children by their elders, hosts of corruption where dangerous monsters lurk. The murkwoods.

Murkwoods is not the name of one place, but a title given to any forest that has become an arboreal nightmare realm. Evil is present in every aspect, trees grow twisted and malformed, the canopies become dense and oppressively banish any light from the forest floors. The animals, once shy and skittish, turn aggressive and vile in temper. And at the zenith of its transformation, the forest spawns abominable mutants that will roam its wilderness.

Murkwoods manifest when a forest is touched by corruption. Many catalysts for a location's transformation into a Murkwood have been recorded. Be it a wicked curse, sites of profane rituals and blasphemy, or the intrusion of a great monster; each murkwood is a direct reflection of its corruption.

In hopes of quelling any risk of corruption, lords and locals alike are zealous in keeping their wilderness free from the foul presence of monsters and dark magics. Prevention is key, as freeing a murkwood from an evil that has set its roots firmly is a nigh impossible task, and in time the murkwood's corruption will only proliferate further.

Forgotten Foes: Murkwood Horrors THE FRINGE FOLK

In the age of the Crown Wars many monarchs abandoned the farthest settlements of their realm in the hopes of saving resources. These villages were left to defend themselves, and in the wake of the chaos of war, quickly lost contact with the rest of the world.

The Fringe Folk; or Frontier Folk, are people who were shut off from the rest of civilization. Most of these far off villages and hamlets can not be found on any modern maps. In terms of territory, they often still belong to the borders of a country, though Fringe Folk care little about outside seats of power, and most lords simply do not care to maintain contact with them. With only themselves to rely upon for generations, they have become self-sufficient and hardened people. Till this day they are left to their own devices, as their area is rarely protected by patrols...for good reason.

Due to the circumstances of their out of the way existence, a constant threat to the Fringe Folk has always been the presence of Murkwoods commonly manifesting within their lands. With little help from the outside and the threat of war ever constant, the settlers had to take matters into their own hands. Some communities became proficient in hunting the horrors of the woods, cultivating a culture of great tamers and trackers that would keep the evil of the forest at bay.

Yet not all fringe folks choose defiance against these looming horrors, as many did not have the strength; be it muscle or heart, to pick up blade and bow. Instead choosing to worship the powerful creatures crawling out of the Murkwoods, by proclaiming them their new lords.

MURK MARKED

Corruption always seeks to extend its reach, and the Murkwoods are perpetual fountains of corruption. Once the land is saturated with its aura, it will begin to affect its surroundings. The Fringe Folk learnt to live within its shadow, but those undeterred by the Murkwood, plunging its twisted depths for resources, would soon succumb to its corrupting force. It is a slow drawn out process, but the telltale beginnings of a settlement's corruption is heralded by the birth of corrupted humanoids among their kin. These creatures were called the Murk Marked.

Murk Marked are malformed Fringe Folk changed by the corruption of the Murkwoods. They are disfigured, twisted human shaped beings, but do not mistake their forms for frail, as the corrupting touch of the Murkwoods comes with its own strength. As if the forest is trying to convert the Fringe Folk into creatures more suited to survive and thrive within its horrid landscape.

Within the Murkwood Cults of the Fringe Folk, the birth of a Murk Marked is seen as a fortunate blessing. The child will be raised and enjoy privilege in their community. These cults are so deep in their delusional worship of the Murkwoods that they are oblivious to the foul nature of these fell beings. They often hold elevated positions within these cults, such as priests, protectors, or well kept secrets from prying eyes. In the wilds they traverse the dark forests, commonly in nomadic groups, possessing an animalistic cunning and supernatural strength. They are able to lay complex ambushes and traps, hunting unaware wanderers just as any other predator would do. Because of this they are considered among the most troublesome creatures to be encountered when forced to journey through the cursed woods.

MURK MARKED

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d8 + 32)

Speed 30 ft. climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (0)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2

Skills Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brutal Strike. The first time in a turn the Murk Marked hits a creature with a cleaver attack and the attack has advantage, the creature must succeed a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Twisted Strength. A melee weapon or thrown weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Murk Marked hits with it and the Murk Marked can drag or carry a creature one size smaller than itself at normal speed.

ACTIONS

Cleaver. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 +3) slashing damage or 16 (3d8+3) slashing damage if the attack has advantage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.





MURK MARKED HOOKER

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2

Skills Survival +5, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Twisted Strength. A melee weapon or thrown weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Murk Marked hits with it and the Murk Marked can drag or carry a creature one size smaller than itself at normal speed.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Murk Marked makes two melee weapon attacks.

Hook. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 +3) piercing damage.

Hook (Thrown). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 +3) piercing damage and the creature must succeed a DC 12 Strength saving throw. On a failed save the creature is pulled up to 10 ft. towards the Murk Marked and the next attack roll before the end of the Murk Marked's next turn against the pulled creature has advantage.

TITHE COLLECTOR

Simply known as the Tithe Collectors to the Fringe Folk are the connection between themselves and the heart of the Murkwood.

These creatures are shuffling beings, seemingly entirely constructed out of sprawling hands, hinting at a humanoid origin. They come at the darkest part of night, seeking to collect the Fringe Folk's offerings to their dark gods. With their many hands they identify any offering worth taking.

All Fringe Folk know Tithe Collectors must not be disturbed during their task, or worse: observed.

Lock your doors, and nail close the shutters, kill every candle and rest your palms against your eyes. Be it a curse of innate magical ability, the Tithe Collectors know when they are perceived by a living being. While seemingly blind, these creatures will immediately become aware of anyone that lays eyes on them. This will cause them to fly into a murderous rage, discarding any offerings they have collected to kill the poor fool who dared to look upon them. Tearing them limb from limb, but always going for the eyes first.

It is unknown why the Collectors react in such a way. But they appear to hold some form of sentience, wearing robes of tattered cloth or any natural materials that they can find to hide their unsightly forms, as if ashamed of their own bodies. Some say they were once human themselves, and are aware of their horrid state. Fringe Folk will say they do so to keep people from following them through the forests to their master's lairs.

Forgotten Foes: Murkwood Horrors

TITHE COLLECTOR

Large Monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +3

Senses (See Curse of the Witness), passive Perception 12

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 6 (1,800 XP)

Blind. The Tithe Collector is blind and has no sight.

Curse of the Witness. When a creature sees the Tithe Collector with its eyes (meaning without using tremorsense or blindsight), the Tithe Collector becomes aware of the creature as if the Tithe Collector can see it, unless the creature is on another plane of existence than the Tithe Collector.

Great Grappler. Checks to escape the Tithe Collector's grapple have disadvantage and the Tithe Collector has advantage on attack rolls against creatures it has grappled.

Spider Climb. The Tithe Collector can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Tithe Collector makes four slam attacks. If two or more attacks hit the same target it is grappled, escape DC 14.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 +4) bludgeoning damage.

Frenzied Flaying. The Tithe Collector can only use this action if it is below half of its maximum hit points. The Tithe Collector makes six slam attacks with disadvantage.

REACTION

Kill Witness (1/Short Rest). When a creature sees the Tithe Collector, the Tithe Collector moves up to its speed towards the triggering creature and makes two slam attacks against it. If both slam attacks hit, the creature is grappled, escape DC 14.



STRYGA

The Stryga commands both fear and reverence. This beast prowls the dim twisted woodlands and strikes unseen from the crooked canopies, commonly swallowing its prey whole and leaving no trace behind.

Stryga were once normal owls, twisted into new forms by the corrupting powers of the Murkwood. Their bodies grew and assumed a faux feline form not unlike a griffon. Their slender heads end in long gaping maws capable of dislodging and stretching to capture and swallow their prey. Only the small owl-like head akin to a mask echoes the memory of its original form.

Its owl face tip is used by the Stryga for camouflage. While lurking within the treetops and scanning the forest's floor for prey, an untrained eye might only see a common owl. Not a powerful predator in ambush. One should consider it a mercy to be slain by the Stryga's talons. As creatures that the Stryga eat find themselves within the beast's foul guts. The Stryga's innards are filled with a necrotic sludge. Creatures swallowed alive by the beast drown in its stinking stomach. The remains are then unceremoniously regurgitated into stench ridden pellets. Foul energies cause these pellets to rise as shambling undead, a pitiful amalgamation of animal bones and fur that could not pass the Stryga's innards.

Stryga nests are tainted with the sickly sweet smell of decay. Groups of wandering undead patrolling an area are telltale signs of a Stryga's nest, who prefer to rest after a successful hunt to digest. Their undead victims will attack anyone on sight - their screams alerting the Stryga to another meal conveniently delivered on its doorstep.

LAIR: STRYGA NEST

Commonly Strygas return to their nests to nurse their injuries or to digest their prey. If attacked within their own nest a Stryga will fiercely protect its territory to the death.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting a Stryga inside of its nest, it can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Stryga takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

Foul Winds. The Stryga beats its wings and spreads its nest's foul stench. Each creature within 20 ft. of the Stryga must succeed a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the Stryga's next turn. A poisoned creature that fails the save by 5 or more spends its next action coughing and retching.

Gorge. The Stryga feasts on one of the many morsels stored within her nest, regaining 20 (6d6) hit points and regaining a use of its Regurgitate action.

Spawn Pellet. The Stryga regurgitates a pellet that animates as a Stryga Pellet. If the Stryga used its Regurgitate action inside of its lair, 1d3 Stryga Pellets rise from the area of its effect instead.

Territorial Screech (1/Day). The Stryga lets out a piercing screech audible within 2 miles. Each creature within 60 ft. of the Stryga must succeed a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for one minute. A frightened creature repeats the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the condition on a success.



STRYGA PELLET

Medium Undead

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2

Damage Resistance Acid, Necrotic

Damage Immunities Poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Bothersome Pile. Unless the Stryga Pellet is destroyed by fire damage or a critical hit, the Stryga Pellets body remains after its death. Its body is difficult terrain for any creature moving through it.

Trapping Bodies. If two or more Stryga Pellets grapple the same creature, the creature is restrained in addition of being grappled.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage.

Trap. A creature within 5 ft. of the Stryga Pallet must succeed a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save the creature is grappled, escape DC 12. The trapped creature has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws for the duration of the grapple.



STRYGA

Huge Monstrosity

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d12 + 45)

Speed 40 ft., flying 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 240 ft. passive Perception 19

Languages Understands Auran, Sylvan but doesn't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Ambush Predator. The Stryga has advantage on attack rolls against surprised creatures. The first time in a turn the Stryga hits a surprised creature with an attack, it deals an additional 10 (3d6) damage.

Keen Eyes. The Stryga has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Owl Camouflage. While the Stryga hides within a tree or similar vegetation that is large enough to conceal its body, it appears as a tiny Owl.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Stryga makes three attacks; one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 +5) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 +5) slashing damage.

Consume. The Stryga makes a bite attack against a Medium or smaller creature. If the attack hits in addition to dealing damage, the creature is swallowed. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Stryga, and takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage at the start of the Stryga's turns. The stryga regains hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt. A creature that dies within the Stryga's stomach is regurgitated as a Stryga Pellet after 24 hours.

The Stryga can have only one creature in its stomach at a time. If the creature is Medium or larger, the Stryga's flight speed is halved for as long as the creature is in its stomach. Whenever the Stryga takes damage when it has a creature swallowed, it must succeed a Constitution saving throw or regurgitate the creature, which falls prone in a space within 5 ft. of the Stryga. If the Stryga is airborne while regurgitating, the Stryga falls before regurgitating the creature. The Constitution saving throw is equal 10 or half of the damage taken, whichever is higher. If the Stryga dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained and can escape from the corpse using 5 ft. of movement, exiting prone.

Regurgitate (1/day). The Stryga regurgitates the contents of its stomach in a 10-foot-radius centered on a point within 30 ft. of itself. The area is difficult terrain and any creature that starts its turn in the area or enters it for the first time in a turn takes 9 (2d8) necrotic damage.

If the Stryga has a creature in its stomach when using this action, the creature is regurgitated and lands prone and restrained by tangled fur and bones in the center of the area. The regurgitated creature takes no falling damage being regurgitated, as its fall is cushioned by the Stryga's stomach contents. The restrained creature can make a DC 14 Strength check to escape the restrains.

The Stryga regains a use of this action when it successfully consumes a creature.

GODHANDS

There are things in this world shrouded in mystery, but truths found behind the curtain can often lead to more questions than answers. The Godhands are unknowable as they are powerful; operating from the most hidden corners of the world.

They appear as giant inhuman hands, moving on finger tips like a mock imitation of a spider. Though do not be fooled, for the jewels and gold some wear suggest the intelligence and ego of something that demands adoration. But be them manipulative monsters, divine puppet-masters, or embodiments of temptation sent to punish mankind, these creatures can often be found pulling the strings of history.

Worshiped by secret cabals of followers, a Godhand seeks to influence nations by infiltrating seats of power. An act performed through its many embraced agents across the world.

Little is known about the nature of a Godhands powers, but some theorize it uses telepathy through touch to delve deep into the mind. Through it's grip it can imbue a creature with instant knowledge worthy of a scholar's library. Or it can invade into memories, feelings, and desires. Learning all there is to know about the one it holds, and promising power, knowledge and the thing their heart desires most. Those who have been held fully in a Godhand's grip are called the Embraced.

However, the insidious nature of these creatures runs deep. For unknown to all but the most loyal of followers, once someone has had their mind touched, a fingerprint is left behind. This imprint holds a command that can be activated when the Godhand deems it time. Once activated, the Embraced will follow this command, no matter the task. Unfortunately the Godhands can also suppress memories through these imprints, and many have been used as unwilling spies and murderers with no explanation for their actions, with no memory of ever being Embraced.

Though many of these Godhands exist, each of them appears to be a part of the same whole, a single entity from which all these hands spawned. And yet, their actions are all driven by a singular goal: each other's destruction.

Forgotten Foes: Godhands

AN UNSEEN WAR

Hands often come in sets, but a Godhands is always found alone, some commanding small cults, others found at the heart of criminal syndicates, or even behind a throne. Yet despite all their cunning and manipulations, the Godhands do not seek to rule humanity. They are driven by one goal, a single cannibalistic instinct to subdue and consume their own kin.

These otherworldly beings are in a constant fight for supremacy, the machinations from the shadows providing tactical safety while waging proxy wars against one another. Alliances can be forged, if they aid in the killing of other Godhands. But they are unconcerned with the world around them if it does not aid their agenda. In the end, the sole purpose of the Embraced, of every creature and seat of power the Godhand manipulates, is to locate and devour their kin. Any atrocity is acceptable, good and evil are beyond their understanding or care. It is said entire nations have been ripped asunder; all so one hand may cannibalize the other. Once consumed, they will simply move on, finding new pawns to find more hands to eat. Of course, this true goal is hidden from all but the Godhands themselves.

When a Godhand consumes another, it is through touch. One might describe the act as two hands interlocking their fingers in an intimate embrace. If both Godhands are alive during this act, it becomes a test of power and wills. The winner absorbs its kin into itself, growing stronger. With seemingly no way to reproduce, it is suggested with enough time Godhands will simply drive themselves to extinction. Though, many wonder what will happen when only one Godhand remains...we can only fear for the worst.

GODHAND

Large Aberration

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 204 (24d10 + 72)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	22 (+6)	23 (+6)	19 (+4)

Proficiency +5

Skills Insight +11, Perception +11, Stealth +6

Damage Resistance bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blind

Senses blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 21

Languages Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Godhand's Embrace. As an action the Godhand can close itself around a creature and communicate with it. When doing so the Godhand can instantly imbue a creature with anything the Godhand knows or convey complex ideas and information with its telepathy. When touching a creature like this the Godhand can also attempt to invade and read the creature's mind and memories. A creature can attempt to resist the Godhand's communication with a successful DC 18 Wisdom Saving Throw.

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). When the Godhand fails a Saving Throw it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Attacks. The Godhand's attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Godhand makes two slam attacks or three Finger Beam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 +5) bludgeoning damage.

Finger Beam. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, Range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) force damage.

Crush. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 +5) bludgeoning damage and the creature is grappled, escape DC 15. For the duration of the grapple the creature is restrained and the Godhand can't use its Finger Beam or crush another creature. The Godhand can have only one creature grappled this way at a time.

Imprint. The Godhand forces a creature it has grappled to make a DC 18 Wisdom Saving Throw. On a failed save the creature takes 27 (6d8) psychic damage and its Wisdom is reduced by 2 (1d4) until it finishes a short or long rest. If this reduces the creature's Wisdom to 0 the Godhand imprints on the creature and the creature falls unconscious until it regains at least 1 point of Wisdom. On a successful save a creature takes half as much psychic damage and suffers no other effects. If the psychic damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, the creature is stable but automatically fails all Wisdom Saving Throws for as long as it is unconscious.

When the Godhand imprints on a creature it does so with a task or set of actions specified by the Godhand. The Godhand always knows the location of a creature it has imprinted on as long as it is on the same plane of existence and can see and hear through its eyes and ears. As an action the Godhand can force the creature to perform the task or set of actions it specified which the creature will then perform to the best of its abilities. Once the task is completed, the creature is no longer imprinted. The imprint can be removed through the *Greater Restoration* spell or similarly powerful magic.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

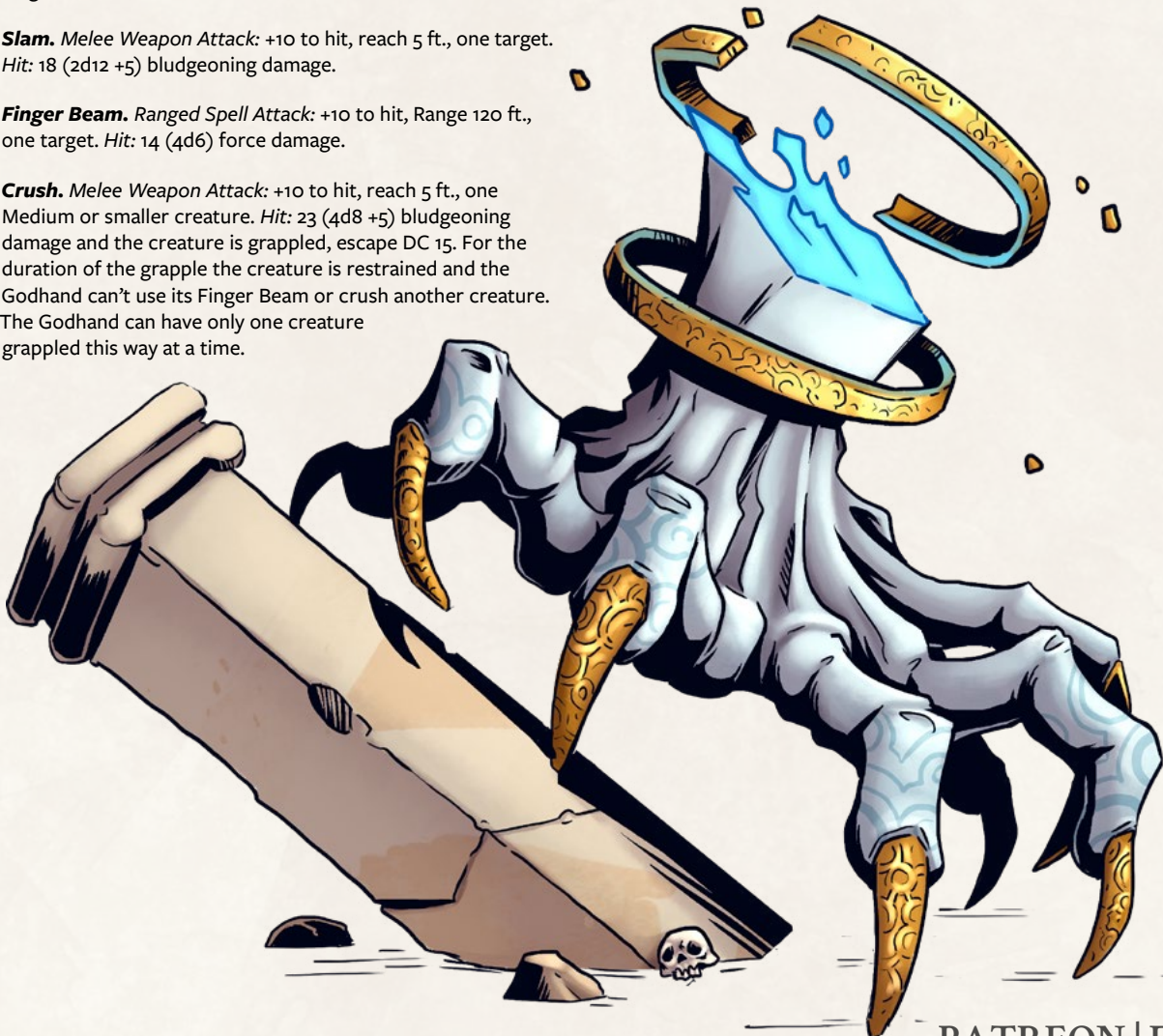
The Godhand can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Godhand regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Finger Beam. The Godhand fires a finger beam.

Imprint (2 Actions). The Godhand uses its imprint action.

Squeeze (2 Actions). The Godhand crushes a creature it has grappled.

Flail (3 Actions). The Godhand makes up to 3 slam attacks against different targets in range. On a hit the target must succeed a DC 18 Strength Saving Throw or be pushed 10 ft. away from the Godhand and falls prone.



GODTOUCHED

Godtouched are Embraced that have proven themselves to be trusted allies of the Godhand. Elite servants given high positions and gifted the eldritch power of their masters. The Godhands will often use the Godtouched to speak directly to others who are not Embraced. If not serving as lieutenants directly protecting a Godhand, they are placed as unassuming people in high positions of power around the world. Cabals of the Godhands see this as the highest honor, propagated by the Godhands as a form of ascension to a higher state of being. In truth this supposed honor and trust is built on control.

A Godtouched carry a unique fingerprint, marking their very soul to become an extension of the Godhand. Once Godtouched a person holds little free will, and can be controlled directly at any time. Even thoughts and memories can be changed at the Godhand's whims, a powerful puppet where treachery is impossible.

Where an Embraced will only be imprinted with a single command, it is not unheard of for Godtouched to undergo a full change of identity to better infiltrate an organization, spending years believing a false life until the Godhand deems it time to use their puppet.



GODTOUCHED

Medium Humanoid

Armor Class 19 (splint & shield)

Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Proficiency +4

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft. passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Celestial

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Godhand's Fingerprint. The Godtouched has advantage on Wisdom Saving Throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Godtouched makes two touch attacks. It can make a shield bash in place of one touch attack.

Touch. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) force damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 +3) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Large or smaller creature it is pushed 5 ft. away from the Godtouched.

Divine Push. A Huge or smaller creature within 60 ft. of the Godtouched must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or take 27 (6d8) force damage and be pushed 20 ft. into a direction of the Godtouched's choice. If this causes the creature to impact another creature the forced movement ends and the other creature takes 13 (3d8) bludgeoning damage and must succeed a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Invoke the Godhand (Recharge 5-6). The Godtouched creates a large spectral hand that crushes a creature within 60 ft. of the Godtouched. The creature must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save the creature is restrained for 1 minute. A restrained creature takes 18 (4d8) magical bludgeoning damage at the beginning of its turn. A restrained creature can use an action break free from the restraint with a successful DC 15 Strength check. On a successful save a creature takes 9 (2d8) magical bludgeoning damage and its speed is reduced by half until the end of the Godtouched's next turn.

Spellcasting. The Godtouched casts one of the following spells, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (Spell attack +7, Spell save DC 15):

At will: light, mage hand, thaumaturgy

1/day each: detect thoughts, dispel magic, levitate

REACTIONS

Godhand's Protection (1/Day). When the Godhand takes damage it takes half as much instead.

REMNANT

Medium Aberration

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., climbing 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Telepathy 120 ft., Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Guarding Fingers. The Remnant has an additional reaction that it can use during each of its turns which it can only use for its retaliate reaction.

Heightened Senses. The Remnant has a +5 bonus to its passive Perception and has advantage on Dexterity Saving Throws against effects that it can see as long as it is not incapacitated.

Spider Climb. The Remnant can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Remnant makes three attacks: one with its slam and two with its fingers.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 +3) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage the Remnant can grapple the target instead, escape DC 12.

Piercing Fingers. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 +3) piercing damage. If the target is grappled by the Remnant, this attack deals an additional 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Flailing Retreat. The Remnant releases any creature it has grappled and disengages. The Remnant makes one attack with its fingers as part of the same action.

Spellcasting. The Remnant casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (Spell attack + 4, Spell save DC 12):

At will: *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *thaumaturgy*

1/day each: *command*, *detect thoughts*

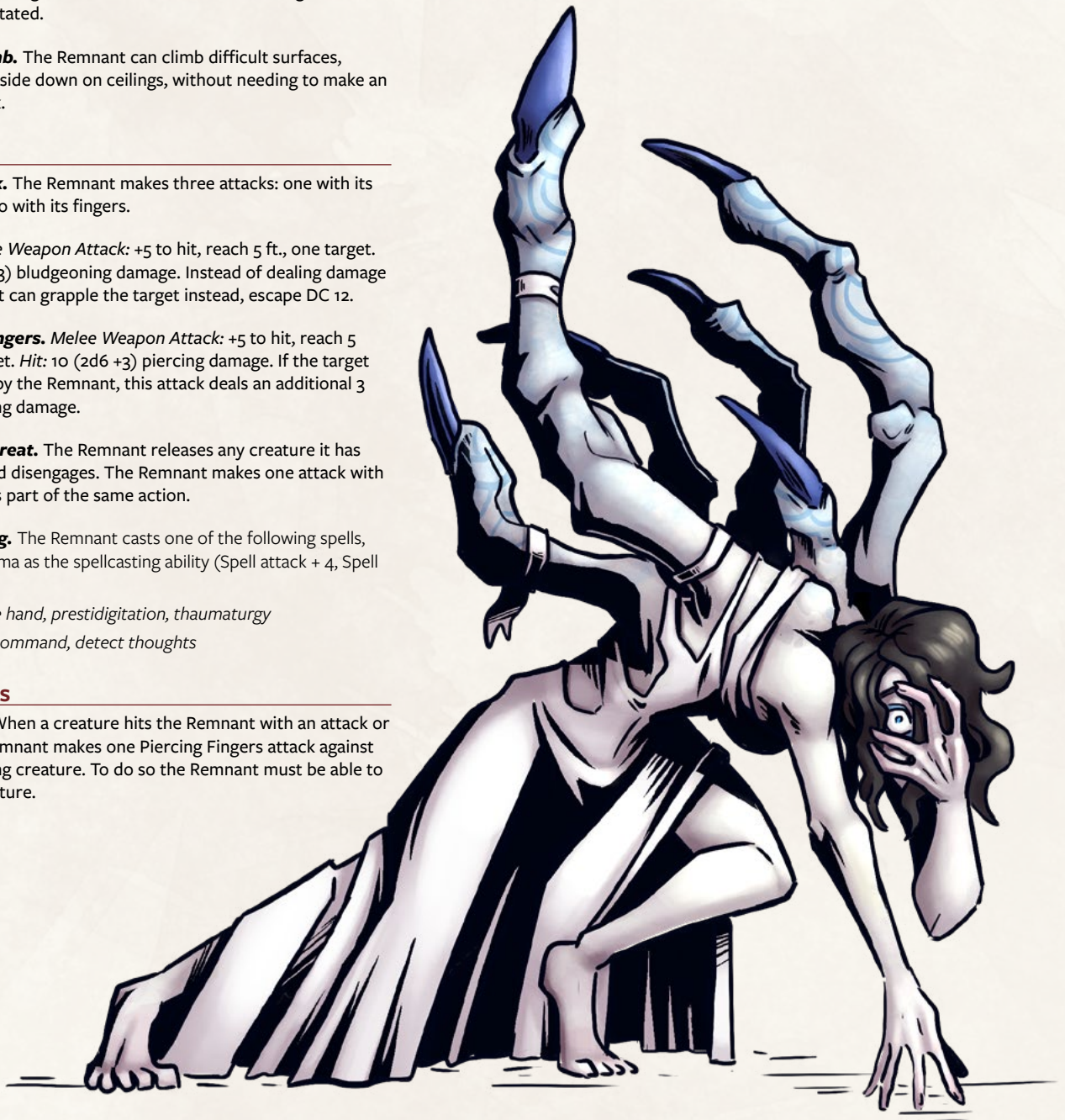
REACTIONS

Retaliate. When a creature hits the Remnant with an attack or spell, the Remnant makes one Piercing Fingers attack against the triggering creature. To do so the Remnant must be able to see the creature.

REMNANT

Though they prioritize their lives above all else, Godhands are prepared for death. When a hand finds itself cornered, it may split a piece of itself off from its core body. This part, called a Remnant, is a parasitic smaller humanoid hand that will seek a new body, willing or unwilling will suffice, as its form is fleeting and will eventually fall apart. Through prolonged exposure everything the Godhand was will transfer to the hosts mind. However, the end result is a permanent symbiotic relationship.

Once the bond advances beyond the permanent state the Remnant will feel vulnerable and influence the host with increased paranoia to ensure survival. But ultimately the host will be transformed into the original Godhand, allowing it to escape consumption or death, and begin the conquest of its kin from scratch. It is a slow process, often taking decades to complete.





GLORIOUS GODHAND

With each victory comes strength, and with more strength comes more victories. The glorious Godhand is a demigod of might that has consumed several powerful rivals, evolving into a greater form. With a rival hand consumed, a Godhand absorbs its fallen kin's memories and power, and as the name implies, its power and range of territory can be staggering. A Glorious Godhand can use spies and hidden agents across all corners of the world, and with enough Godhands consumed it can be an almost ever present entity on the world's tapestry. They are said to even rival the power of ancient monarchs, lesser creature's minds easily succumbing in its mere presence.

After a certain state of evolution, the rival Godhands' fingerprints will transfer over to the Glorious Godhand after consumption, giving access to all its fallen kins Embraced and Godtouched. It is likely that some followers will not even realize their Godhand has been cannibalized and replaced by another more powerful hand.

But with such power comes attention, and a Glorious Godhand is often a coveted target for other Godhands to hunt and consume. As such these entities' incredible might and energy is used to create layered defenses for itself, Embraced, Godtouched, agents, misinformation, illusions and sheer might. Its thoughts are beyond earthly understanding, but a glorious Godhand will always be found in the seat of its power. It will only fight when victory is all but assured.

LAIR: GODHAND'S SANCTUM

A Godhand's sanctum is the seat of its power and monument to its own glory. From its protected sanctum the Godhand directs its ingenious machinations.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting a Godhand inside of its sanctum, it can take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Godhand takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

Assessment. The Godhand instantly analyzes the current battle and prepares its battle plan. The Godhand can choose to have advantage on one Attack Roll and one Saving Throw throw that it makes before it takes its next lair action.

Glorious Presence. The Godhand radiates a deterring presence. Each creature hostile to the Godhand must succeed a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw, on a failed save the creature has disadvantage on attack rolls targeting the Godhand. If the saving throw is failed by 5 or more, the creature can't target the Godhand with attacks or spells for 1 round (until initiative count 20 next turn).

Rearrange Minions. The Godhand uses its telekinetic powers to move up to 6 allied creatures up to 30 ft. to unoccupied spaces within its sanctum.

Telepathic Shock. The Godhand floods the mind of any creature of its choice within its sanctum with telepathic noise. Each affected creature must succeed a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 21 (6d6) psychic damage, has disadvantage on ability checks, and on Concentration Saving Throws. Once the Godhand uses this lair action it must use another lair action before it can use this one again.

GLORIOUS GODHAND

Huge Aberration

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 204 (24d10 + 120)

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

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)	24 (+7)	25 (+7)	23 (+6)

Proficiency +6

Skills Intimidation +12, Insight +13, Perception +13, Stealth +8

Damage Immunity bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities blind

Senses blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 20

Languages Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 20 (25,000 XP)

Glorious Touch. As an action the Godhand can touch a creature and communicate with it. When doing so the Godhand can instantly imbue a creature with anything the Godhand knows or convey complex ideas and information with its telepathy. When touching a creature like this the Godhand can also attempt to invade and read the creature's mind and memories. A creature can attempt to resist the Godhand's communication with a successful DC 18 Wisdom Saving Throw. If the creature is willing or fails its Saving Throw the Godhand can cast its modify *memory spell* as part of the same action and instantly change parts of the creature's memories.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). When the Godhand fails a Saving Throw it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Attacks. The Godhand's attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Godhand makes two melee attacks of which only one can be a touch attack, or four Finger Beam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 +7) bludgeoning damage and if the creature is size Large or smaller it is pushed 5 ft. away from the Godhand.

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d10) psychic damage and the creature's next Wisdom Saving Throw it makes before the end of the Godhand's next turn.

Finger Beam. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +13 to hit, Range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) force damage.

Crushing Embrace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* 43 (8d8 +7) bludgeoning damage and the creature is grappled, escape DC 17. For the duration of the grapple the creature is restrained and the Godhand can't use its Finger Beam or crush another creature. The Godhand can have up to two creatures grappled this way at a time.

At the beginning of the grappled creature's turn it must succeed a DC 21 Wisdom Saving Throw or its Wisdom is reduced by 2 (1d4) until it finishes a long rest. If this reduces the creature's Wisdom to 0 it falls unconscious until it regains 1 point of Wisdom. As long as the creature is unconscious it automatically fails all Wisdom saving throws.

Glorious Starfall (Recharge 5-6). The Godhand releases a barrage of eldritch projectiles that rains down in a 30-foot radius cylinder that is 90 ft. high centered on a point within 120 ft. of the Godhand until the end of its next turn. Each creature of the Godhand's choice that starts its turn in the area or enters the area for the first time in a turn must make a DC 21 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 81 (18d8) force damage and half as much on a successful one. Any creature that must make a saving throw treats the area as difficult terrain.

Brand of the Godhand (1/Day). The Godhand forces a creature within 30 ft. of itself to make a DC 21 Wisdom Saving Throw. On a failed save the creature is branded by the Godhand. On a successful save the creature takes 45 (10d8) psychic damage.

The Godhand can see and hear anything that the branded creature sees or hears and can telepathically communicate with the creature for as long as it is on the same plane of existence as the Godhand. Additionally the Godhand can use an action to force the creature to repeat the Saving Throw. On a failed save the creature is charmed for 1 hour and will obey the Godhand's every command without question for as long as it is charmed. If the save is fails by 10 or more the creature is permanently charmed until the brand is removed. On a successful save the creature is not charmed. If the save succeeds by 10 or more the creature is no longer branded.

The Brand of the Godhand can be removed through a *Greater Restoration* spell or similarly powerful magic.

Spellcasting. The Godhand casts one of the following spells, using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (Spell attack + 12, Spell save DC 21):

At will: dancing lights, telekinesis, thaumaturgy

1/day each: mass suggestion, modify memory (9th level)

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Glorious Godhand can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Glorious Godhand regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The Godhand makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Finger Beam. The Godhand fires a finger beam.

Squeeze (2 Actions). Each creature that the Godhand has grappled must succeed a DC 21 Strength check or take 36 (8d8) magical bludgeoning damage.

Godhand's Will (2 Actions). The Godhand forces a branded creature to repeat the saving throw (see **Brand of the Godhand**).

Telekinesis (2 Actions). The Godhand casts telekinesis.

Touch (2 Actions). The Godhand makes a touch attack.

DESIGNER'S NOTE: FIGHTING AN OUTER BEING

Earthly weapons will not be able to pierce the Glorious Godhand's skin. Groups that aim to destroy this beast must come well prepared with blessed or enchanted arms.

If your game features a low amount of magic items within your players possession, you may consider changing the Glorious Godhand's Damage Immunity to non-magical weapons to a mere resistance.

ICHOR FIENDS

Calamities often come without warning, be them natural disasters or man's own folly, the chaos of life is inevitable. Ancient cultures often blamed the gods for these events, or at least, that was what scholars assumed when studying various beast tribe wall paintings depicting monsters falling from fire in the sky; or when the An'Shyvann Star Sage scrolls talked of a shooting black star crossing the heavens and bringing death in its wake.

Many historians agree that these vastly different cultures were likely depicting the same event, a comet passing over the planet leaving horrific devastation. Due to the vast number of documentations of this event across the ancient world, historians have chosen to use the translated collection of texts found in the celestial libraries of Gludeo as the baseline for further study.

The comet has many names, but the Kingdom of Gludeo referred to it as the Bleeding Star, most likely named for the rain of blood that would trail behind it

Though myths talk of monsters falling from the sky it is believed they spawned from smaller meteorites broken off from the main body. Reports describe that on impact the debris would reveal a fleshy blood like core, either quickly forming into a strange creature or covering the environment in strange cancerous growths. The living substance inside does not match any existing blood type, despite it being very similar in nature. As such it is referred to in many texts as Ichor. Hence the creatures spawned from it were named Ichor Fiends.

Gludeo describes Ichor Fiends as simple creatures, almost mollusk-like. Their flesh is semi-translucent, containing the eerie crimson glow of the Ichor that spawned them. But one should not underestimate their sluggish appearance. Many are said to have lightning fast reflexes and strike without prejudice. As such further study is difficult, as any creature that comes into contact with Ichor is doomed to either die and become raw material for the substance to feed on, or is horrifically mutated beyond repair.

Places where the Ichor lands and its fiends manifest must be dealt with swiftly before their corruption takes root on the land. If left to their own devices they will consume all life in the area where they land and then die off from starvation.

Forgotten Foes: Ichor Fiends

TRAVELING DOOM

Another troubling detail about the comet is the lack of consistent trajectory, appearing in inconstant stretches of history around the world, from one night in three hundred year increments to three months every two hundred years. Thus its arrival was impossible to predict for future civilizations. Some scholars have theorized the comet has a celestial will of its own, crossing over the planet like some malignant creature. While others suggest the later depictions of the comet in history prove it is getting closer. What was once described as a thin line of crimson light drawn across the night sky has now become a wandering celestial body that draws its blood-soaked trail across the night, tinting the world below crimson red.

More troubling, the time between sightings in the last two hundred years has been growing shorter, and the comet stays longer. Some fear it is only a matter of time before it crashes into the planet.

ICOR COAGULON

The Icor Coagulon is one of the more primitive Ichor Fiends to spawn from the comet's vile debris. The molusk-like body is embedded in the rock that birthed it, acting as a powerful shield for the Ichor within.

Most curiously the Coagulon is able to move small appendages that sprout from its shell, making one wonder where the creature begins and ends. Its carapace is highly resistant to damage; anyone who seeks to kill this creature will have to wait for an opportune time to strike at the tender flesh within. On further study, sightings of the creature also suggest it is an ambush predator, using its clinging legs to find secure spaces on ceiling or walls to rest, or wait for potential prey.

Once in a favored position, it uses its sensitive organs to detect the presence of a creature in reach. Then with a swift lash of its tendrils it will capture its prey. Digestion follows as the Ichor Fiend attempts to dissolve the body with caustic fluids secreted from its tendrils, absorbing the resulting goop.

ICOR COAGULON

Small Aberration

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (3d6 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	7 (-2)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +2

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +2

Damage Resistance bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Rock Camouflage. The Icor Coagulon has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide among rocks and rock formations.

Spider Climb. The Icor Coagulon can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Weakspot. Any damage to the Icor Coagulon caused by an attack roll made with advantage ignores its innate resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

ACTIONS

Tendrils. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled, escape DC 14. Until the grapple ends, the creature is restrained and the Icor Coagulon can't attack another creature with its tendrils.

Digest. Each creature grappled by the Icor Coagulon takes 10 (3d6) acid damage.

REACTIONS

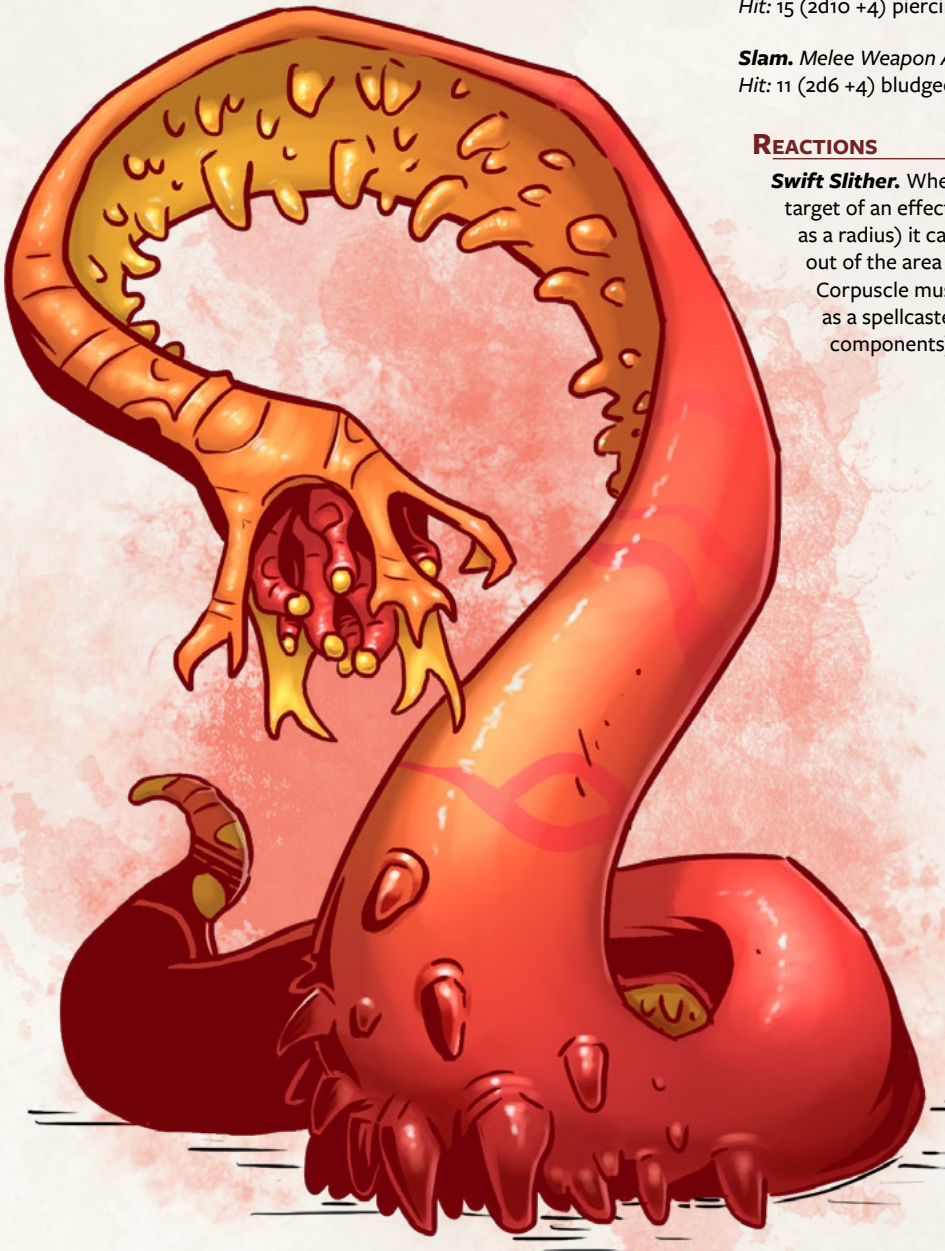
Retract. The Icor Coagulon adds +4 to its AC against one attack that would hit it. To do so the Icor Coagulon must see the attacker. When the Icor Coagulon does so it releases any creature it is currently grabbing with its tendrils.



Ichor Corpuscle

Ichor Corpuscules rise from pure Ichor, depicted as being unique among the other Ichor Fiends as it lacks any kind of shell. They are also highly predatory creatures with the instinct to hunt the moment they are spawned. Despite their slug-like appearance they can slither at high speeds to easily ambush and overwhelm prey from tree tops and borrowed tunnels. Their flexible bodies allow them to squeeze through tight spaces uninhibited, and more horrifying still records have shown these creatures to be capable of hunting underwater as well. One mid-century tapestry displayed a large specimen curled around a fishing boat; it is unclear if the size was an exaggeration. Combined with an incredibly sensitive cognitive organ that can detect incoming danger, not only are Ichor Corpuscules fast, they are near impossible to approach without detection.

Despite its ability to swim these Ichor Fiends seem to spawn on land, there is no documentation suggesting Ichor Fiends spawn from the ocean, and no large body of water has ever been depicted as becoming corrupted by Ichor. Curiously, the large downpours from the Bleeding Star throughout history seem to only infect land masses as if aimed with malicious intent.



Ichor Corpuscle

Medium Aberration

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +3

Skills Perception +5

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Flexible. Squeezing through tight spaces does not impede the Ichor Corpuscle's movement and it ignores difficult terrain.

Slippery. Opportunity attacks against the Ichor Corpuscle have disadvantage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Ichor Corpuscle makes two attacks; one with its Bite and one with its Slam.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 +4) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) acid damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 +4) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Swift Slither. When the Ichor Corpuscle becomes a target of an effect or spell that targets an area (such as a radius) it can move up to 10 ft., possibly moving out of the area of effect. To use this reaction, the Ichor Corpuscle must see the origin of the effect (such as a spellcaster cast a spell with somatic or vocal components).

ICOR EMBOLUS

Large Aberration

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 147 (14d10 + 70)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	5 (-3)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +4

Skills Perception +6

Damage Resistance bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantine weapons

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Ambusher. The Icor Embolus has advantage on attack rolls against creatures that are surprised and each surprised creature has disadvantage on its saving throw against the Icor Embolus' Ensnaring Appendages.

False Appearance. While the Icor Embolus remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a rock, albeit the appearance of the rock might be unusual.

Weakspot. Any damage to the Icor Embolus caused by an attack roll made with advantage ignores its innate resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Icor Embolus makes three pseudopod attacks.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d6 +4) bludgeoning damage.

Ensnaring Appendages (Recharge 5-6). The Icor Embolus explosively extends its guts in a 30 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must succeed a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save a creature takes 31 (10d6) bludgeoning damage and is pulled up to 30 ft. towards the Icor Embolus. On a successful save a creature takes half as much damage and is not moved. In addition the area is covered by viscous goo until the end of the Icor Embolus' next turn, causing the area to become difficult terrain.

ICOR EMBOLUS

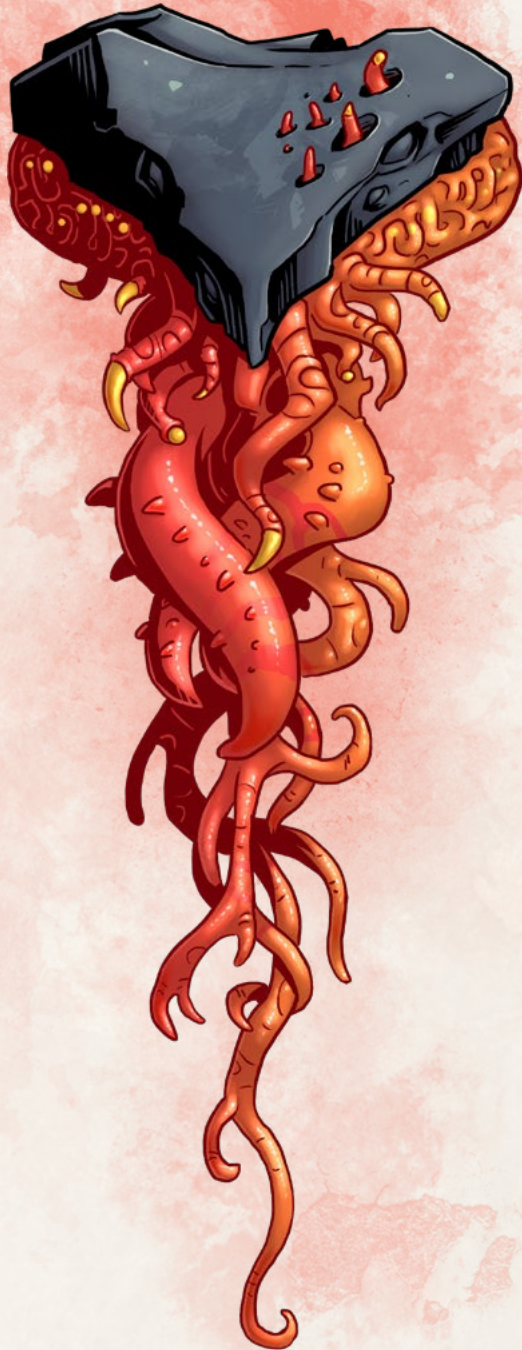
Icor Emboluses resemble Coagulons, some early texts suggest perhaps the Embolus is an advanced form of the Coagulon. Often found in larger chunks of debris from the Bleeding Star, they actually remain dormant until the surrounding Ichor has siphoned enough matter from the surrounding area.

Like the Coagulon, the Icor Embolus resides in a powerful shell taking on a unique shape based on the sustenance that gave it life. One fossilized Embolus shell excavated in the past appeared suspiciously human skull-shaped.

But unlike its smaller kin the Embolus moves on a twisted pseudopod body that drags its mighty carapace. The soft body of the Embolus resembles a confusing arrangement of sticky appendages that greedily grab and pull for anything it identifies as edible.

Unlike its siblings, the Embolus moves its burdensome body at a slower pace, seeking out large pieces of matter to consume over time with its soft tendrils. However, if no immediate food is available it will lie in wait for prey like the Coagulon. Using its stone shell as camouflage, when prey is near it launches its entire soft body at its target. This soft mass acts like a net that lunges at anything it can grab and pulls it toward itself to consume. Once entrapped in its organic web there is little hope for its prey to escape.





Icor Polyp

The theory of the Bleeding Star drawing closer has clear evidence. The more recent texts report an increase in physical matter falling from the comet's body along with its Ichor. This would suggest in earlier times any mass not protected by rock would disintegrate when breaching the planet's firmament. These chunks of tissue, usually charred and destroyed by the impact, would gradually begin to remain intact. The mass would then form a perplexing growth, collecting the debris around it to form an Icor Polyp.

Icor Polyps are huge floating creatures, among the largest forms of Ichor Fiends documented and very rare. Once an Icor Polyp forms it takes flight like a graceful jellyfish, it glides through the air, using its many tendrils to navigate its flight.

Unlike its kin, an Icor Polyp appears driven with purpose. One cannot fathom its desires, but older scholars suggest it exceeds the basics of food and proliferation.

ICOR POLYP

Huge Aberration

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 152 (16d12 + 48)

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	22 (+6)	17 (+3)	5 (-2)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +4

Skills Perception +4

Condition Immunities grappled, paralyzed, restrained (see Unfettered)

Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Understands Draconic but doesn't speak

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Evasion. When the Icor Polyp is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw and half damage if it fails.

Lightning Reflexes. Once per turn, the Icor Polyp can use its Warding Tendrils reaction without having to use a reaction unless it is incapacitated. When the Icor Polyp does so, it can't use its reaction to use its Warding Tendrils until the end of the turn.

Unfettered. As long as the Icor Polyp is not incapacitated it is immune to being grappled, paralyzed, or restrained.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The the Icor Polyp makes two Tendril attacks or three Slicing Winds attacks.

Tendrils. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d4 +6) bludgeoning damage.

Slicing Winds. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 +6) magical slashing damage.

BONUS ACTION

Quicken (1/day). The Icor Polyp disengages, dashes, and makes a Multiattack.

REACTION

Warding Tendrils. When a creature enters the Icor Polyp tendril's range of attack it makes an attack with its Tendrils. To do so the Icor Polyp must see the creature.

Once formed the creature immediately begins patrolling the site of its impact, almost with curiosity. Perhaps due to its sensitive sensory organs, it will fly into a frustrated rage towards anything that inhibits its set path, such as trees, buildings, or rock formations alike. With swift super sonic motions of its tendrils, foreboding cracks give birth to cutting winds that are sharper than any mortal blade, able to split tree, rock, and men like paper. Its only path seems to be forward motion and the way shall be cleaved if necessary.

Most terrifying of all is the Polyp's ability to tap into surges of logic defying speed, allowing itself, despite its considerable size, to dart through the air and strike within a single heartbeat.

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