

DRAGONS

 "John, you don't have to do this."

Sir John ignored his draconian friend.

"Maybe ditch the arms and armor," Bootblack said.

"Nah, I thought of that." John looked down at his gear. "This is who I am. I go in there under some ... some *pretense* and I might foul the whole thing up." He shook his head. "Just another kind of trick."

He turned to Embers. "Any luck?" he asked.

Ember's eyes, currently solid starscape, faded into her normal, gold-flecked azure eyes. "Yes," she said, and some tension fled from the group. "Choryvixiar, the Forge of Pain."

"Oh, wonderful," Jackson Bootblack said while the rest of the team groaned.

Embers recalled her void vision. "I know this dragon," she said and closed her eyes. "Wings like sword blades. Choryvixiar razed a dwarven city, the city of Kal Aethyron."

Dazar gave John a look. "John, Kal Aethyron was sacked twelve thousand years ago," he said.

"It wanted the legendary armory of Zor, the Metalmaster of Aethyron. They treated with it. It allowed them to evacuate the city first." Embers opened her eyes and looked at John. "It can be reasoned with," she said, and nodded.

"I think it'll work," John said.

Vaantikalisax put a hand on the pommel of his mace. "Why?" he demanded.

"I'll tell you why," Jackson said. Everyone looked at the polder.

"Well, we all know it's in there, right?" Jackson asked, gesturing to the cave. They nodded.

"Then it ... or he, I guess, knows we're out here. And he hasn't roasted us, so ... maybe he's waiting to hear our offer?"

John smiled at the troubadour having come to the same conclusion he had. He turned to Embers. "A crucible dragon?" She nodded. He sighed.

"The crucibles make fortresses of iron. Steel. And they burn with eternal heat," Dazar said, the second most qualified loremaster among them. "This is just a cave," he said.

Gwillyv appeared with what looked like a metal roof shingle. She passed it to A Mist Curls Around Dying Embers. You could see how heavy it was by the way she held it.

"Yes," Embers said, looking at the metal dragonscale made of blackened iron. She pressed her palm against it. Metal scored over centuries and impregnated with ancient soot. "This creature had a home recently, such as you describe, theochron. But something happened and it was forced to flee. Wounded, probably. This would have been years ago, and it slumbered here since. Then something woke it."

She turned the heavy, metal scale over in her hands. "When a dragon gets this old, all it knows is pain. It becomes hateful, *s spiteful*."

"Yeah, I had a bad toothache once, it was a bitch, I know how it feels," Bootblack said. Everyone ignored him.

"There has to be some other option," Sir Vaantikalisax said.

"Well, I talked to Ffyllynvir or however you pronounce it," John said. "The Thorns are at an impasse. They can't pull back without exposing whole villages to this thing, and they can't bring it down."

"So we fight!" Dazar said and gripped his staff in a battle stance.

John shrugged. "They tried that," he said. "If the Thorns couldn't take this thing down I doubt we could. Time to try something else."

Dazar came to inspect the dragonscale. Vaantikalisax grabbed John by the arm. "John, do you know what you're doing?" he said under his

breath. Others had asked essentially the same question, but this was Vaant.

John smiled at his friend. "Yeah." He looked at the group arguing about the wisdom of his plan and gestured with his head toward a boulder before walking away from the group. Vaant followed. When they were out of earshot, John explained his plan.

"Look. I don't believe in coincidences, okay? We need the Thorns, at the keep, when Saxton shows up. So what happens? They're tied up with this dragon. Well that's pretty nice for Saxton, isn't it?" He left it at that. Waited for Vaant to catch up.

Vaant looked around. It took him a second. Then he looked at John. "You think Saxton got here before us?"

"Yes, I do," John said. "I told you I talked to Ffyllynvir, right? Do you know what they said?" John paused for a moment and his eyes unfocused as he remembered what Embers said the dragon's name was. "Choryvixiar," he said, suddenly coming back to reality, "started this vendetta against the wode elves a week after Saxton came to power. And I think? It might have been less than a week."

"Ah," Vaant said, impressed. "And you don't believe in coincidences."

"If Embers is right, this dragon might be the most dangerous thing, of any kind, in the entire duchy. If I were Saxton? Getting that thing on my side would be my first priority."

"Because if it works," Vaant said, "you start your campaign with a powerful ally. And if it doesn't ..."

"Then he starts with a powerful enemy. So, first thing he does is find out whose side the dragon's on."

"Because that dictates his entire strategy." Vaant was impressed and more impressed because he'd known John for years and was still surprised. "Well done, John." Vaant acted like the dragon was already on their side.

"Everyone thinks this is some big risk, some daring ploy," John was looking at the rest of the team. He shook his head, then looked back at Vaant. "But if Saxton did it, if he talked to this thing? I can. And I'm a better negotiator."

"Because you're not an ... an 'unrepentant' ..." He couldn't remember what the polder, Jackson Bootblack, had called Lord Saxton earlier.

"Cockbag," John finished for him. "I'm not an unrepentant cockbag, yeah, that's the idea."

"Smart," Vaant said and shook John's hand. "Good luck."

"Hey!" Jackson Bootblack said. John turned to look at him. "Saxton's armor is made from the whispering iron," he said. "It's only found in Hell. Pretty good prize for a dragon with taste who turned out to be on the right side. Or no side."

John looked from the polder to the others. "Is that true or did you make it up?"

"I'll tell you after you come out." Bootblack smiled. "If you come out." John shook his head with amused exasperation. Bootblack spread his hands and bowed deeply.

Sir John proceeded toward the cave.

"John," Embers said. John sighed and stopped. "Flatter him," the void mage said. "Appeal to his vanity. Remind him that he's the most powerful thing in all Omund's Land."

"I got it," John said and filed the information away. He didn't really know what he was going to say. He was going to present himself and see what happened.

"And if you're wrong?" Gwillyv whispered. John could barely hear her, but he could guess what she said.

John shrugged with one shoulder. "If I'm wrong, we're all going to die anyway. No point living in fear. Anyone else?" No one said anything. Only Vaant and Embers could look him in the eye.

"Wish me luck," Sir John said, and walked alone into the dragon's lair.

On Dragons

Terrifying behemoths. Harbingers of destruction and woe. Dragons claim the world for themselves, throw the innocent into despair, and inspire heroes to draw steel.

Where the Elements Meet Anguish

As elementals are pure expressions of the mundane world, their shapes can become hardened and bent by intense energies permeating that world. Over time, an elemental entangled in extreme concentrations of rancor or grief might crystallize into a terrifying creature known as a dragon.

Dragons are both a provocateur and a consequence of people's anguish. A thorn dragon will cover crops and forests in a fortress of bramble vines and threaten to starve the people living there, yet they were born out of decades of hunger and strife that came before them. Vanquishing a dragon might be necessary to save innocent lives, but unless the underlying problems are addressed, another dragon will take their place in time.

Draco Vulgaris

Many regular dragons share a number of commonalities between them, such as powerful wings, whiplike tails, and reptilian faces adorned with horns. People categorize dragons more specifically based on where they're found and how those environments have shaped their forms, such as the gloom dragon having a telltale mantle of fog. Some individual dragons retain a trait or two from their primordial forms, while more powerful dragons have been known to intentionally change their shapes to distinguish themselves even further.

Across all dragons, their breath is their most violent form of self-expression. Whether they roar to ward off threats or charge their breath with elemental energy, no good comes from a dragon opening their mouth.

Wyrmscale

Most dragons are covered in wyrmscale, a hardy plate that both absorbs and emits elemental energy. Wyrmscale not only protects dragons, but allows them to catalyze their bodies and further shape their environment. The crucible dragon, for example, erupts with blasts of steam that let them take to the air and rain down death upon their foes.

When a dragon feels threatened, their wyrmscale radiates massive amounts of energy and creates a barrier around them. This barrier buffers both incoming and outgoing force, allowing the dragon to become even more fearsome should their defenses break down.

Lords of Their Domains

It is said that a dragon's physical form includes the land they're found in. The longer a dragon spends time in a location, the more control they have over it. In an omen dragon's domain, for instance, the land becomes barren as old souls become suspended in its thickened air, with new life unable to breach the soil.

This impact is more than a passive consequence of a dragon's presence, for dragons use their magic to set seals upon creatures and lands they claim as their own. To be "dragonealed" in this way is to become an extension of the dragon's might and subject to their fury.

Folk in cultures that have developed in close proximity to a dragon might give alms to a dragon as if they were a saint, and treat the dragon's seal as a blessing. There is some value to this, for few other predators are foolish enough to encroach on a dragon's territory.

Dragon Hoards

Legendary heroes protect the common folk from dragons. Foolhardy adventurers brave a dragon's lair to take their treasure.

Mature dragons hoard vast amounts of treasure and wealth as a hunting technique. The more valuable their trove, the more prey they lure into their clutches. Desperate kings have sent whole armies to their deaths for the opportunity to expand a kingdom's wealth. Their efforts only expand a dragon's hoard, though, as weapons, armor, and magic trinkets add to the wealth that can't be ignored.

Younger dragons still settling their domains have been known to scour ruins and ancient cities for treasures to start their hoard. It is not unheard of for a dragon to either repeatedly visit or settle near people who willingly give them their valuables and heirlooms.

What's In A Hoard?

It's said that the only creature greedier than a dragon is a dragon hunter. Dragons know this all too well, and their lairs are accordingly well-hidden and guarded. Even if would-be thieves stumble upon an absent dragon's hoard, their troubles are only beginning: some dragons magically know the locations of every treasure purloined from their hoard, while others maintain discreet contacts with local fences and dealers in rare goods.

The following are sample treasures from a dragon's hoard. The hoard contains the treasure from each echelon up to and including the dragon's echelon. These items can be found in [Draw Steel: Heroes](#).

1st Echelon

Components: Dragon scales, horns, or venom glands

Titles: Dragon Blooded

Wealth: Each hero earns 1 wealth

2nd Echelon

Treasures: Kuran'zoi Prismscale, Purified Jelly

3rd Echelon

Project Sources: Notes in Vastariax for the Dragon Soul armor enhancement, notes in Zaliac for a Thunderhead Bident

4th Echelon

Treasures: Blade of Quintessence, Page from the Infinite Library: Solaris

Draco Nobilis

Regular dragons should not be confused with the elder dragons, otherwise known as true dragons. These legendary beings are said to be able to devour entire worlds. Even the most fearsome meteor dragon possesses only a modicum of a true dragon's power and wiles.

(The draco nobilis will be explored in future adventures and products.)

Thorn Dragon

Thorn dragons take root in the destitution of nature, and are cultivated by the suffering of those who struggle against the cruelty of drought, fire, flood, and more. Though a region's people might have long overcome past famine, the desperation of those who suffered long before has already nurtured their future scourge.

These dragons appear born of the wood, resembling living thickets bedecked in torturous thorns. With twisting briar horns and wings shaped by tangled roots, thorn dragons embody the richness of nature they so readily leech the life from.

Conquerors of the Green

Thorn dragons cultivate their lairs in lush farmlands or flourishing forests. They engulf these beautiful regions in massive briar thickets, choking out existing flora until their own brambles are the only things that grow. In forests, this process drives out local fauna smart enough to flee rather than foolishly fight against the wood's new ruler. When a thorn dragon establishes their lair over a village's farmlands, local folk either wisely relocate or slowly starve for the sake of stubborn pride.

Natural Curators

More intelligent dragons seek all forms of riches for their hoard, but thorn dragons have no eye for worldly treasures. Instead, they amass the wealth of the wild they represent. Thorn dragons stockpile food—even food they won't eat—alongside uncut gemstones, minerals and ore, wood, oils, and spices.

Bestial Instincts

Compared to more powerful dragons, thorn dragons are closer to beasts in temperament. They are incapable of speech and act primarily on instinct as they expand their territories, defend their lairs, and grow their hoards.

Despite this, the folk of certain settlements manage to avoid being driven from their homes or starved at the expense of being dependent on a thorn dragon's bestial ego. These farmers and woods folk come to a tenuous understanding with the dragon, trading them the kinds of treasure they desire in exchange for meager foodstuffs from the dragon's hoard.

Territorial Brutes

Thorn dragons are highly territorial, and are vigilant against potential threats to their lairs. To defend their homes, these dragons take advantage of their thickets by dragonsealing intruders, pushing and pulling them across the briars, and letting the thorns bleed them dry. When mere brambles aren't enough, thorn dragons either imbue those brambles' barbs with poison or breathe out those toxins directly, taking pleasure in slowly draining the life from their enemies.

Thorn Dragon's Domain

If the encounter map is a location the dragon has occupied for 1 week or more, all surfaces on the map are covered in overgrowth. Any creature other than the dragon who starts their turn on the encounter map has their speed reduced by 2 (to a minimum of 1). Any creature made restrained while on the ground is also made bleeding.



Thorn Dragon

Dragon, Elemental

Level 2 Solo
EV 48

3 Size 8 Speed 250 Stamina 6 Stability 5 Free Strike

Immunity: Poison 5
Movement: Fly

Might +2 **Agility** +3 **Reason** -1 **Intuition** +1 **Presence** +2

Solo Monster

End Effect: At the end of each of their turns, the dragon can take 10 damage to end one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. This damage can't be reduced in any way.

Solo Turns: The dragon can take two turns each round. They can't take turns consecutively.

Withering Wyrmscale Aura

The dragon's scales create a 2 aura of withering green magic around them. Any creature other than the dragon who regains Stamina in the area regains only half the expected amount. Any winded creature who enters the area for the first time in a round or starts their turn there takes 1d3 corruption damage.

Virulent Breath

Area, Magic

Melee 10 x 1 line within 1

Signature Ability

Main action

Each enemy and object in the area

Effect: Each target makes a **Might** test.

≤11 12 poison damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
12-16 9 poison damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
17+ 5 poison damage

A dragonsealed creature has their wounds bound by nettles and thorns, causing them to take an extra 1d3 damage whenever they take damage rolled as a d6 or a d3.

Spinous Tail Swing

2d10 + 3
Charge, Melee, Strike, Weapon

Melee 2

≤11 8 damage; push 2
12-16 12 damage; push 4
17+ 15 damage; push 8

Main action

Two creatures or objects

2 Malice: Each target takes an extra 1d3 damage, and if they have **A<2**, they are bleeding (save ends).

Provoking Nettles

Once per turn, the dragon shifts up to 5 squares and can move through enemies' spaces at their usual speed. The first time the dragon moves through an enemy's space during this movement, the enemy takes 3 damage.

Investiture of Verdure

Area

Melee 10 burst

5 Malice

Maneuver

Each enemy in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. Each target is pulled up to 5 squares toward the dragon, who gains 5 temporary Stamina for each target pulled.

Prickly Situation

Magic, Ranged

Ranged 10

Free triggered action

The triggering creature

Trigger: A dragonsealed creature within distance ends the dragonsealed effect.

Effect: The target is pulled up to 5 squares toward the dragon, and if they have **A<2**, they are restrained until the end of their next turn.

Thorny Scales

Melee

Melee 1

1 Malice

Free triggered action

The triggering creature

Trigger: A creature within distance deals damage to the dragon with a melee strike.

Effect: The dragon makes a free strike against the target, and if the target has **M<2**, they are bleeding until the end of their next turn.

Briar Bindings

2d10 + 3

Villain Action 1

Area, Magic

Melee 4 burst

≤11 5 damage; **A<1** restrained (save ends)
12-16 9 damage; **A<2** restrained (save ends)
17+ 12 damage; **A<3** restrained (save ends)

Each enemy in the area

Thorned Armor

Melee

Self

Villain Action 2

Effect: The thorns upon the dragon's scales grow longer and sharper. Until the end of the encounter, any adjacent creature who targets the dragon with a melee strike takes 3 damage. The dragon then uses their Provoking Nettles ability.

Malign Thicket

Melee

Special

Villain Action 3

Effect: Poisonous overgrowth and seeking vines cover all surfaces on the encounter map. The dragon uses their Bramble Barricade Malice feature twice at no cost. Until the end of the encounter, any creature force moved by the dragon takes 1d3 poison damage, and if they have **M<2**, they are weakened (save ends).

Special: If the Thorn Dragon's Domain trait is in effect, any creature other than the dragon who starts their turn on the encounter map takes 1d3 poison damage.

Thorn Dragon Malice

Malice Features

At the start of a thorn dragon's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

Cage of Thorns

3 Malice

A cage of thorns grows around one dragonsealed enemy on the encounter map, making that enemy restrained until the end of their next turn.

Bramble Barricade

5 Malice

The dragon grows a 10 wall of briars in unoccupied spaces on the encounter map. The wall blocks line of effect for all creatures except the dragon. Each square of the wall has 5 Stamina and fire weakness 5. The area can be moved through but is difficult terrain. Any creature who is force moved into or within the area takes 1 damage for each square of the area entered and is bleeding until the end of their next turn.

Solo Action

5 Malice

The dragon takes an additional main action on their turn. They can use this feature even if they are dazed.

Afflictive Overgrowth

7 Malice

The dragon summons poisonous, biting thorns around their foes. Each enemy on the encounter map makes an **Agility** test.

≤11 12 poison damage; restrained (save ends)
12-16 9 poison damage; bleeding (save ends)
17+ 5 poison damage; bleeding (EoT)

Gloom Dragon

Where twilight spills long and cold over the lands and chilling fog hangs heavy and wet through long autumns and winters, there you will find gloom dragons. Wreathed in churning shadows and wrapped in glittering dark scales, gloom dragons bring with them heavy fog and mist that manifests hallucinations, trapping their prey in nightmares.

Thrill of the Hunt

While many dragons command grand enclosed spaces, gloom dragons make their lairs within sprawling, murky wilds, commanding vast territories. As clever as ravens and as cunning as hunting beasts, they use mimicry and hallucinations to draw unsuspecting travelers ever farther into the mists of their domain, until the fog swallows the sound of those travelers' screams.

In areas where gloom dragons settle, people are known to have more nightmares than usual.

Intangible Treasures

Gloom dragons are eerie collectors of voices, memories, and nightmares, as well as material items. Though able to speak, they can only repeat exactly what they've already heard, and so they prize their vast collections of voices and phrases, using these sounds to lure mortals close enough to draw out their memories and fears. Endlessly curious and fascinated by terror, gloom dragons are keen to see what hallucinations terrorize their prey before they slaughter them.

When a gloom dragon slays a victim, they take not just their valuables, but also whatever is most meaningful to their fears. A broken mirror from a dead lover will always fascinate a gloom dragon more than a perfect ruby brooch.

Unnerving Neighbors

Instinct and curiosity drive these enshrouded hunters. It is rare to find a gloom dragon who can be reasoned with, but some might develop an understanding with nearby settlements, such that each leaves the other to their business. Since gloom dragons focus on individual terrorizing over mass destruction, it is relatively easy to coexist with one lurking in the swamps nearby. But in such cases, these dragons become the subject of stories told to children, warning them to never follow voices into the fog.

Gloom Dragon Languages

Eerie myths surround the gloom dragons, for they wield languages they do not themselves speak. These draconic nightmares can mimic any sound they've heard. But more mysteriously, the magic that produces their hallucinations also mimics the sounds a foe's mind produces, no matter their language. If a hero hallucinates a loved one dying, everyone around will hear that loved one's screams for help.

Gloom Dragon's Domain

If the encounter map is a location the dragon has occupied for 1 week or more, illusory magic suffuses the location with shadowy malevolence. Each creature on the encounter map other than the dragon takes a -2 penalty to saving throws made to end the frightened condition. Additionally, whenever a frightened enemy on the encounter map takes damage, they take an extra 3 psychic damage.



Gloom Dragon

Dragon, Elemental

Level 4 Solo
EV 72

4 Size **8** Speed **350** Stamina **2** Stability **6** Free Strike

Immunity: Psychic 5
Movement: Fly, hover

Might +2 **Agility +4** **Reason +1** **Intuition +3** **Presence +4**

Solo Monster

End Effect: At the end of each of their turns, the dragon can take 10 damage to end one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. This damage can't be reduced in any way.

Solo Turns: The dragon can take two turns each round. They can't take turns consecutively.

Gloaming WyrmScale Aura

The dragon's scales create a 3 aura of dark supernatural fog around them that feeds on their victims' fears and provides concealment to the dragon only. Each enemy who starts their turn in the area takes 2 psychic damage. Additionally, whenever one or more enemies is in the area, the dragon's abilities deal an extra 3 psychic damage.

Breath of Brume

Area, Magic, Ranged
4 cube within 10

Signature Ability

Main action

Each enemy and object in the area

Effect: Each target makes an **Agility test**

≤11 14 cold damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
12-16 11 cold damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
17+ 6 cold damage

A dragonsealed creature has psychic weakness 3 and cold weakness 3. Additionally, the area is filled with magical darkness. The dragon ignores concealment created by this darkness.

Phantom Tail Swing

Charge, Magic, Melee, Strike
Melee 3

Main action

Two creatures or objects

≤11 10 psychic damage; pull 2
12-16 15 psychic damage; pull 4
17+ 18 psychic damage; pull 6

3 Malice: The pull becomes a vertical slide.

Shadow Skulk

Once per turn, the dragon can shift up to their speed, leaving behind a 4 cube area of magical darkness in their starting space that lasts until the end of the encounter. The dragon ignores concealment created by this darkness. Any enemy who ends their turn in the area and has **I<3** is frightened of the dragon until the end of their next turn.

Visions in the Dark

Area, Magic
10 burst

5 Malice

Maneuver

Each enemy in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. Each target takes 3 psychic damage, and if they have **I<3** they immediately make a free strike against one creature of the dragon's choice.

Encroaching Darkness

Self

1 Malice

Free triggered action
Self

Trigger: A creature within 10 squares moves.

Effect: The dragon moves two existing cubes of magical darkness they created up to 10 squares each.

Enveloping Umbrage

2d10 + 4
Area, Magic

5 burst

≤11 Pull 2; **I<2** frightened (BoT)
12-16 Pull 4; **I<3** frightened (save ends)
17+ Pull 6; **I<4** frightened (save ends)

Villain Action 1

Each enemy in the area

Pall of Nightmares

2d10 + 4
Area, Magic

10 burst

≤11 6 psychic damage
12-16 11 psychic damage
17+ 14 psychic damage

Villain Action 2

Each enemy in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. Any target who has **I<3** is also dazed (save ends).

Absence of All Light

Villain Action 3

Special

Special

Effect: The dragon disappears from the encounter map. The dragon and three hallucinatory illusions of themselves then immediately reappear in unoccupied spaces on the encounter map, and the dragon and each illusion uses Breath of Brume. Each illusion is indistinguishable from the dragon except by supernatural means, has 1 Stamina, and has the dragon's speed. An illusion acts on the dragon's turns but can take only move actions. Once per round before or after using an ability, the dragon can trade places with any duplicate.

Gloom Dragon Malice

Malice Features

At the start of a gloom dragon's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

Dread and Terror

3 Malice

The dragon thickens the fog of their Gloaming WyrmScale Aura trait and the horrors within it. Each creature in the area takes a bane on strikes made against the dragon until the start of the dragon's next turn.

Doleful Visions

5 Malice

The dragon manifests four 2 cubes of nightmarish apparitions anywhere on the encounter map. Each creature in the area when it appears makes an **Intuition test**.

≤11 14 damage; dazed (save ends)
12-16 11 damage; dazed (EoT)
17+ 6 damage

Solo Action

5 Malice

The dragon takes an additional main action on their turn. They can use this feature even if they are dazed.

Phantasmagoria!

7 Malice

The dragon summons macabre, disquieting phantasms in a 10 cube within 1 square that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any enemy who enters the area for the first time in a round or starts their turn there takes 6 psychic damage, or 8 psychic damage if they are dragonsealed by the gloom dragon. Additionally, the enemy's Intuition score is treated as 1 lower for the purpose of resisting potencies until the end of the encounter.

Crucible Dragon

Crucible dragons are born from metallic elementals touched by the toxic combination of fiery rage and ice-cold grief—often the result of failure in the pursuit of perfection. Each dragon is a dark forge of abandoned creativity melted down in fires of spite, jealousy, and hate.

These metallic dragons are massive, heavy creatures requiring an immense release of heat to engage in flight. Their scales range from gleaming silver to blackened iron, depending on how fastidious they are about cleaning, and are occasionally gilded with more-precious metals. Their long tails terminate with a massive, hammer-like tip that can freeze over and instantly cool hot metal.

Bastions of Steel

Crucible dragons make their homes high in the mountains, most commonly in peaks cut through with thick veins of iron ore. Occasionally, one will take over a fortress or outpost, but wherever they settle, the first thing a crucible dragon sets in place is a colossal anvil. From there, the dragon consumes vast amounts of iron, slagging that iron in their belly to create a fortress of steel around them. Much of the slag is expelled into heated vats for forging, but a dragon keeps a small reserve inside their gut in case they need to melt any intrusive adventurers.

Discerning Collectors

Crucible dragons are obsessive collectors, and have a habit of narrowly focusing on a singular creation when it comes to collection and replication. Bynirak, the Rain of Ten Thousand Spears, is known to collect only the most finely crafted and powerful magic polearms in Vasloria. Joris'nyrathi, the Scorching Aegis, is said to have a collection of shields that would rival any god of the forge.

All crucible dragons manage to accrue large amounts of armaments and armor in their hoards. They care little for gems and gold, other than for melting down as filigree or embossing the weapons and armor they forge.

Flawed Pursuits

The failure that spawned a crucible dragon drives their obsessive pursuits. They endlessly attempt to reproduce the perfect treasures they count among their most prized possessions, but can only recreate flawed copies at a fraction of their original power. Discarded projects, melted heaps of raw iron, and scrap angrily embedded into cavern walls perpetually surround a crucible dragon as examples of their failures, perpetuating a cycle of obsessive rage, grief, and inescapable decline.

Crucible Dragon Languages

The oldest of crucible dragons are known to speak some Vastariax, though younger dragons are typically silent. However, survivors of an encounter with a younger crucible dragon sometimes report the monster using the Caelian phrases “not enough” and “mine.”

Crucible Dragon's Domain

If the encounter map is a location the dragon has occupied for 1 week or more, melted metal and blades coat nearly every surface. Any creature other than the dragon who starts their turn in physical contact with a surface on the encounter map takes 5 damage. Such creatures take an additional 5 damage when they take damage from being forced into a surface on the map. Whenever an enemy in the encounter uses an ability that deals lightning damage, they take 1d6 damage to themselves and each enemy and object adjacent to them.



Crucible Dragon

Dragon, Elemental

Level 6 Solo

EV 96

4	8	450	6	7
Size	Speed	Stamina	Stability	Free Strike

Immunity: Fire 6
Movement: —**Weakness:** —**Might +4****Agility -1****Reason +3****Intuition +3****Presence +2****Skull Solo Monster****End Effect:** At the end of each of their turns, the dragon can take 10 damage to end one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. This damage can't be reduced in any way.**Solo Turns:** The dragon can take two turns each round. They can't take turns consecutively.**Skull Magnetized WyrmScale Aura**

The dragon's scales create a 3 aura of magnetism around them that affects large masses of metal. Any creature who enters the area for the first time in a round or starts their turn there while wearing metal or while slagged (see **Slag Spew**) is pulled up to 2 squares toward the dragon. A creature pulled this way who has **M<3** is unable to willingly move away from the dragon.

Slag Spew

Area, Magic

Icon 10 x 2 line within 1**Signature Ability**

Main action

Icon Each creature and object in the area**Effect:** Each target makes an **Agility test**.

≤11	13 fire damage; the target is slagged (save ends)
12-16	10 fire damage; the target is slagged (save ends)
17+	6 fire damage

A slagged target is coated in molten metal and takes 2d6 fire damage at the start of each of their turns. If a slagged target has **M<3** they are restrained (save ends) whenever they take cold damage.

Forge Hammer Tail Slam 2d10 + 4

Melee, Strike, Weapon

Icon Melee 3

Main action

Icon Two creatures or objects

≤11	11 damage; M<2 prone
12-16	17 damage; M<3 prone
17+	20 damage; M<4 prone

Effect: The dragon can make a free strike against each slagged target knocked prone this way.**1 Malice:** The strike deals 1d6 cold damage.**Star Heat Buffer**

Once per round while the dragon is flying using their Thermodynamic Flight ability, they give off a blast of steam to extend the duration of their flight until the end of the next round. Each creature in a 4 cube within 1 underneath the dragon when they use this ability takes 7 fire damage.

Thermodynamic Flight**1 Malice**

Area

Icon 2 burst

Maneuver

Icon Each enemy in the area**Effect:** The dragon expels blistering steam, dealing 7 fire damage to each target in the area. The dragon then shifts up to their speed vertically and can fly until the end of the round.**Hammer and Anvil****1 Malice****Icon** Self

Free triggered action

Icon Self**Trigger:** While flying, the dragon starts their turn or moves.**Effect:** The dragon drops to the ground and uses Forge Hammer Tail Slam, which deals an extra 4 damage for each square they descended. The dragon loses their ability to fly until they use **Thermodynamic Flight** again.**Skull Polarize Aura** 2d10 + 4

Area, Magic

Icon 3 burst**1 Malice**

Triggered action

Icon Each creature and object in the area**Trigger:** The dragon is targeted by two melee strikes in the current turn.**Special:** The target must be size 2 or smaller.**≤11** Push 5**12-16** Push 7**17+** Push 10, ignoring stability**Skull Heart of the Forge** 2d10 + 4**Villain Action 1**

Area, Magic

Icon 6 burst**Icon** Each enemy in the area**≤11** 4 fire damage; **I<2** frightened (save ends)**12-16** 6 fire damage; **I<3** frightened (save ends)**17+** 8 fire damage; **I<4** frightened (save ends)**Skull Subdermal Shielding****Villain Action 2****Icon** Self**Icon** Self**Effect:** Shields embedded under the dragon's scales emerge, and the dragon gains damage immunity 6 at the start of each round until the end of the encounter. If the dragon takes any damage, they lose this immunity until the end of the current round.**Skull Polarity Chaos****Villain Action 3****Icon** 10 burst**Icon** Each creature and object in the area**Effect:** Each target makes a **Might test**.**≤11** 16 damage; pull 10 or push 10**12-16** 13 damage; pull 8 or push 8**17+** 7 damage; pull 5 or push 5.**Crucible Dragon Malice****Malice Features**

At the start of a crucible dragon's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

Skull Swordfall**3 Malice**

While the dragon is flying, they shape themselves into a blade and fall. Each creature and object in the dragon's space when they hit the ground and in a 6 x 4 line within 1 square of the dragon takes 7 damage. A creature who takes this damage and has **A<4** takes 4 extra damage per square the dragon fell and is restrained (save ends). A creature not restrained this way can move into the nearest unoccupied space.

Skull Shower of Blades**5 Malice**

The dragon shakes loose a cloud of shattered weapons in a 6 x 4 line within 1 square of them. Each creature and object in the area makes an **Agility test**.

≤11 16 damage; bleeding (save ends)**12-16** 13 damage; bleeding (EoT)**17+** 7 damage**Skull Solo Action****5 Malice**

The dragon takes an additional main action on their turn. They can use this feature even if they are dazed.

Skull Meltdown**7 Malice**

The dragon superheats the ground across the encounter map until the end of the round. Any enemy who starts their turn on the ground is slagged as if affected by the dragon's Slag Spew ability.

Omen Dragon

They have been known by many names: Reaper, Blight, Sorrow, Stillness, Vengeance, Grief. The omen dragons carry as many meanings and interpretations as death itself—for they are death embodied. This dragon is a coalescing of wayward souls, the stench of death solidified, that clings to the last vestiges of this world—to the detriment of their surroundings.

Life and Death

The opposite of life isn't death—it's stagnation. When a soul refuses to move on, it lives outside the cycle of life. Souls can have any number of reasons to linger: anger, fear, sadness, a thirst for revenge. One skilled at dealing with the undead might even be able to shepherd such a soul back into its cycle. But when hundreds of souls with hundreds of unique motivations bind themselves to an elemental and form an omen dragon, the only practical way to stop them is to destroy what they've become.

As the embodiment of these wayward souls, the omen dragon wields them like weapons. They can send restless souls to grab creatures and pull them in, or to possess their attackers, compelling them to distraction in the middle of a fight. They even wrap themselves in the most durable of souls, creating a stifling aura.

Life Outside Life

Just as the omen dragon exists outside the cycle of life, so too does their domain. The omen dragon's dragonseal brings desolation and stagnancy to all living things. Growth does not happen. Living things that grow or creatures who dwell near an omen dragon's domain do not age. One can often find secret societies researching lichdom residing in

such sites, for what better place to study than a stagnant wasteland that grants one infinite time?

The effects that surround an omen dragon also mean that new life cannot begin. Civilization cannot exist, let alone prosper, without a reliable food source. When living creatures die in these dragons' domains, their bodies do not decompose. Their souls are sucked into the omen dragon, granting the creature ever more power.

Wicked Visions

To face off against an omen dragon is to stare down death itself. One can spend only so long near a choir of restless souls before being compelled to sing. For the sin of defiance, this dragon bestows upon their attackers an omen of their own death. Tarry too long near the creature, and a hero risks fulfilling that prophecy, even if they can weather the dragon's unrelenting attacks.

Omen Dragon Languages

An omen dragon speaks with the voices of all the souls they have collected. In addition to Vastriax, the dragon speaks and understands

Omen Dragon's Domain

If the encounter map is a location the dragon has occupied for 1 week or more, any creature on the map who regains Stamina regains only half the expected amount. Additionally, when a creature on the map who has a soul dies, the dragon absorbs the soul, granting the Director 1 Malice. The creature can't be brought back to life until the dragon is destroyed.



Omen Dragon

Dragon, Elemental

Level 8 Solo
EV 120

5 Size 10 Speed 550 Stamina 6 Stability 9 Free Strike

Immunity: Corruption 6
Movement: Fly

Might +3 **Agility +4** **Reason +2** **Intuition +3** **Presence +5**

Solo Monster

End Effect: At the end of each of their turns, the dragon can take 15 damage to end one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. This damage can't be reduced in any way.

Solo Turns: The dragon can take two turns each round. They can't take turns consecutively.

Deathcount

Several of the dragon's abilities impose a Deathcount on a target. At the end of every turn, a creature with a Deathcount who is within the area of the dragon's Stagnant Wyrmsscale Aura has that Deathcount reduced by 1. When a creature's Deathcount hits 0, they die. If multiple Deathcounts are imposed on a creature, they don't stack. Only the lowest Deathcount takes effect. All Deathcounts are lost when the dragon is reduced to 0 Stamina.

Stagnant Wyrmsscale Aura

The dragon's scales create a 4 aura of supernatural stagnancy around them. The area is difficult terrain for enemies, and no creature except the omen dragon can regain Stamina while in the area. Any creature dragonsealed by the omen dragon who starts their turn in the dragon's aura and doesn't have a Deathcount gains a Deathcount of 12.

Corroding Breath

Area, Magic, Ranged
5 cube within 10

Signature Ability

Main action

Each creature and object in the area

Effect: Each target makes an **Agility test**.

≤11 18 corruption damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
12-16 14 corruption damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
17+ 9 corruption damage

Only creatures with souls can be dragonsealed by the omen dragon. A dragonsealed creature appears ghastly and pale, their Presence score is treated as 1 lower for the purpose of resisting potencies, and they can't treat other creatures as allies.

Barbed Tail Swing

2d10 + 5
Charge, Melee, Strike, Weapon
Melee 4

Main action
Two creatures or objects

≤11 14 damage; M<3 bleeding (save ends)
12-16 19 damage; M<4 bleeding (save ends)
17+ 23 damage; M<5 bleeding (save ends)

3 Malice: The potency increases by 2, and each target is also pulled up to 5 squares.

Death or Victory

Once per turn, the dragon chooses one creature with a Deathcount within line of effect. That creature can choose to take 1d6 damage and lose a recovery to increase their Deathcount by 5.

Detonation

Area
10 burst

5 Malice

Maneuver

Each enemy in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. Each target takes 9 corruption damage, and the omen dragon regains Stamina equal to half the total damage dealt. The target then loses their dragonseal.

Don't Turn Away

1 Malice

Free triggered action

Self

Trigger: A creature leaves the area of the dragon's Stagnant Wyrmsscale Aura trait.

Effect: The dragon shifts up to their speed, and the Deathcount of each dragonsealed creature who comes adjacent to the dragon during this shift is reduced by 1.

Repent!

2 Malice

Ranged

Ranged 5

Free triggered action

The triggering creature

Trigger: A dragonsealed creature within distance deals damage to the dragon.

Effect: The target must choose between making a free strike against themselves or gaining a Deathcount of 5.

What You Deserve

Villain Action 1

Area, Magic

5 burst

Each enemy in the area

≤11 Pull 1; the target has a Deathcount of 10

12-16 Pull 2; the target has a Deathcount of 8

17+ Pull 3; the target has a Deathcount of 6

Effect: Each target receives a premonition of their imminent death.

Souls of the Broken

Villain Action 2

Magic, Ranged, Strike

Ranged 10

Five creatures

Effect: The dragon spits fragments of souls to attempt to possess the targets, making a separate power roll for each target.

≤11 P<5 frightened (save ends)

12-16 P<5 the target moves up to their speed toward the dragon

17+ P<5 the target makes a free strike against the nearest ally

So Long and Goodnight

Villain Action 3

Area, Magic

6 burst

Each creature in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. The dragon's eyes glow with unequalled malevolence, and any target who has a Deathcount has that Deathcount reduced to 1.

Omen Dragon Malice

Malice Features

At the start of an omen dragon's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

Black Skies

3 Malice

The dragon expands their wings to create a shroud of shadow. Until the start of the dragon's next turn, any strike made against them takes a bane.

Rise and Fall

5 Malice

The dragon flies up to 10 squares and carries fated souls with them. Each creature in the area of the dragon's Stagnant Wyrmsscale Aura trait makes a **Presence test**.

≤11 Vertical pull 10

12-16 Vertical pull 6

17+ Vertical pull 4

Solo Action

5 Malice

The dragon takes an additional main action on their turn. They can use this feature even if they are dazed.

Burn It Right Down

10 Malice

Each edge of the encounter map burns with intangible purple flames until the end of the encounter. The flames expand by 1 square at the end of every turn. Any enemy takes 5 corruption damage for each square of flames they enter.

Meteor Dragon

They dwell in the cold, airless depths of space in lair-cities built of stolen kingdoms for centuries at a time. Then without warning or mercy, a meteor dragon attacks.

Kingdom Killers

A meteor dragon's territory is hard to define. Their attacks might come ages apart, and not every dead civilization or ruined city is the work of a dragon. But when a city grows too great, an empire too powerful, or a culture too advanced, the meteor dragon descends. Their violence isn't mindless or wanton, but cold and calculated. Often, they breach dams, trigger landslides, and devastate granaries and fields, knowing that the chaos and devastation they unleash will continue long after they return to their lairs.

Cities in the Sky

Other dragons hoard trinkets and baubles. Meteor dragons claim their domain over infrastructure. Palaces, fortresses, monuments, and towers are often stolen by these creatures and brought back to their spacefaring lairs, arranged into dilapidated tableaus of the places they have obliterated. A meteor dragon's floating lair-city is both their hoard and home, fused together and secured by the dragon's glittering crystal dragoneal. Within this labyrinthine jumble of ruination, a meteor dragon lurks in wait for the next civilization to grow too comfortable.

Avatar of the Infinite

Meteor dragons have an innate mastery over gravitational forces that allows them to crush enemies and buildings on a whim. They're among

the smallest of the dragons, but the density of their bodies exudes an intense field of the cold, airless void of space around them wherever they go.

A meteor dragon's body is infused with crystalline starlight, which they can convert to a barrage of white-hot energy rays. At any distance, the dragon's presence can forever sear the minds of lesser creatures.

Voidlight Annihilation

Voidlight is the name given to the unique energy produced by the breath of a meteor dragon. It is anathema to existence, an evil energy that destroys all. Anything that exists, no matter its material, strength, or potency, is inverted and ceases to exist when bathed in voidlight.

Meteor Dragon Languages

Meteor dragons are not known for their conversational habits. When they do deign to speak, it is exclusively in Vastariax and the First Language.

Meteor Dragon's Domain

If the encounter map is a location the dragon has occupied for 1 week or more, each creature other than the dragon has their stability reduced to 0 and automatically obtains a tier 1 outcome on Agility tests. Additionally, any creature who is suffocating during the encounter takes an extra 1d6 damage at the end of each round.



Meteor Dragon

Dragon, Elemental

Level 10 Solo
EV 144

3 Size 15 Speed 650 Stamina 6 Stability 10 Free Strike

Immunity: —
Movement: Fly

Might +5 **Agility +5** **Reason +3** **Intuition +3** **Presence +5**

Solo Monster

End Effect: At the end of each of their turns, the dragon can take 20 damage to end one effect on them that can be ended by a saving throw. This damage can't be reduced in any way.

Solo Turns: The dragon can take two turns each round. They can't take turns consecutively.

Voidshroud WyrmScale Aura

The dragon's scales create a 1 aura of void space around them. Any enemy who starts their turn in the area takes 10 cold damage and is suffocating. Each time the dragon takes damage, the area of the aura increases by 1 (to a maximum of 5), and they deal an extra 5 damage the next time they use an ability that deals rolled damage.

Gravity Well

Area, Magic, Ranged
4 cube within 10

Signature Ability

Main action

Each creature and object in the area

Effect: Each target makes a **Might test**.

≤11 20 sonic damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
12-16 16 sonic damage; the target is dragonsealed (save ends)
17+ 10 sonic damage

A dragonsealed target emits a golden aura, and takes 2 damage per square moved when falling or when force moved into an obstacle.

Cosmic Tail Ray

2d10 + 5
Magic, Melee, Ranged, Strike
Melee 2 or ranged 15

Main action

Two creatures or objects

≤11 15 holy damage; **A<4** weakened (save ends)
12-16 21 holy damage; **A<5** weakened (save ends)
17+ 25 holy damage; **A<6** weakened (save ends)

Effect: If a target made weakened this way is already weakened, they are instead dazed until the end of their next turn.

Crescent Claws

Once per turn, the dragon chooses a target within 3 squares. The dragon can make a free strike against the target, and ignores banes when using abilities against the target until the start of their next turn.

Investiture of Gravity

Area, Magic
15 burst

5 Malice

Maneuver

Each enemy in the area

Effect: Each target must be dragonsealed. The dragon chooses a direction and vertical slides each target 10 squares in that direction, ignoring stability. A target who strikes an obstacle takes damage as if they had fallen the forced movement distance.

Field Collapse

Self

Free triggered action
Self

Trigger: The dragon takes damage from an ability while the area of their Voidshroud WyrmScale Aura is 2 or more.

Effect: The dragon halves the damage. Each enemy and object in the area of the dragon's Voidshroud WyrmScale Aura trait takes 5 sonic damage and is pulled up to 5 squares toward the dragon. The area of the wyrmScale aura then resets to 1.

A Hero Faces the Void

2d10 + 5
Magic, Ranged

Ranged 5

2 Malice

Free triggered action
The triggering creature

Trigger: A creature within distance spends their Heroic Resource to use an ability.

≤11 10 psychic damage; **P<4** frightened (save ends)
12-16 16 psychic damage; **P<5** frightened (save ends)
17+ 20 psychic damage; **P<6** frightened (save ends)

Effect: While frightened this way, the target can't use the triggering ability.

Impactful Arrival

Area, Magic

1-mile burst

Villain Action 1

Each creature and object in the area

Effect: Each target takes 30 fire damage, and if they have **M<5**, they are knocked prone.

Special: The dragon can use this ability before the encounter begins.

Burning Aurora

Self

Villain Action 2

Self

Effect: Until the end of the encounter, each enemy who is dragonsealed and weakened and who the dragon has line of effect to loses 1 of their Heroic Resource at the start of each of their turns (to a minimum of 0). The dragon then uses their Cosmic Tail Ray ability with a double edge, targeting four creatures or objects.

Voidlight Breath

Area, Magic

∞ × 3 line within 1

Villain Action 3

Each enemy and object in the area

Effect: Each target makes an **Agility test**.

≤11 25 damage; **I<6** the target is annihilated
12-16 21 damage; **I<5** the target is annihilated
17+ 15 damage; **I<4** the target is annihilated

An annihilated target must make the test again, decreasing the potency for themselves by 2 each time they are annihilated. A creature reduced to 0 Stamina by this dies and their soul is destroyed.

Meteor Dragon Malice

Malice Features

At the start of a meteor dragon's turn, you can spend Malice to activate one of the following features.

Liftoff

3 Malice

The next time the dragon uses their Crescent Claws ability, they can also slide the target up to 5 squares. If the target is dragonsealed, the dragon can vertical slide them instead.

Solo Action

5 Malice

The dragon takes an additional main action on their turn. They can use this feature even if they are dazed.

Starfall

5 Malice

The dragon drops stars into five 2 cubes anywhere on the encounter map. The area is difficult terrain, and each creature and object in the area when it appears makes an **Agility test**.

≤11 20 holy damage; slowed (save ends), prone
12-16 16 holy damage; slowed (save ends)
17+ 10 holy damage

Event Horizon

10 Malice

A black hole manifests as a 1 cube within 20 squares of the dragon in an unoccupied space. Each creature who has **M<5** and each object of size 3 or smaller is vertical pulled 2 squares toward the area at the start of each round, ignoring stability. Any creature who starts their turn in the area or any object in the area at the end of the round suffers the effect of the dragon's Voidlight Breath ability, and the black hole disappears.