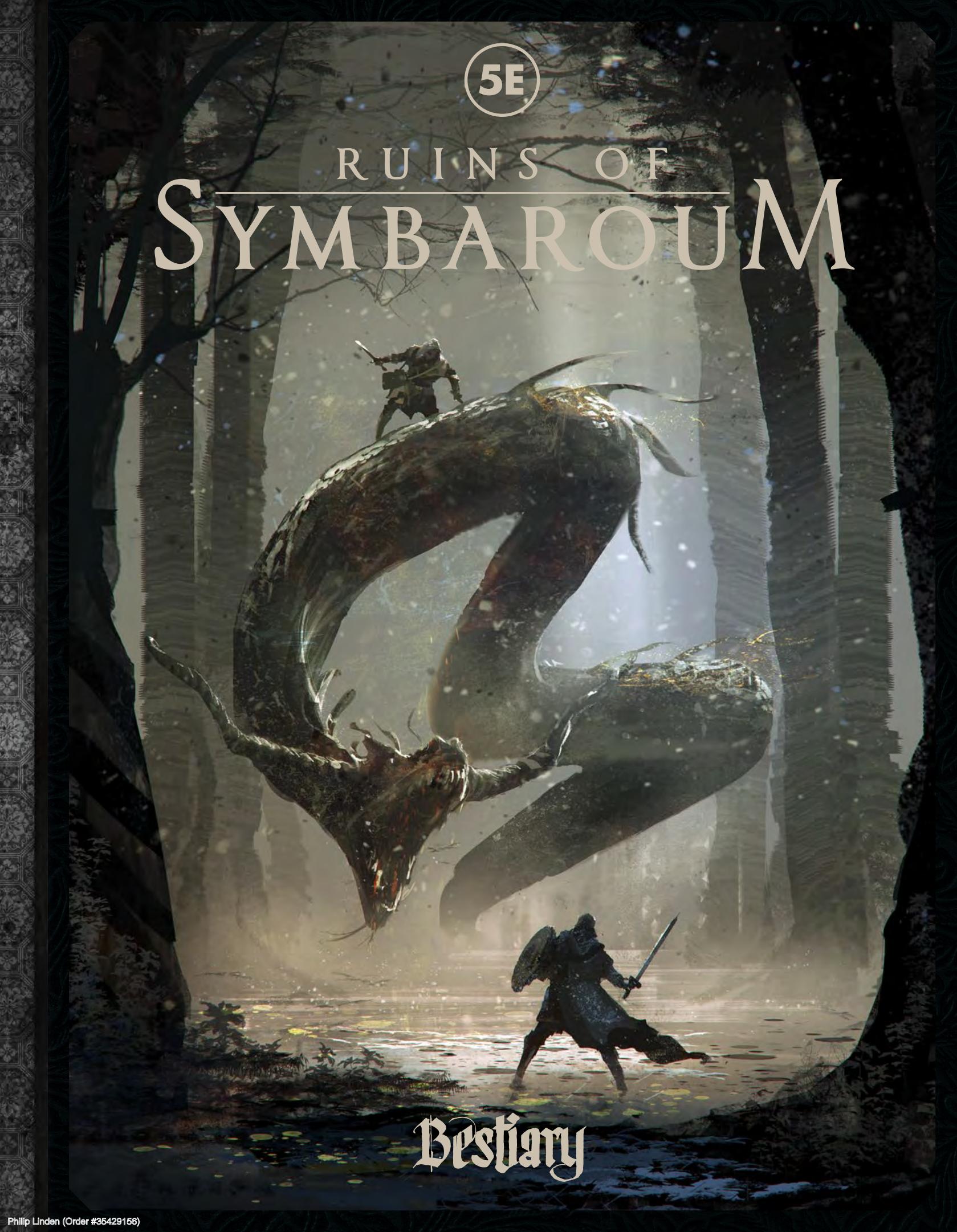


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RUINS OF
SYMBAROUM

Bestiary





RUINS OF SYMBAROUM

Bestiary

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Introduction

WELCOME TO RUINS of *Symbaroum's Bestiary*, a book featuring a collection of astonishing creatures and remarkable monsters which can be encountered in the vast forest of Davokar and its surroundings. Between its covers, you will get to meet dangers unknown, or at least not yet described, monsters and adversaries who are very eager to put your players and their characters to new and tougher tests. You will also find rules and guidelines that will be helpful when you are creating your own, unique monstrosities or when you are designing interesting challenges in Ambria, Davokar or the mountains.

We hope that the *Bestiary* will demonstrate our expectations for *Ruins of Symbaroum*. Put simply, the monsters (both those examined in detail in Section 1 and those provided in overview form in Section 2) are designed to occupy the very edge of each challenge rating. Even in a balanced combat, they should prove dangerous and even deadly, and such a 'fair fight' should be a rare thing in the most dangerous corners of the setting. The Adversaries chapter, however, contains both potential allies and enemies (and one may shift from ally to enemy, quite easily) so their statistics are more average for each challenge rating.

The book is divided into four sections, entitled Hordes of the Eternal Night, Beasts & Monsters, Adversaries, and Adaption & Expansion – sections that are complementary while being different in content, and that should provide material for many, many thrilling (and probably dangerous) hours at the gaming table.

SECTION 1: **HORDES OF THE ETERNAL NIGHT**

The opening section is in many respects based on its name-sake – the original work written by the famous monster scholar Father Almagast. Initially, we had plans to base most of the section's descriptive texts on the words of the venerable Black Cloak, but we soon noticed that his analyses, accounts and judgments would convey an all too biased and overconfident description of the creatures in question. Instead, we have striven to apply a broader, less categorical perspective, so that the presentations are more in line with

the uncertainties that actually exist when it comes to their history and nature, also supplemented with examples of the reports, depictions and legends which the Black Cloak drew from in his work.

It should also be mentioned that we have kept much of the style and design that signifies the original, in honor of Father Almagast, and maybe also in the hope that he will forgive us for diverting from his portrayals to such a degree.

The twenty-seven parts of Hordes of the Eternal Night describe one creature each. Often two or more versions of the same creature are introduced (with differences in age, size or capability), and sometimes the parts present different types of what may seem to be one and the same creature. But on the whole, the idea is that each part will serve two main ends: it should say something about and deepen the understanding of the *Ruins of Symbaroum* setting, while at the same time introduce adversaries that can challenge the gaming group in new ways, socially or tactically.

Finally, each part presents an adventure set-up. The Gamemaster can choose to take it as it is and develop it into a playable scenario, or let it act as inspiration and an example of how the various creatures can be put into action.

SECTION 2: **BEASTS & MONSTERS**

The second section of this book aims for quantity rather than depth. Ambria, Davokar and the mountain ranges are inhabited by creatures who all regard the area they occupy as theirs – their valley, their village, their bog or cave. Any-one who claims otherwise or tries to influence the site in some undesirable way is considered an adversary, or even an enemy. If they also happen to be strangers in a way that makes them difficult to understand and communicate with, they risk being thought of as monsters.

The Beasts & Monsters section contains short descriptions and stats for a large number of creatures, many of which would most likely view each other as adversaries as well as monsters. That a town guard in Ambria or a wilderness guide in Davokar calls the Blight Worm a monster is

only to be expected. But do not forget that the Blight Worm, according to its own bestial logic, probably regards explorers and others who encroach on its territory as monstrous intruders; enemies who must be fought, driven off, or preferably destroyed. As Gamemaster, it is your job to portray this diverse array of creatures and how they relate to the player characters of your gaming group.

The creatures are arranged by type: abominations, amphibians & aquatics, flora, herbivores, predators, spiders, undead, and winged creatures. The list is hardly exhaustive. Instead, our hope is that the content will serve as a starting point for the Gamemaster to draw from when designing their own creatures, challenges and adventures, and it should also be approached in a creative way. For example, adding an undead feature or trait to the Stone Boar (page 145) will change both the challenge level and feel of an encounter with such a monster. There is no right or wrong here; only more or less exciting encounters!

SECTION 3: ADVERSARIES

This section begins with an overview of the cultural beings, most of them humans, such as the champions of Prios, the lords of Ambria, Ordo Magica, outsiders, peoples of Davokar and of the Queen, townsfolk, and finally the elves and the strange trolls – said to have a secret society of their own beneath the forest.

The same advice about using these entries as inspiration applies when creating new types of monsters or adversaries. For example, by replacing the Village Witch's Shape-shifter and Nature's Lullaby with Nature's Embrace and Lay on Hands you get a witch who has chosen the red path of witchcraft instead of the green one.

The Town Guard described here is merely an example, as are the Village Witch and the Whip of Prios. If the Game-master wants to change traits, features, and other details (for instance to give the individual a more unique nature or adjust its values to better suit the player characters), this is of course perfectly alright!

SECTION 4: ADAPTION & EXPANSION

The final section of the *Ruins of Symbaroum Bestiary* features a variety of additional information. The first part provides a listing of monster categories and their features, traits, lair actions, legendary actions, reactions and swarm capabilities – enough to build hundreds of creatures that challenge the characters in different ways. This allows you to mix and match such features as you customize monsters for your group.

All the beasts, undead and abominations that the player characters may encounter in Symbaroum's game world are distinguished by the category they belong to and what monstrous traits they have – characteristics that only in the rarest occasions are associated with humans and other cultural beings. The ability scores and skills are the same for everyone, but it is only Ambria and Davokar's most dreaded creatures that can tunnel through the ground, spew cascades of fire, acid or purest Corruption, or that are so enormous they can swallow a player character whole, with weapons drawn.

This last section of the *Bestiary* also provides the rules needed to put the monsters and adversaries of previous sections into play. Most notably we include full rules on involving terrain features as part of a combat, whether gamed out on a table-top with maps and miniatures or done in your imagination, as “theater of the mind”. This prevents combats from becoming a straight set of opponents lined up against each other, bashing on each other until someone's hit points run out.

The final chapter provides rules and suggestions for expanding the number of creatures you can use. We have suggestions for how you can draw on existing OGL resources in order to produce unique challenges for your players. If you have materials for the original Symbaroum game, we also have a set of rules suggestions aimed at helping you bring a particular creature or NPC over to *Ruins of Symbaroum*.

In conclusion, we wish you much fun with this book, and we hope that it will live up to our high ambition: that its content will provide material for hundreds of unforgettable gaming hours, in a world that the same material makes even more marvelous and captivating!

Mattias, Mattias & Jacob



HORDES OF THE
ETERNAL NIGHT

SECTION 1

Hordes of the Eternal Night

It is likely true that few people, if any, know as much about the Lawgiver's enemies as I do. I know them all, from the hugest abomination to the smallest glint, from the oldest arch troll to the youngest blight spawn. I've heard the legends, studied the accounts, examined both cadavers and living specimens. Still, I have no definite answer to the question that meets me more often than others: which is the most abominable monster under Prios' sky?

The candidates are many, but naturally there are those who stand out from the rest. The ancient blight beasts which have ravaged and ruined since long before the fall of Symbaroum display both the darkness and strength to be qualified contenders. For sure, the same can be said about the world serpents, especially if the World Serpent itself should awake; also the dragons, supposing that the rumors of their return can be taken as truth. Additionally, there are more devious, and in that respect vile, beasts, such as ravenous willows, parasitical glints and lurking night swarmers – all immensely hungry, all cunning and calculating in their hunt for life and blood.

However, one must wonder if there isn't another creature that overshadows them all, a creature with the actual potential to drown all of Creation in the darkness of the Eternal Night. Even if this creature revels in light, it can be seduced to blacker paths, if it isn't warned about the temptation, taught to resist the lure and punished for every transgression. Yes, dear reader, I am speaking of you. I am speaking about the human...

Excerpt from *Hordes of the Eternal Night*, Father Almagast

Arachs

ATHE PREDATORY ARACHS comprise the remains of the Spider King's subjects, survivors of the realm that was finally crushed by the early High Chieftains of Karvosti. The existence of the arachs is closely linked to the Spider King and it was commonly assumed that they had been destroyed along with their ruler. However, in recent years there have been reports, from more or less credible groups of explorers, claiming that the arachs still live and are active in the deeper parts of Davokar. Some say they have encountered arach hunting parties in the woods or scouring for artifacts in some ruin; others testify that members of their group have been abducted, presumably to be used as slaves or eaten. According to the wildest rumors, inhabited pyramids have been found, as grand as Serand's but uncharted, sunken and overgrown with dense forest.

THESE SPORADIC, BUT all the more frequently occurring, reports and rumors have triggered speculations about the people of the Spider King being ready to rise again. A legend told among the clans warns of precisely this: that the arachs will resurrect their fallen monarch and launch a new war of conquest, spreading fear and death in Davokar. But such a development is highly unlikely. A majority of the eye-witness accounts describe the arachs as certainly dangerous but basically nothing more than the pitiful remains of a once glorious race, now roaming the forest much like other predatory beasts.

The Transformation

The process through which a cultural being is transformed into an arach involves a ceremony (see page 150 in the *Ruins of Symbaroum Gamemaster's Guide*), performed in two phases. Initially, an egg-shaped, human-sized cocoon of silken threads is spun. Through the ritual's power and clangor it is given a golden luster. This egg may wait up to a year for phase two, when a dazed or unconscious cultural being is placed within.

During the hour-long chanting of the second phase, the cocoon slowly shrinks while the threads grow harder and thicker, so that the prisoner finally is caught as if in a vice and the transformation can begin. The malnourished creature that emerges about a month later retains its memories, but is consumed by a desire to serve its new leaders and comrades. It requires a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw for it to be able to leave the collective, and then it requires a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw once a day for 10 days for it to break free and not feel a compulsion to return. However, the creature always must make a successful DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to take an action which is directly harmful to other arachs.

IT IS SAID that the humanoid arachs can be mistaken for humans from a distance, especially if they dress in human garb. But on closer inspection, there is no mistaking their spider-like attributes: four spider-eyes in a row, jaws with poison channels, limbs with seven joints that end in three claws rather than fingers, bodies covered in bristling hairs. It may even be that there are different kinds of arachs. A few statements affirm that threatened arachs have rubbed off their hairs so as to create an irritating or even poisonous cloud around them; other witnesses claim that sometimes a single arach has a back covered in wart-like spinnerets, able to produce spider webs. Hence, one theory is that arachs evolve towards the more and more spider-like, without knowing if this change has to do with maturation, or if it is an effect that comes with elevated social standing or some kind of holy exaltation.

Adventure Set-up

ATHE EXALTED ARACH Maz-at-tezz has started spinning the gospel of spiders in a sunken, partially collapsed and completely overgrown ruin at the border between bright and dark Davokar. Her Poisoners have banished (or killed) all beasts and a goblin tribe from the area, and started their most important tasks - hunting for artifacts in nearby ruins and ensuring the growth of the princess' army. The latter is achieved by taking human prisoners to the bottom level of the pyramid to be transformed.

The player characters might get involved when people start vanishing from some outpost or village at the border of Davokar. Maybe one of the banished goblins can be found and tells about the ruin it lived in; maybe the characters visit the goblins' former home and encounter a group of treasure-hunting Poisoners? Why not let them come across Lemelio Starak's letter in the ruin, to give them a hint of what is happening? If so, their next task will be to find the overgrown pyramid, get inside and try to free the prisoners that are yet to transform - likely with heavy resistance from Maz-at-tezz and her warriors.

Dear sister,

I am writing to you from inside an egg of golden threads, with a dying candle as my only source of light. The letters spread over the parchment as the poison spreads through my veins. My killer lies next to me, her body pierced by my trusted estoc; death has captured the many joints of her limbs at unnatural angles, and her face features the spider's four eyes in a row. Her jaws are poisonous mandibles, one of them broken and set deep in my thigh.

My other hand is squeezing the Taar-cross, wrongly called an ancient symbol of Prios by the seller in Thistle Hold. It is not a sun, it is a golden spider, the holy symbol of Angathal Taar whose realm once stretched out around a network of pyramids. Gerand's Pyramid is known and surveyed, but I found another, sunken into the ground and untouched for centuries. The Taar-cross was my key, the way into the pyramid, down to the lower chambers and the golden egg. Oh, how it sang at my touch; how it opened up, thread by thread, to expose its empty interior.

When the watchers came climbing I fled in here to avoid certain death. It was not until the egg closed that I realized that this was their intent, to drive me into this golden trap. I hear them singing out there, hoarse and with clattering jaws. Initially, I wondered if they sang for me or their fallen sister, but now I realize that it is part of the ritual. I will transform, I will die and be reborn as one of them. You who are reading this letter, please take it to my sister in the town of Thistle Hold.

Beloved sister, the house is now yours, and you won't have to put up with my sloppiness and dreams of the Spider King. I have been drafted into his army, and the next time we meet, your poisonous words will be nothing compared to the venom of my jaws.

Respectfully, Lemelio Starak

(Crumpled up letter, found
on a dead arach, slain in
the depths of Davokar)

Arach Exalted

These arachs are the product of an even more dreadful ceremony than the one that produces a new arach and have become even more spider-like. They serve as leaders and advisors of the newly recovering arach population and their many-layered plans will spell doom for most visitors to the forest.

Leader of Many. Arach exalted are often accompanied by arach poisoners, tricklestings and etterherds, usually at least one of each.

Tactics. Urges its companions to attack first and focuses on one target at a time, capturing and poisoning it while all who come near suffer from its harmful aura of poisonous hairs.

Lair Action. If the arach exalted is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) release tiny hairs into the air, causing irritation to creatures' within 60 feet of it. Arachs and spiders are not affected by the hairs. Other creatures must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the start of their turn. On a failure, the irritation is equivalent to the character being poisoned until the beginning of its next turn. An arach

exalted cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

Arach Poisoner

These creatures are responsible for collecting 'volunteers' for the golden cocoons and also serve as guards and warriors for older arachs.

Tactics. The poisoner tries to encircle and flank the enemy to gain advantage, after which they rely on their venomous bites.

The thread that's been spun has beginning, has end, but never ceases to be. The thread that's been ended still remains, forever bound to existence — essential, unbroken, unchanging. If end is merged with end, beginning is void, end is void, and that which ended becomes eternal. So shall happen, one day, to Angathal Taar, our sovereign and lord of the world.

Excerpt from Taar's Prophecy

Arach Exalted

Medium humanoid (Arach)

Armor Class 19 (chitin armor)

Hit Points 142 (15d8 + 75)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +9

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +8

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages The languages it knew before being transformed; Spider-tongue

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

Manner proudly observing

Shadow rusty-brown with golden stripes, like unpolished amber (Corruption: 0/6)

Equipment

Chitin Armor. The arach's armor class is equal to 10 plus its Dexterity modifier and its Constitution modifier.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the arach exalted fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

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

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the arach exalted knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The arach exalted ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. **Hit:** 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes 18 (4d8) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

Web (Recharge 5–6). Ranged Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. **Hit:** The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 14 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect also ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 10, 15 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Command. The arach exalted can select another arach which takes its turn next, instead of at its normal initiative count. This effect lasts for only one round.

Attack. The arach exalted can make a bite attack.

Recharge (Costs 2 Actions). The arach exalted automatically recharges its web feature.



Arach Poisoner

Medium humanoid (Arach)

Armor Class 17 (chitin armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages The languages it knew before being transformed; Spider-tongue

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner clacks fiercely with its mandibles

Shadow spotted gray-brown, like a chunk of bog iron
(Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment —

Chitin Armor. The arach's armor class is equal to 10 plus its Dexterity modifier and its Constitution modifier.

Pack Tactics. The arach has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the arach's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

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

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the arach knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The arach ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes 9 (2d8) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

Bestiaal

BCCORDING TO THEIR own tales, the age-old race of shapeshifters calling themselves bestiaals began as allies to the humans of Symbaroum, but eventually became their slaves and enemies. Judging by some of the fragmentary mosaics found at Odaban, assumed to tell about the siege of Symbar, the bestiaals fought against the humans, alongside the elves. It took the scholars many years to realize that the multi-shaped creatures depicted in the mosaics were of the same kind, sometimes winged, sometimes not; at times tall and sturdy, at other times tiny and seemingly harmless. A bestiaal's natural form – the one they wake up in every morning and assume at the moment of death – is human-like with beastly features, sparse fur and a hairless tail. Because of their shapeshifting ability, they may assume a variety of forms and traits, thus adjusting to the requirements of the situation.

AFTER THE FALL of Symbaroum, the shapeshifters withdrew into isolation amongst the Ravens. Lately they have reappeared in regions occupied by humans – first in Vajvod, then spreading to the west and south. Their agenda, if they indeed have a common one, is unknown.

The individuals encountered in Bright Davokar and in Ambrian border settlements and outposts seem to act alone or in small groups, as hunters, or more precisely: as predators. According to many horrific stories, not even humans are safe from their appetites.

FROM WHAT IS known, almost all members of this race are capable and dangerous in combat. However, there are some tales describing bestiaals who truly excel in this respect; individuals feared even by others of their kind. This is supposedly the matter of specimens whose highly developed shapeshifting ability makes them capable of entering into a kind of symbiotic relationship with glints (see page 46). So far, no such glint-carrying bestiaals have drawn attention to themselves on Ambrian soil, and this is fortunate since they are said to be both lightning fast and extremely tough. On the other hand, there are stories from both Thistle Hold and Kastor about bestiaals having vanished or been found slaughtered after claiming to have glint-carriers on their trail. Maybe there is some truth to the analysis of Order Master Eufrynda, that most bestiaals found in Ambria are on the run, and that the glint-carriers are sent from one or more settlements hidden in the vales of the Ravens?

I didn't understand the odd looks and signs of protection that were aimed at us in Thistle Hold, and it took a long while before I realized that they actually were about our choice of guide. The masked girl was reclusive and careful not to show her face in view of others, but there is no doubt she was qualified – she found the quickest route through the forest, and on several occasions her instincts led us unharmed past ambushes and traps. Sure, she tracked like a dog, sniffing along the ground, but this is a method also practiced by barbarians.

Honestly, I couldn't see what caused the alarm and worry – until we were surrounded by dragouls. The girl grew wings and flew over us with her bow singing, to later dive to the ground and launch into battle, suddenly tall, muscular and with long, razor-sharp claws. I must say, at that moment our guide became the most interesting thing about our expedition.

Brother Erbalmer
expedition leader in the name of Prios



Truesight and Bestiaals

A character with truesight sees the natural form of the bestiaal, without any of the modifications made possible by their metamorphosis feature. Dispel magic can remove their new traits (as if it were a 3rd level spell) but they can use their metamorphosis feature to reactivate them. An antimagic field prevents the bestiaal from using the metamorphosis feature.

Bestiaal (Clawing Fighter)

Medium humanoid (Bestiaal)

Armor Class 15 (leathery skin)

Hit Points 51 (6d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Bestiaal

Challenge 3 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner purposefully aggressive

Shadow deep, unreflective gray, like a worn lump of lead (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment

Enlarge (Recharge 5–6). The bestiaal uses its bonus action to increase in size one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying for 1 minute. It gains 6 temporary hit points. It does an additional 1d4 damage on melee attacks while enlarged.

Leathery Skin. The bestiaal's armor class is equal to 12 plus its dexterity modifier if it is not wearing armor.

Metamorphosis. The bestiaal can use a bonus action to change its body, changing its enlarge, leathery skin or claws traits out for others given on page 15.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bestiaal makes two claws attacks.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

Adventure Set-up

THE CHARACTERS RECEIVE a distress call from a logging camp or similar outpost in Davokar – people have been killed or taken, up to two at a time; all that has been found are the slaughtered remains. The best (maybe only?) way to expose the murderers is to use live bait, possibly one or two disguised player characters. At the first attempt they can be attacked by something entirely different (predators, rage trolls or elves), but it is soon evident that these could not have caused the previous killings.

A second attempt yields results; they are attacked by 4–5 bestiaals. However, as the trap slams shut, one or more bestiaals fall to their knees, begging for mercy. If the characters let them live, they disclose that they are refugees from a mountain village, and that the glint-carrier sent to hunt them down holds two of their children captive and forces them to feed him with fresh meat, preferably human. The characters will have to choose whether to slay the hunting party, help them to kill the glint-carrier, or try to rescue the children so that the refugees can get away from their tormentor.

Bestiaal (Glint Carrier)

Medium humanoid (Bestiaal)

Armor Class 17 (leathery skin)

Hit Points 94 (9d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Bestiaal

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner shifts between calm and furious

Shadow deep gray with fiery streaks, like a faintly glowing lump of lead (Corruption: 0/7)

Equipment

Aggressive. The bestiaal can use its bonus action to move a distance equal to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

Blood Frenzy. The bestiaal has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

Enlarge (Recharge 5–6). The bestiaal uses its bonus action to increase in size one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying for 1 minute. It gains 9 temporary hit points. It does an additional 1d4 damage on melee attacks while enlarged.

Leathery Skin. The bestiaal's armor class is equal to 12 plus its dexterity modifier.

Metamorphosis. The bestiaal can use a bonus action to change its body, changing its aggressive, blood frenzy, enlarge, or leathery skin traits out for others given on page 15.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bestiaal makes two axe attacks.

Axe. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The bestiaal adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the bestiaal must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Bestiaal (Clawing Fighter)

This bestiaal has adapted itself for melee combat.

Tactics. Moves over the field of battle to reach the enemy's archers and mystics. When these are down, it takes on the melee fighters.

Bestiaal (Glint Carrier)

This bestiaal has a symbiotic relationship with the glint, giving it more power, making it more dangerous and cruel.

Tactics. Walks straight towards the enemy's strongest fighter to slay it with flashing strikes. When the glint-carrier dies, a glint is released and immediately attacks (see page 48).

Metamorphosis Traits

A bestiaal can activate one or more of these features as a bonus action on their turn. Normal bestiaals can have no more than three features available, while a glint carrier can have four.

FEATURE	ABILITY SCORE	NOTES
Aggressive	—	The bestiaal can use its bonus action to move a distance equal to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.
Awareness	—	The bestiaal has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.
Blood Frenzy	—	The bestiaal has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.
Bite	Str or Dex	The bestiaal makes an attack against a target within 5 feet. To hit is its proficiency bonus (2, or 3 for glint-carrier) plus the chosen ability modifier. On a hit, it does 1d8 plus chosen ability modifier in piercing damage.
Claws	Str or Dex	The bestiaal makes an attack against a target within 5 feet. To hit is its proficiency bonus (2, or 3 for glint-carrier) plus the chosen ability modifier. On a hit, it does 1d8 plus chosen ability modifier in slashing damage.
Enlarge (Recharge 5-6)	—	The bestiaal uses its bonus action to increase in size one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying for 1 minute. It gains temporary hit points equal to its number of Hit Dice. It does an additional 1d4 damage on melee attacks while enlarged.
Leathery Skin	Dex	The bestiaal's armor class is equal to 12 plus its Dexterity modifier.
Reduce (Recharge 5-6)	—	The bestiaal uses its bonus action to reduce in size by one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying until the beginning of its next turn. Its current and maximum hit points are reduced by its number of Hit Dice (to a minimum of 1 hit point). Its melee attack does the minimum possible damage (as if the bestiaal rolled a 1 on all damage dice).
Wings	—	The bestiaal gains a flight speed of 30 feet.

Playing a Bestiaal

IT IS FULLY possible, though challenging, to play a character of a bestiaal origin. It is challenging in two respects: first in the sense that bestiaals do not have a given role in Ambria, making them difficult to portray; second, it can be difficult from a rules perspective, to handle the flexibility provided by the trait Metamorphosis. Nonetheless, if the player is prepared to accept these conditions, members of this beastly race may prove very rewarding to play.

BESTIAAL TRAITS

All bestiaals share a set of inborn tendencies and features.

- ◆ **Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2. Increase any other ability score by 1.
- ◆ **Age.** Bestiaals are adults at 15; few know how long they live naturally but seeing an active 40-year old bestiaal is almost unknown.
- ◆ **Size.** Bestiaals average somewhere around 6 feet high and around 200 pounds of dense bone and muscle. Your size is Medium and you have a d8 Hit Die. At first level you have 8 hit points plus your

Constitution modifier. When you gain a level in any class, you gain an additional Hit Die and 5 (1d8) plus your Constitution modifier hit points.

- ◆ **Speed.** You have a base speed of 30 feet.
- ◆ **Metamorphosis.** You can shapeshift, adding new features to your body. See the chart above.
- ◆ **Pariahs.** Bestiaals are poorly treated by those few who acknowledge their existence. You have disadvantage on Charisma checks with people of other origins.
- ◆ **Languages.** Bestiaals have their own language and know a little of the local tongues (Goblin, Ambrian, Barbarian).

BESTIAAL NAMES

Native bestiaal names sound to many other cultural beings like barking or growling sounds. Bestiaals working with others tend to adopt nicknames, which often bear more than a passing resemblance to the sorts of names given to pets.

BESTIAAL BACKGROUND

Use the goblin Wild background and adapt it for the bestiaal.

Colossi

Well, sure, you'd better believe I have seen a coloss up close, terrifyingly close. It was on one of those days when you'd rather stay in the tent - a gushing rain fell on the tree tops; the droplets smashed into a wet mist or assembled on the leaves to fall in heavy sheets that truly hammered against the scalp. But I buckled on my quiver and forced myself out to check the traps.

One of the traps was placed close to the ruin of the Anchor Cross, and it was there I found him. That he was a witch, I knew immediately, from his clothes and the mask of bark. Lifeless. As if dead. No visible wounds but with black stains on the face, as if from acid or possibly... well, from death?

Anyway, I hurried to feel his pulse. The heart was beating, though faintly. Shortly after I started dabbing his face with an herbal cure, I heard it - a loud creaking bang behind me, as if a sturdy tree branch slowly broke asunder. I turned my neck, was met by an abysmal bellowing and a foreleg that was raised to crush me. I froze. Completely paralyzed.

At that moment the witch awoke, and the coloss froze, like me. If the herbal cure had taken one single breath longer to work, I would have become one with the soil, and you would not exist. That's the truth of it!

Grandpa Toste brags to his grandchildren over a pint of beer at *The Rusty Dragon*, Kastor

AMONG AMBRIANS AS well as most barbarian clans, the legendary mounts of the witches are called Colossi. These massive carnivores that look like a blend of wood and flesh, instill fear and respect in any and all, but maybe these feelings would be even stronger if those meeting them knew their true origin. In truth, the colossi are not beasts like all others. They are created.

THE MYSTICAL CEREMONY used by the witches in this context is a well-preserved secret, only known by the most experienced among them - the Huldra, the Keepers of the clans and their equals. When speaking to outsiders, the initiates claim that the colossi came with the Iron Pact from the west, which is supposedly why they use the Elven word for the creatures, eliend, as often as they say coloss.

THE ACT OF creation starts with a witch who is balancing on the edge of becoming blight-born, and who

willingly agrees to be sacrificed in order to continue fighting. During the ceremony that transforms the witch into a hybrid of flesh and wood, the subject is cleansed of all Corruption, and stripped of memories and will. All that remains is the unruly hunger of the coloss and a desire to serve the witch the ritual bound it to.

THIS ALSO EXPLAINS why wild specimens are so rare. Lonesome colossi are always the result of their witch being killed or otherwise hindered in caring for their creation. Such individuals are instinctively drawn to places where beasts or cultural beings gather, with the aim of finding a new master, worthy of their loyalty and assistance. They often linger in an area for an extended period of time, and if they do not get help to satisfy their hunger for fresh meat, they will sooner or later attack - to feed before they journey onwards to some other place.



Adventure Set-up

HE CHARACTERS ARRIVE at a settlement around which a lone and hungering coloss is stalking. Initially, tracks are found in the vicinity; later, loud creaks are heard when the frustrated beast beats down fully grown trees, followed by actual observations. Then come the first attacks (possibly against livestock), soon followed by the slaying of a cultural being.

One of the authority figures in the settlement asks the characters for help in dealing with the situation. This can be done in several ways – direct combat is possible, but a passed DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check opens up the option to feed, and hence calm, the creature. Whatever they do, a serious complication is revealed: someone recognizes a piece of equipment on the coloss (a witch's braid, facial mask or similar) and knows who used to ride and care for this particular animal: the witch Ayda.

This is deeply worrying, since every fall (or at some other suitable time) the settlement suffers problems associated with a passing monster (arch troll, winter elf, lindworm or similarly powerful being). Ayda has always helped the residents to divert the attention of the hungering, threatening monster when it passes the settlement; with her gone, maybe dead, the residents are in serious danger.

The player characters are asked to track down Ayda. As a suggestion, they find her dead, after having been captured or ambushed, but among her belongings they discover instructions on how to divert the monster's attention from the settlers. Putting these instructions into practice also falls on the characters, and if they fail they must prepare for a really tough fight – or they can decide to run away, knowingly leaving hundreds of children, women and men in great peril.

The witch's coloss can carry
The witch's coloss can trample
Kick and scratch and chew, indeed,
Yes, that is what the colossi need.

Popular children's song in Davokar

Coloss

This construct is given life by a ceremony that transforms an almost blight-born witch into a creature of unending hunger and violence.

Tactics. The coloss charges forth, trampling its enemies to death.

Coloss

Huge construct

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 133 (14d12 + 42)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +7

Skills Athletics +11, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

Manner stoically enraged

Shadow trembling bright green, like beard-lichens in the wind (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment —

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the coloss fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Siege Monster. The coloss deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The coloss makes two hooves attacks at the same target.

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. Hit: 20 (2d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Move. The coloss can move up to its speed.

Attack. The coloss can make a hooves attack.

Defend (requires 2 actions). Attacks against the coloss have disadvantage until the beginning of the coloss's next turn.



Create Eliend, Ceremony

The mystical ceremony which transforms a witch into a coloss requires a minimum of four participants, one of which acts as Officiant. It takes a whole day to complete and the participants jointly suffer 5d6 temporary Corruption, divided equally between them, and without causing any further side-effects. One of the participants is bound to the newly awakened creation, just as if it was a familiar.

Furthermore, should a witch encounter a lone coloss in the wilds and gain its trust, they can bind to the creature using the ritual *find familiar*. Unlike normal familiars, the coloss cannot change shape and does not return if it is destroyed. Instead the witch must repeat the ceremony.

Corrupted Nature

We had the witch surrounded, and she knew it. She had nowhere to run; with the face of the cliff on one side and the swamp on the other, she retreated into the gorge and had her cursed thorn beasties hinder our advancement.

Several of our guides hesitated when ordered to follow her down into the shadows, but I pressed on. Admittedly, the floor of the gorge offered a disheartening view – ashen gray, as if the rock itself had been incinerated and no life later returned; even the air was dry in a way which suggested that the winds could not bring moisture into this valley of cinders. A befitting place for the death of a witch, I thought. It was not until we started our attack that I realized that her withdrawal was carefully planned, that she too knew she would die and had decided to take us with her. As our warriors moved in, we spoke our prayers and weaved our spells while the witch called upon her dark allies to combat us. The Corruption oozed in the air, as unavoidable here as everywhere else. We knew what we were doing – fire may be fought with fire, by those who are disciplined enough. Or so we thought. Then and there, we were totally wrong.

Corruption fell to the ground like black teardrops, and where each drop landed, a daemon appeared to immediately attack – us or the witch; they did not discriminate in deciding who to tear asunder. The last sound I heard before my squires dragged me away wounded was the witch laughing, a laugh that turned into a scream when she and the rest of my troop were destroyed in the depths of that cursed gorge.

Templar Aralo Patio, statement after the return to Templewall

Discovering Corrupt Nature

That you are entering an area with corrupt nature can be noticed with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check by anyone with Bushcraft or Shadow-sight. With Bushcraft the character realizes that the place is unnatural and dangerous; with Shadow-sight it is also possible to perceive the Corruption in the air, ground and waters. Corrupted areas can be as small as a few hundred paces or as large as a handful of miles across. If the check is successful, it is possible to turn back and find a way around the area, at the cost of a longer route (+1d12 hours).

CHERE IS NO doubt that in the deeper parts of Davokar, there are places which are very dissimilar from what normally passes for nature. Whoever claims that similar phenomena can be encountered in the mountains and on the rolling fields of Ambria is also correct. No matter if the area's Corruption has long been evident, if it has bloomed after centuries in fallow or if it recently came to be, there are places that should not be visited; places whose wrath threatens all that live. Unfortunately, the malice can be difficult to notice before it is too late.

CORRUPT NATURE APPEARS in many different forms – it may be dense fog banks that slowly drift through the woods, places where the ground and all vegetation



The hallucinations that sometimes occur in corrupted areas can feel so real that they in themselves may be the end of an entire adventuring party.

Understanding the Danger

When the characters have established that they are in a corrupted area, someone with the feature Shadow-sight or proficient in Arcana may try to predict what is coming. Passing a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) or Intelligence (Arcana) check gives information regarding which type of danger/dangers are likely found in the area (Virulent Corruption, Retaliation and/or Materialization). Should the check pass by 5 or more, the character also gets an idea of how grave the dangers are (the Game-master gives a hint of the challenge rating.)



have blackened, wetlands reeking of putrefaction, or areas suffering from tears in the physical structure of the world. The witches call such places by names like Blight Mists, Night Mirrors, Black Lands and World Wounds, and claim that they all vary in strength and size. There are tales of World Wounds that have turned into gaping Doom Chasms, linked to the Yonderworld and spewing out hungering daemons; of creamy mists hovering about and following monstrous primal blight beasts; even of grounds stained by darkness so vile that they can thoroughly corrupt travelers and beasts at first breath.

IN COMMON FOR all these types of blighted nature is that they can harm the living in many different ways: they can infect with Corruption, amplify outbreaks of Corruption or embody Corruption in the physical form of abominations and daemons. Regarding the latter, the beasts may appear in different ways – at times they crawl out of the Black Land's mires; at times they seem to materialize from the fog; and sometimes they force their way through the tears of the world wounds.

»The uncultivated man is like a mire sick with corruption: reeking, terrifying and full of abominable impulses.«

Eufrynda, notorious Order Master

Adventure Set-up

HNE WAY TO give corrupt nature a clear role in an adventure is to let a person that the characters are hunting flee into the mists, out onto the blackened or putrid grounds, or to an area plagued by World Wounds. Maybe the prey just happens to end up there, or it is a calculated move – the enemy trusts itself to find the way out and hopes that the hunting characters will not.

As for the characters, the question is whether they perceive the danger or if they unknowingly run into the area and risk getting lost. Chances are that both hunters and prey get stuck in the area; maybe the situation forces them to negotiate a temporary truce so they can face the dangers of Corruption together?

Corrupted Land Effects

When encountering corrupt nature, the following tables are used to determine what dangers are found in the area. The Gamemaster rolls $2d3 - 1$, this is the number of rolls for the Corrupt Land Effects table. If several rolls are to be made, the same result may not appear twice; if this happens, roll again. Likewise, only one outcome resulting in Virulent Corruption is allowed. Finally, note that if more than one roll results in encounters with attacking creatures, these will appear in waves with $1d4 + 1$ rounds between them – always with the weakest first, and then in accordance with rising might.

Combating Corrupt Nature

The feature Nature's Lullaby can always be used to traverse areas of corrupt nature; when it is used, those protected will not suffer the effects of Virulent Corruption or Retaliation, and the area's hunting daemons will keep at a distance.

Most places can also be temporarily cleansed or healed with spells like hallow, but this requires the mystic to actually be in the area and remain safe while performing the ritual. Doing this means that the Virulent Corruption is neutralized for a period from one day up to a whole year (the Gamemaster decides), after which it returns to (un)normal. How much truth is in the legends of ancient, powerful ceremonies with the power to actually heal corrupted nature is debated – and this to no avail, since the knowledge of such rituals is long forgotten.

CORRUPT LAND EFFECTS

1d20 Type	Effect
1 Virulent Corruption	For each hour, pass a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 temporary Corruption.
2 Virulent Corruption	For each hour, pass a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1d4 temporary Corruption.
3 Virulent Corruption	For each hour, pass a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1d4 temporary Corruption.
4 Virulent Corruption	For each hour, pass a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 permanent Corruption.
5 Retaliation	Double the amount of temporary Corruption gained in this area.
6 Retaliation	When you gain Corruption in this area, you take necrotic damage equal to the Corruption as well.
7 Retaliation	For each point of Corruption you gain in this area you take 1d4 necrotic damage as well.
8 Retaliation	Every time a creature gains Corruption a Scorer Daemon (page 90) appears and attacks a random target.
9 Retaliation	Hallucinations – you must succeed at a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw at the start of your turn or use your turn to fight imaginary threats.
10 Retaliation	Greater hallucinations – you must succeed at a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw at the start of your turn or use your turn to fight imaginary threats.
11 Materialization	2d4 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Humans (page 122)
12 Materialization	2d8 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Humans (page 122)
13 Materialization	1d4 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Aboars (page 120)
14 Materialization	1d8 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Aboars (page 120)
15 Materialization	1d4 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Elk (page 121)
16 Materialization	1d8 daemons with the stat block of Blight-born Elk (page 121)
17 Materialization	1 daemon with the stat block of a Primal Blight Beast (page 124)
18 Materialization	1 Scorer Daemon (page 90)
19 Materialization	1d4 Scorer Daemons (page 90)
20 Materialization	1 Intruder Daemon (see below)

Intruder Daemon

Intruder daemons emerge from the corrupted land, crossing over from the Yonderworld.

Tactics. The intruder daemon works to keep the characters contained within the corrupted area.

Intruder Daemon

Large fiend

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 138 (12d10 + 72)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	13 (+1)	22 (+6)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +10, Wis +6

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

Manner fierce and loyal

Shadow like a black shadow against a deep blue backdrop (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment —

Aggressive. The daemon can use its bonus action to move a distance equal to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The daemon makes two attacks with its claws or its demon bow.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d12 + 7) slashing damage.

Demon Bow. *Magical Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) magical temporary Corruption damage.

REACTIONS

Preemptive Attack. When a creature comes within reach, the daemon can make a Claws attack.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The daemon can take 1 legendary action, 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 daemon regains its spent legendary action at the start of its turn.

Move. The daemon can move up to its speed.

Shoot. The daemon makes a demon bow attack.

Darkling

Loved ones, dear family, I will never return. I set off to find happiness, and I found it in the most peculiar place, in the strangest of circumstances.

The journey through the woods cost us many lives, so many that only four of us finally reached Whitewater and continued towards the Twilight Field. If this field really exists, and if it is full of Twilight Thistles, I will never know, because two days upstream we walked straight into my owners' ambush. We heard nothing, saw nothing, did not get the slightest feeling of unease, until the arrows were lodged in our legs, stopping us from running away.

Slender inhumans appeared from out of the greenery, disarmed us and tied us up in a row. My colleagues were eaten within a couple of weeks, but you know me - my stubborn inquisitiveness must have amused them, or made them curious, because I still live, as their obedient slave, servant and medicus. I am no longer afraid; all that remains is a harmonious, almost euphoric feeling of finally really living, as life is intended to be.

Forget me, just as I will forget about you. Know that I am happy.

hedla, your mother and spouse

To whom it may concern,
The jewel in this flask is
yours. All I ask in return
is that you deliver the
letter to master Ildered,
my husband, by the
Octagon in Rivenia.

Letter found in a glass bottle, floating on Lake Volgoma



THERE ARE BEINGS in the Davokar region which almost never leave the woods and thus are seldom seen on Ambrian soil. One of these is the creature that in ancient barbarian legends is called the Darkling, or sometimes Nightling. They are an intelligent race which has existed in the area since long before humans came wandering across the Ravens. It appears they have never been dominant, never sought conquest and barely left any trace of their existence in the form of buildings or writing.

THE FEW ACCOUNTS that speak of these creatures are consistent on a couple of issues, whether they come from alleged encounters or conversations with knowledgeable barbarians. Darklings do not seem to discriminate between cultural beings and the beasts of the wilds, meaning that humans as well as elves and trolls are counted among their prey. Aside from this, their strangest and most prominent feature is their resistance to mystical influence – a characteristic that some witches claim has to do with them, from tradition and necessity, living in total harmony with Wyrtha, without trying to cultivate, refine or manipulate nature.

AS A CONSEQUENCE, the darklings are genuine hunter-gatherers, and their hunting takes place in both the woods and the Underworld. They use simple weapons, such as bows, spears and traps, often without metal, giving them the quality Blunt. However, the leaders sometimes have tips of bog iron, or weapons inherited from killed prey animals.

Darkling Language

The darklings communicate with a combination of gestures and sounds, where the latter are enough to convey functional messages, while the former add value judgments, emotions and detail. One effect of this is that darkling jokes are often formulated so that the sounds say one thing and the gestures another.

A mystic that casts *comprehend languages* or *tongues* receives the meaning of darkling speech without the nuance of the gestures. A character with the Loremaster feature can learn the complete language, see Training on page 41 of the *Player's Guide*. Access to a Darkling group or captive cuts the time required in half.

Darkling Hunter

Most of the tribe serves as hunters or gatherers, finding what the darklings need on a day by day basis. As described above, they make no distinction between animals and people and eat almost anything they catch or find.

Tactics. The darklings fight unhindered by darkness and hunt in groups, commanded by a strong leader. Aside from defending the leader, they aim for the target he or she has appointed. If the opposition seems tough the leader may give the order to retreat, but they will not be taken alive and if someone in their group cannot get away they all stay and fight to the death.

Darkling Hunter

Medium humanoid (Darkling)

Armor Class 14 (animal skins)

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Darkling

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner always tense

Shadow shimmering dark green, like damp moss on a stump in the moonlight (Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment protective braid, talismans, 3 spears

Ambusher. In the first round of a combat, the darkling has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

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

Regeneration. The darkling regains 2 hit points at the start of its turn unless it took necrotic damage since the beginning of its last turn.

ACTIONS

Spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack. Blunt: this weapon does not generate critical hits (treat a result of 20 as an automatic but otherwise normal hit).

Primitive Bow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60/240, one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. Blunt: this weapon does not generate critical hits (treat a result of 20 as an automatic but otherwise normal hit).



Symbols carved on rock face by Lake Volgoma; the earliest known distress call from a human captured by darklings.

Darkling Leader

Darkling leaders direct each group according to what they think is best. Darkling leaders have a tendency to become attached to resilient prey, treating a defeated creature as a chosen pet as long as they comply with the leader's wishes.

Tactics. The darkling leaders keep a cool head, remain at a distance from the enemy and coordinate any attacks. Attacking with ranged weapons during a tactical retreat is their usual strategy when facing aggressive opposition.

Darkling Leader

Medium humanoid (Darkling)

Armor Class 15 (animal skins)

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Perception +4, Persuasion +3, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Darkling

Challenge 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner calmly calculating

Shadow glossy green, like algae at the bottom of a sunlit stream (Corruption: 0/5)

Equipment headband, metal-tipped arrows (12), protective braid

Magic Resistance. The darkling leader has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Regeneration. The darkling leader regains 3 hit points at the start of its turn unless it took necrotic damage since the beginning of its last turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The darkling leader makes two attacks with its bow.

Primitive Bow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 60/240, one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Protective Braid

The Protective Braid is a lesser artifact developed by the darklings over the centuries, making it possible for them to move through corrupted terrain. It can be made from any natural material; its power lies in the structure of the braiding and the melodies sung while it is being made.

The artifact's effect is that each time its carrier suffers temporary Corruption, the amount of Corruption is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1. On the downside, the power of the braid shields the carrier from the mystical energies of the world, resulting in disadvantage on spell attack rolls and providing targets of spells advantage on their saving throws.

Adventure Set-up

IT HAS BEEN known to happen that a leader among the darklings will grow fond of a captured prey, be it a cultural being or a beast. In the former case, it is not a question of the darkling thinking that it can learn from the captive. Sure, the prey is allowed to contribute to the community, but aside from this, the relationship between the parties is similar to that between owner and pet.

The characters may be given, or decide to take on, the mission to track down a missing person, maybe even Hedla, the author of the letter on the previous spread. When, after an eventful journey, they find the person, the darklings will likely hesitate – the strangers look too tough to be regarded as prey. At a tense meeting where the captive acts as interpreter, it is made clear that the leader will not let the slave go unless the characters assist the hunting party in dealing with a local threat (for instance an abomination, undead or a liege troll).

Should the characters agree, they will soon face the next setback: the captive wants to remain and only played along to get their help in dealing with the threat! Do the characters decide to leave without the person they came for, or will they resort to violence and force?

Death Prince

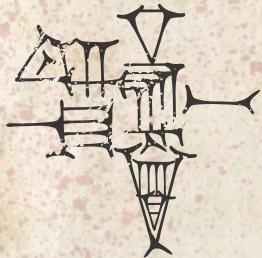
ENCLENT LEGENDS, AS well as more contemporary stories, are full of examples of sorcerers with the ability to create Death Lords – a dead body that has been brought back to life through a ritual that burns its flesh and bones into a blackened suit of armor, which is bound to serve the sorcerer forever. But what these horror stories often fail to mention is what happens if, or rather when, the master dies...

THE DEATH LORD is incapable of harming its master, but if he or she should die from something else, the undead is freed from the chains of servitude. Such free death lords are usually called Death Princes and are very rare, which is fortunate, as they can be described as particularly terrifying. The death prince's liberation unlocks the dark energies that were bound in the ritual creating it;

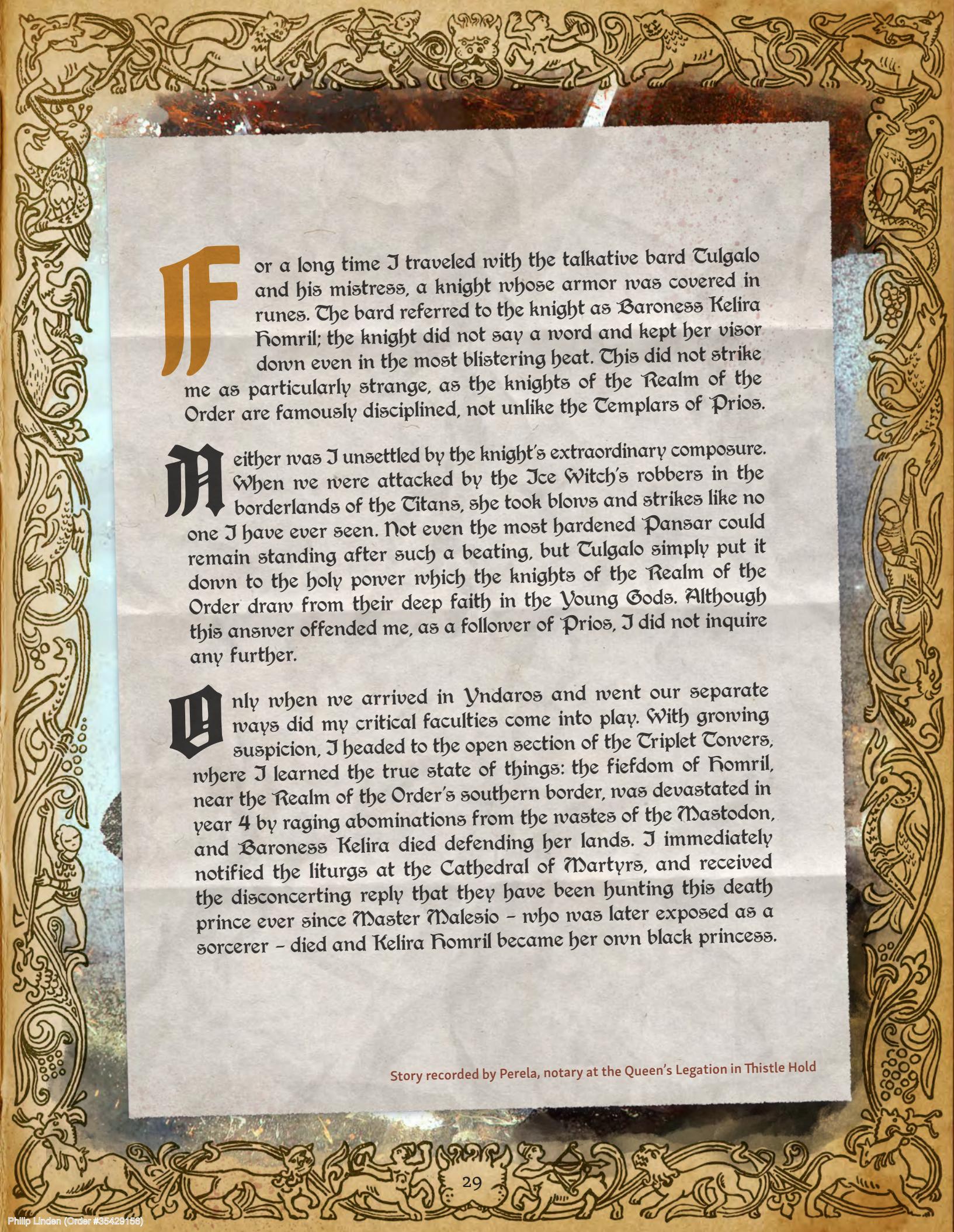
the power is then under the prince's control, to be used against any who displease it. Once free, the death prince also develops a ferocious hunger for power, possibly as a reaction to the enslavement it suffered while its master still lived. They are normally drawn to places where there are humans or beasts to subjugate, where they can crown themselves sovereigns and start spreading their bleak terror. But there are also stories about death princes who, after being freed, have traced their memories back to places that were once important to them, before their death and subsequent reanimation. The burning jealousy that flares up whenever the death prince learns that other people have gotten their hands on its property has claimed many lives in Ambria, Davokar, and the once great Alberotor – lives that are often reanimated and forcefully recruited into the growing army of the death prince.

List of Wanted Death Princes

- ◆ **Kelira Homril:** Traveling knight who is said to seek revenge on the Sun Church, particularly on the individuals who branded her family heretics. Was last seen near Yndaros.
- ◆ **Mandar of Blood & Fire:** Mystically trained death prince who fled after the Black Cloaks killed his mistress near Kastor. Rumor has it that Mandar has settled down in southern Davokar, populating his domain with bestial subjects.
- ◆ **Felial the Frightful:** A centuries-old death prince who according to witnesses (albeit unreliable ones) has stalked the people across the Titans and assembled an army of goblins and trolls. If true, his long-term plan is most likely a full-scale invasion, probably beginning in the south.
- ◆ **The Nameless One:** The death prince who was freed upon the demise of Judge Abigal, one of the Dark Lord's closest followers, is said to be operating in Ambria. Whether he is hunting his master's killer or seeking revenge on the master's surviving colleagues is unclear.



Segments of obscure cuneiform found in Odaban. It may concern the last ruler of the city, who might have been slain by a death prince known as Shieldbolt, or possibly Boltguard.

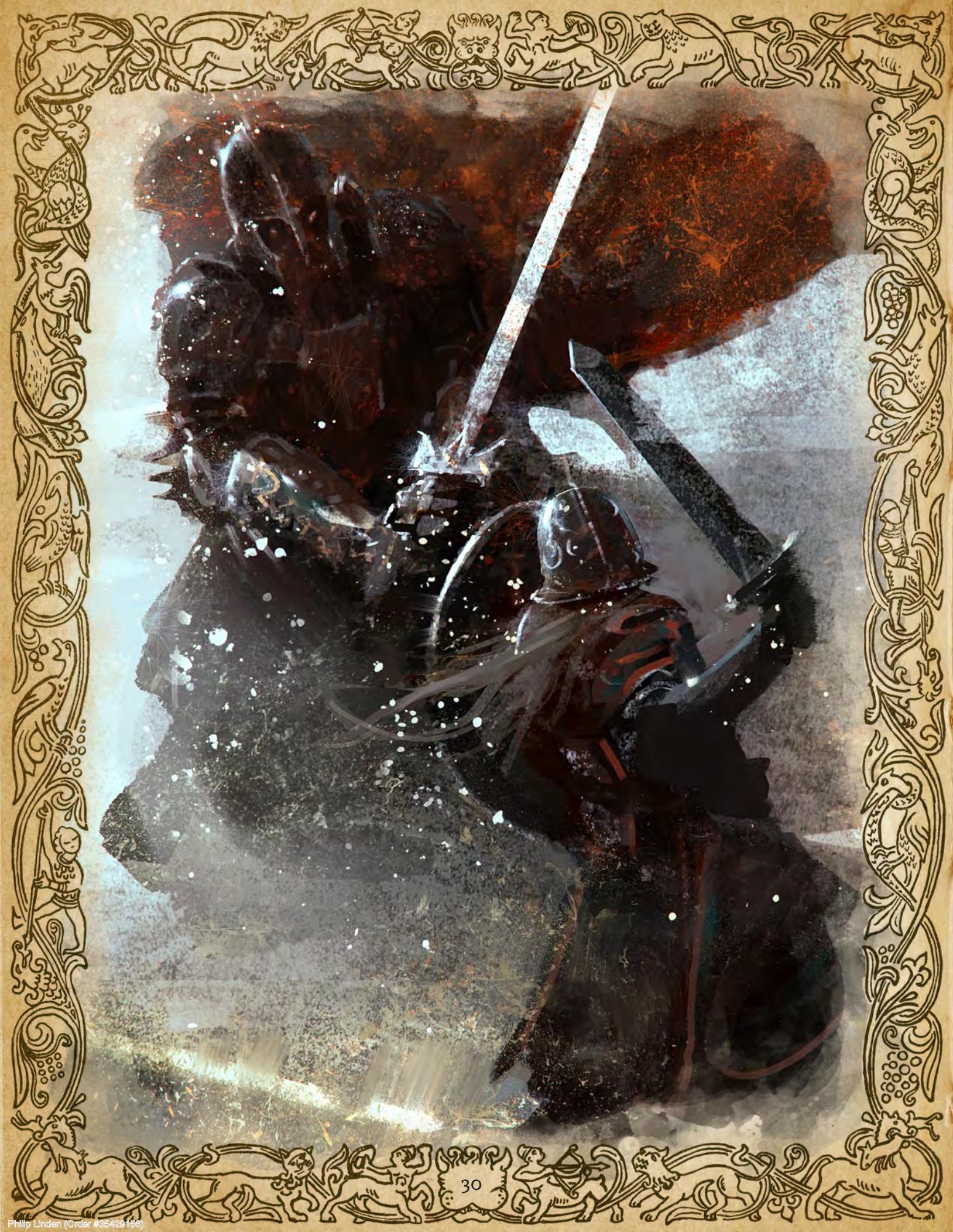


If or a long time I traveled with the talkative bard Tulgalo and his mistress, a knight whose armor was covered in runes. The bard referred to the knight as Baroness Kelira Homril; the knight did not say a word and kept her visor down even in the most blistering heat. This did not strike me as particularly strange, as the knights of the Realm of the Order are famously disciplined, not unlike the Templars of Prios.

Mether was I unsettled by the knight's extraordinary composure. When we were attacked by the Ice Witch's robbers in the borderlands of the Titans, she took blows and strikes like no one I have ever seen. Not even the most hardened Pansar could remain standing after such a beating, but Tulgalo simply put it down to the holy power which the knights of the Realm of the Order draw from their deep faith in the Young Gods. Although this answer offended me, as a follower of Prios, I did not inquire any further.

Only when we arrived in Yndaros and went our separate ways did my critical faculties come into play. With growing suspicion, I headed to the open section of the Triplet Towers, where I learned the true state of things: the fiefdom of Homril, near the Realm of the Order's southern border, was devastated in year 4 by raging abominations from the wastes of the Mastodon, and Baroness Kelira died defending her lands. I immediately notified the liturgs at the Cathedral of Martyrs, and received the disconcerting reply that they have been hunting this death prince ever since Master Malesio - who was later exposed as a sorcerer - died and Kelira Homril became her own black princess.

Story recorded by Perela, notary at the Queen's Legation in Thistle Hold



Adventure Set-up

HE PLAYER CHARACTERS have come to a castle or a larger estate belonging to a noble, as guests or perhaps as emissaries of some suitable faction. Late one evening, a funeral procession arrives at the estate, carrying the corpse of the knight Aridna on a stretcher. Karmalo, the late knight's squire, explains that his mistress burned to death while battling a fire-breathing monstrosity. He asks for the noble's protection and help in bringing Aridna home.

The corpse is placed in the local chapel for the night. At midnight, a group of violins silently gathers on the ridges of the roof. Shortly thereafter the settlement is attacked by undead, and what is more: just as the battle reaches its height, the dead knight rises and joins her equally undead squire Karmalo (disguised during the day through the seeming spell) in trying to open the gate from the inside!

The knight's full name is Aridna Kaora. She was killed in Alberetor by the Dark Lords, when the grandparents of the current castle/estate owner betrayed her family's hiding place. Now she has come to seek revenge,

and take the residence of the traitor for her new stronghold. Perhaps the opposition is so overwhelming that the characters are forced to escape; perhaps they bring the noble along? And maybe a series of future adventures can revolve around them driving off the undead princess and cleansing the region of undead.

Death Prince

These now free-acting undead are some of the most powerful of their type.

Tactics. The death prince marches into combat flanked by its followers, and makes use of gravely cold to slow the enemy before crushing it with mighty, reanimating blows.

Lair Actions. If the death prince is on 'home ground', it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause the air to become deadly chill, doubling the damage of gravely cold and giving non-undead creatures disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws. A death prince cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

Death Prince

Medium undead

Armor Class 17 (ancient armor)

Hit Points 178 (17d8 + 102)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	19 (+4)	23 (+6)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Constitution +11, Wisdom +8

Skills Arcana +10, History +10, Perception +8

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

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages those it knew in life

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

Manner commanding

Shadow matte black, like sooty steel (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment ancient wargear

Gravely Cold. Each creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of the death prince must pass a DC 19 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (1d6 + 6) cold damage and lose 10 feet of its movement speed until the end of its turn.

Innate Spellcasting. The death prince's innate spell-casting ability is Intelligence (+10 to hit, spell save DC 18). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *dancing lights, minor illusion, ray of frost*
3/day each: *animate dead, black bolt*
1/day each: *seeming*

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the death prince fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Revenant Strike. A creature that dies because of damage from the death prince's black blade returns as a dragoul (see page 156) under its control at the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. The death prince makes two attacks with its black blade.

Black Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption plus 11 (1d8 + 7) slashing damage or 12 (1d10 + 7) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Move. The death prince can move up to its speed.

Attack. The death prince can make an attack with its black blade.

Spellcast (costs 2 Actions). The death prince can cast one of its spells innately.

Dragon

ACCORDING TO MOST authorities in Ambria, dragons are a thing of the past and most doubt that such creatures have ever existed. The few who beg to differ often simply refuse to agree with the vast majority or refer to obscure sources - conversations with ancient arch trolls, examinations of unearthed bone fragments or scriptures recovered from crumbling ruins, preferably carved in ambiguous types of cuneiform writing. However, in this case, like in many others, the majority are wrong and the alleged maniacs right.

ACTUALLY, IT IS even the case that a dragon was dissected at the Vivisection in Yndaros, as late as in the winter of year 19, albeit in its larval stage - the stage that in both Ambria and Davokar goes by the name Lindworm. Not even the lindworms themselves know why none of them have evolved to higher life-stages these past hundreds of years, just as none of them can explain why it has started happening again. Supposedly, the former had to do with the fall of Symbaroum and the intervention of the Iron Pact; likely, the latter development is connected to the accelerating darkening of Davokar.

LINDWORMS FALL INTO slumber just like elves, preferably deep inside a remote cave, at the bottom of a lake or dug down into the ground and covered by a thick layer of soil. Just as with the elves, many individuals perish during this slumber, while those who awake grow in both strength and size. According to some legends, the life-cycle of a dragon involves at least three stages after the lindworm, but in today's Davokar you can only find representatives of two of those. It is a small number of individuals, especially at the stage called Dragon and whose members have both extremities and the ability to breathe fire, but they are all particularly proud, powerful and greedy. Furthermore, they are intelligent enough to avoid catching the attention of humans; their collective memory contains many dark events of the past, demonstrating just how vexing human monster hunters and heroes with delusions of grandeur can be...

Adventure Set-up

ALINDWORM'S EVOLUTION INTO a dragon should be introduced step by step. Maybe it starts with the player characters seeking out a well-known and reasonably friendly-minded lindworm, in the hunt for knowledge about some ruin, artifact or mystical truth. When they arrive, they are forced to combat minions the serpent assembled prior to its slumber. After many ordeals, they reach the lindworm's underground lair just in time to witness its rebirth - in the form of a famished Drakworm.

The second step may be introduced once they have returned to Ambria with the tale of what happened. Most people laugh and dismiss all "evidence" as a hoax, but one Master of the Order (or similar) reacts in a dissimilar way. Apparently, she sent a small expedition to the Ravens or Titans about six months ago, and just recently she received a message by a homing pigeon. It was written with a shaky hand, completely incoherent, but one of the few words that was legible spelled "dragon." With reference to the player characters' earlier experience and triumphant return, she wonders if they are willing to escort her in search of the missing expedition...

THUS SPOKE AROALETA

"... and every serpent heard the call; in line by line, row by row, they covered the slope by the gaping cave; strongest atop, weakest in the shadows of the vale. Fofar the Colossal, the Destroyer, Lord of Dragons, let the fires wash over the bowing crowd, as far as it reached. Then, no growls were ever heard ..."

Honorable Eumenos,

Brother Almagast's scornful smile and ill-concealed accusations regarding our tendency to underestimate the Dark have proved justified, as befitting as the warnings spoken by the blight-crazed treasure hunter.

We have arrived at the gorge where he found the artifact, the Sun Mirror. All in our company trusted in the assessment that you, esteemed brother, shared with me and Routefinder – that the beast the treasure hunter spoke of in his sleep must have been a lindworm, and that his speech on »fiery breath« and »roaring wings« were exaggerations caused by fear. But we were wrong, so wrong.

I hear them now, the roaring wings, and I have seen the creature's shadow. Moments from now, as we leave this shelter, we will all die. But when starvation is the only alternative, the choice is no real choice. With the grace of Prios, the beast may yet prove reasonable; if not we shall meet again, kneeling by the Lawgiver's side.

Your obedient servant, Sister Disera

The Noble Endeavor of the Lindworms

Many lindworms are convinced that exaltation is something you earn, rather than something which just happens. During the past millennium, a majority of Davokar's lindworms have lived much like other predators, but their behavior has changed radically within the last decade. Based on the presumption that the rhythm of life is dictated by the deeds of the individual, many lindworms have started hunting for worthy opponents, amassing subjects like beasts and trolls, and even challenging each other to prove their

strength. Others, having lived such a long life, have developed a deep-rooted fear of death and do all they can to avoid the hazardous dormancy.

It is unclear if there truly is a connection between an individual's power and exaltation, but for the lindworms it is considered to be fact – not least since almost all individuals who have entered the slumber can be said to have, or have had, great power over their surroundings. Yes, even in uncertain cases, interpretations underlining this idea can always be made.





Lindworm

Huge dragon

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 149 (13d12 + 65)

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws, Dex +6, Con +10, Wis +5

Skills Arcana +8, History +13, Perception +5, Stealth +11

Condition Immunities charmed, prone

Damage Immunities cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Draconic, Goblin

Challenge 16 (15,000, proficiency bonus +5)

Manner cautious, sways back and forth

Shadow emerald green, like the leaves on an ancient oak, hypnotically rustling in the summer breeze
(Corruption: 0/13)

Equipment

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the lindworm fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Enthrall. When a creature tries to act against the lindworm they must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure the creature becomes charmed by the lindworm until the end of its next turn. A creature that succeeds at the saving throw becomes immune to the effect for 24 hours.

Lindworm

This is the first, and most common, stage of dragon life. However, these creatures are still rare and powerful in their own right.

Tactics. The lindworm is old and sly and will not fight if it knows it cannot win, or if there is nothing to gain. It prefers to enthrall its victims to learn about them, thereby finding out which one is the strongest. After that, the serpent is not afraid to let its fangs end the discussion.

Lair Actions. If the lindworm is in its lair, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause the ground to become unstable, and the area within 60 feet of the lindworm becomes difficult terrain. A lindworm cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The lindworm makes two bite attacks and then a tail attack which must be at a different creature.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8 + 7) piercing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage and the creature is grappled (escape DC 17). If the lindworm has a creature already grappled, it takes 16 (2d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage automatically.

REACTIONS

Flick of its Tail. When a creature makes a melee attack against the lindworm, it attempts to knock the attacker down with its tail. It attacks with +12 to hit. The attacker takes 11 (1d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage and must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The lindworm 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 lindworm regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Move. The lindworm can move up to its speed.

Attack. The lindworm can make a bite attack.

Command (requires 2 actions). The lindworm can force a charmed creature to take an action on its next turn, for example to attack one of its allies.

Drakworm

For those lindworms who survive their long slumber, this is the next draconic form. With ancestral memories returning, the drakworms have access to unpredictable powers but still retain the ability to enthrall their visitors as well.

Tactics. The drakworms do not hesitate to prove their strength and are more hot-tempered compared to their younger cousins. Sure, they are wise enough to appraise the opposition and use their entralling ability if necessary, but if readily provoked, they have to pass a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to not immediately attack.

Lair Actions. The area where the drakworm lairs is surrounded by thick fog and strange echoes. On initiative count 20 (losing all ties) each creature within 90 feet of the drakworm must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks. The drakworm cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

Drakworm

Huge dragon

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)

Hit Points 162 (13d12 + 78)

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	19 (+4)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws, Dex +10, Con +12, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +10, History +16, Perception +9, Stealth +10

Condition Immunities charmed, prone

Damage Immunities cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Draconic, Goblin

Challenge 20 (25,000 XP, proficiency bonus +6)

Manner aggressively self-assured

Shadow a dark, matte green, like the rustling leaves of a stinging nettle (Corruption: 0/16)

Equipment —

Draconic Feature. If the drakworm takes a short or longer rest, it can select a draconic feature to gain. It can only have one draconic feature selected at a time.

Enthrall. When a creature tries to act against the drakworm they must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure the creature becomes charmed by the drakworm until the end of its next turn. A creature that succeeds at the saving throw becomes immune to the effect for 24 hours.

Dragon

Legends say that when a drakworm desires sleep, they go to the deepest part of their lair and bury themselves among their accumulated treasures and assorted debris. There they sleep, for uncountable years, until something disturbs their rest and they awaken, now the greatest of all dragon-kind.

Tactics. Even if the fully evolved dragon has lost its capability to enthrall it has many tactics to choose from in combat. If the resistance is challenging, it rises into the air and makes sweeping attacks with bites and fire. At other times, it opts to meet the enemy on the ground, and then draws extra power from the wisdom of its ancestors (for instance the feature Reckless or Superior Strength.).

Lair Actions. The area where the dragon lairs is exceptionally hot and full of debilitating fumes. On initiative count 20 (losing all ties) each creature within 90 feet of the dragon must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. The dragon cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the drakworm fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The drakworm makes two claw attacks and then a bite attack.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 27 (3d12 + 8) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 24 (3d10 + 8) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Flick of its Tail. When a creature makes a melee attack against the drakworm, it attempts to knock the attacker down with its tail. It attacks with +14 to hit. The attacker takes 14 (1d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage and must make a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The drakworm 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 drakworm regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

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

Tail Attack. The drakworm can make a tail attack (as if it used its flick of its tail feature).

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The drakworm beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the drakworm must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 15 (2d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The drakworm can then fly up to half its flying speed.

Dragon

Gargantuan dragon

Armor Class 23 (natural armor)

Hit Points 245 (14d20 + 98)

Speed 30 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	20 (+5)	24 (+7)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws, Dex +13, Con +15, Wis +11

Skills Arcana +13, History +21, Perception +11

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, prone

Damage Immunities cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 21

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Draconic, Elvish, Goblin, Troll

Challenge 25 (75,000 XP, proficiency bonus +8)

Manner supremely dominant

Shadow shiny dark green, like an uncut emerald in the sharpest sunlight (Corruption: 0/21)

Equipment —

Draconic Feature. If the dragon takes a short or longer rest, it can select a draconic feature to gain or exchange. It can have two draconic features selected at a time.

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

DRACONIC FEATURES

The following additional features can be selected as part of a dragon's Draconic Features trait.

- ◆ **Deadly Damage.** Add one more die of damage to either the dragon's Bite, Claws or Tail attack.
- ◆ **Evasion.** The dragon can use its reaction to reduce the damage from an attack it is aware of by half.
- ◆ **Exceptional Armor.** Increase the dragon's Armor Class by 2.
- ◆ **Fast Flyer.** Increase the dragon's flying speed by 30 feet.
- ◆ **Frightful Presence.** Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC (Charisma modifier + proficiency bonus) Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes two claw attacks and then a bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 40 (3d20 + 9) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (3d12 + 9) slashing damage.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fire in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 25 Dexterity saving throw, taking 91 (26d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d8 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon 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 dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

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

Tail Attack. The dragon can make a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 10 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 24 Dexterity saving throw or take 18 (2d8 + 9) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

- ◆ **Increased Strength.** Add +2 to the dragon's Strength score and +1 to its modifier. Adjust all physical to-hit and damage values by +1 as well.
- ◆ **Prehensile Tail.** The dragon can use its tail to grapple someone. The escape DC is equal to 10 + the dragon's Strength (Athletics) modifier.
- ◆ **Quick.** Increase the dragon's ground speed by 20 feet.
- ◆ **Resistive.** The number of times per day the dragon can use its Legendary Resistance increases by 1.
- ◆ **The Hottest Fire (Dragons only).** Add 4D6 to the dragon's Fire Breath damage.

Ettermite

The rumor spread like wildfire around the Antique Plaza: "There is an ettermite colony midway between Odaban and the Columns of Haganor!" The news was barely out there before the first bodies fell in the gutter, victims of rivals hunting for Etter Sleep to make the infernal ettermites drowsy. It was at that time I got involved, as the Commandant's special investigator.

My thankless assignment was to stop the murder spree, a truly challenging task when such sums of thaler and such dreams are at stake. But I am a loyal servant of the Crown and obviously I did my best. For a moment, when I found out how the rumors had started, I actually believed I could succeed – a fortune hunter named Broona had returned from the designated area with ettercopal in a knapsack; however, not from any ettermite colony but from the lair of a liege troll. I thought myself sly when I spread this news, convinced that it would put an end to the murders. But alas!

Another, just as damaging, rumor quickly took root: that Major Nightpitch tried to silence the affair with false information, hoping to claim the colony's wealth for himself. Numerous treasure hunting expeditions left for the woods, and few of them ever returned. If it was ettermites or something else that killed them I honestly do not know, but no inflow of ettercopal was ever noticed – this I kept careful track of as part of the investigation.

Excerpt from the logbook of Captain Tallios, Thistle Hold



Ettermite Swarm

These exceptionally big flying insects combine into a terrible storm of biting jaws and buzzing wings.

Tactics. The swarm sweeps by at high speed, showing enemies with deadly bites. When at a safe distance from melee attacks, the swarm turns and attacks again, until all enemies are down. Then the feast begins; they always start with the teeth – a crunchy delicacy for triumphant ettermites.

Ettermite Swarm

Large swarm of Tiny beasts

Armor Class 16 (nimble)

Hit Points 82 ($11d10 + 22$)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner like a rattling, crackling whirlwind

Shadow glossy honey-yellow, like gleaming ettercopal (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment —

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

Nimble. The ettermite swarm's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Swift. The ettermite swarm can use its bonus action to fly another 30 feet.

ACTIONS

Bites.

Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. **Hit:** 9 (2d8) slashing damage or 4 (1d8) slashing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. The creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn.

REACTIONS

Scatter.

When struck by an attack, the ettermites temporarily allow more space between members of the swarm, reducing the damage done by half.



N IN THE RARE tree-less hills and ridges found in Davokar, explorers sometimes find huge, strikingly beautiful pillars

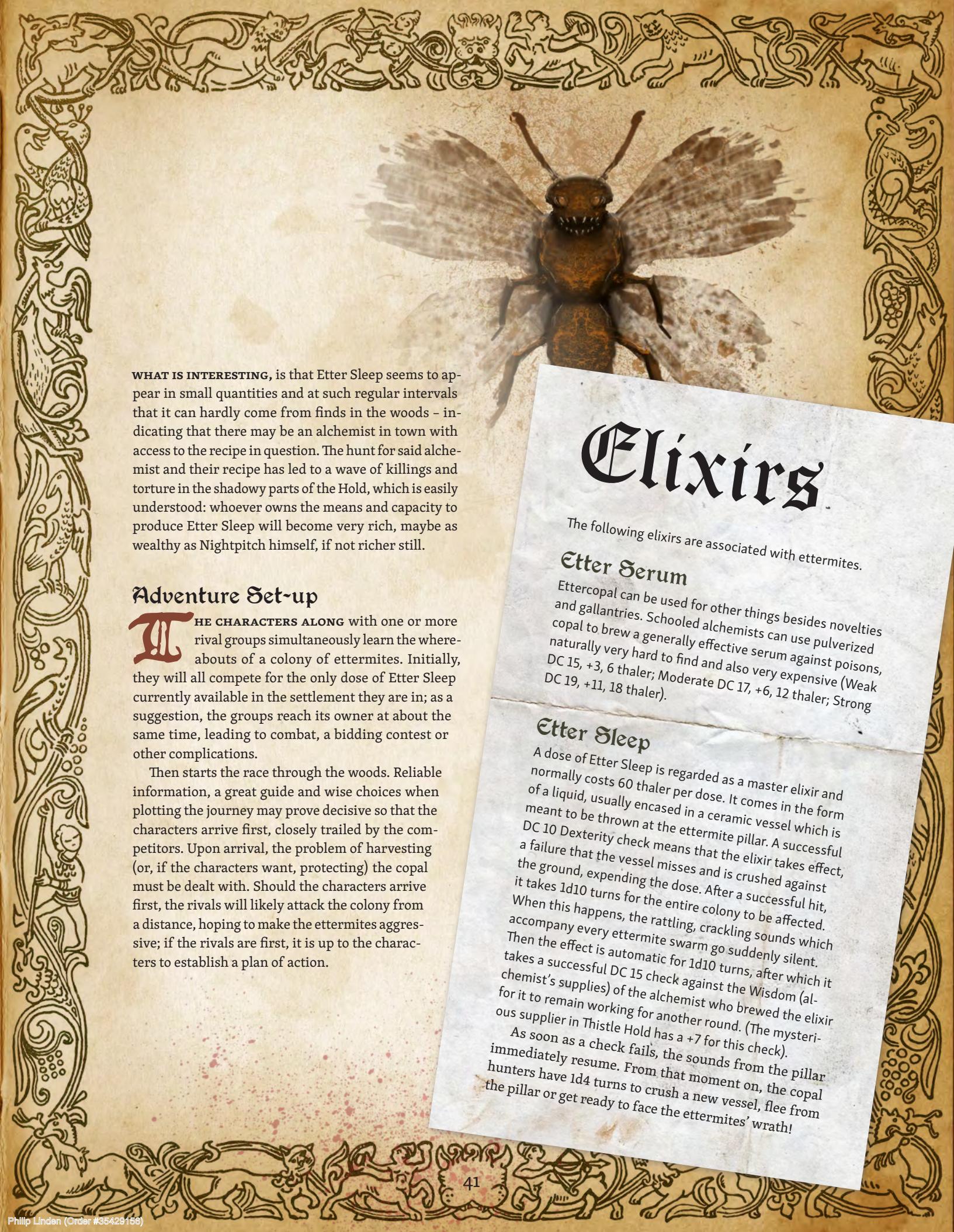
made from a rare type of gemstone, often golden brown in color, but sometimes glittering blue-green or even a hypnotic deep, dark brown. The precious building material, called Ettercopal, has always attracted treasure hunters, brave enough to face the residents of the pillars – swarms of forearm long, winged, carnivorous ettermites. Studies have shown that the copal is actually produced by the ettermites themselves, from a mixture of their poison and tree sap.

OTHER STUDIES HAVE led to various techniques for getting close enough to harvest the ettercopal, but these are rarely effective and the task is, as a consequence, highly lethal. On the black market of Thistle Hold you can sometimes find an elixir called Etter Sleep, said to be able to make a whole swarm of ettermites drowsy – for a short time. Such concoctions are of course in high demand, and the price is always high when (and if) they can be found.

Harvesting Ettercopal

Anyone who manages to get close to an ettermite pillar (and possesses the proper tools) can each turn mine and bag one piece of ettercopal. However, it is wise to go for the purest possible pieces.

Attempting to mine the ettercopal requires a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check each turn; those with the Loremaster feature may instead roll against Intelligence (Sleight of Hand). A successful check gives a piece worth 2d4 + 2 thaler; a failure means it is worth 1d4 thaler. How many pieces can be mined depends on the size of the pillar, which in turn depends on how many swarms the pillar houses. You can expect that a specific pillar is made of [2d10 + 30] pieces per residing swarm.



WHAT IS INTERESTING, is that Etter Sleep seems to appear in small quantities and at such regular intervals that it can hardly come from finds in the woods – indicating that there may be an alchemist in town with access to the recipe in question. The hunt for said alchemist and their recipe has led to a wave of killings and torture in the shadowy parts of the Hold, which is easily understood: whoever owns the means and capacity to produce Etter Sleep will become very rich, maybe as wealthy as Nightpitch himself, if not richer still.

Adventure Set-up

THE CHARACTERS ALONG with one or more rival groups simultaneously learn the whereabouts of a colony of ettermites. Initially, they will all compete for the only dose of Etter Sleep currently available in the settlement they are in; as a suggestion, the groups reach its owner at about the same time, leading to combat, a bidding contest or other complications.

Then starts the race through the woods. Reliable information, a great guide and wise choices when plotting the journey may prove decisive so that the characters arrive first, closely trailed by the competitors. Upon arrival, the problem of harvesting (or, if the characters want, protecting) the copal must be dealt with. Should the characters arrive first, the rivals will likely attack the colony from a distance, hoping to make the ettermites aggressive; if the rivals are first, it is up to the characters to establish a plan of action.

Elixirs

The following elixirs are associated with ettermites.

Etter Serum

Ettercopal can be used for other things besides novelties and gallantries. Schooled alchemists can use pulverized copal to brew a generally effective serum against poisons, naturally very hard to find and also very expensive (Weak DC 15, +3, 6 thaler; Moderate DC 17, +6, 12 thaler; Strong DC 19, +11, 18 thaler).

Etter Sleep

A dose of Etter Sleep is regarded as a master elixir and normally costs 60 thaler per dose. It comes in the form of a liquid, usually encased in a ceramic vessel which is meant to be thrown at the ettermite pillar. A successful DC 10 Dexterity check means that the elixir takes effect, a failure that the vessel misses and is crushed against the ground, expending the dose. After a successful hit, it takes 1d10 turns for the entire colony to be affected. When this happens, the rattling, crackling sounds which accompany every ettermite swarm go suddenly silent. Then the effect is automatic for 1d10 turns, after which it takes a successful DC 15 check against the Wisdom (alchemist's supplies) of the alchemist who brewed the elixir for it to remain working for another round. (The mysterious supplier in Thistle Hold has a +7 for this check).

As soon as a check fails, the sounds from the pillar immediately resume. From that moment on, the copal hunters have 1d4 turns to crush a new vessel, flee from the pillar or get ready to face the ettermites' wrath!

Glimmer

Gt looked like it would be an easy fight. We had hunted the refugees towards the east, all the way to the foothills of the Ravens. There, they took shelter in the remains of a ruined castle, likely fatigued and with limited supplies. We already knew they were prepared to fight to gain access to the Promised Land, so we closed in with great care, right before dawn, weapons at the ready.

They saw us coming and answered with arrows, which stopped our advancement and forced us to cower behind our shields, about halfway up the slope. Once the projectile attacks began to slow, we got up and charged. At that precise moment, the sun came up and its first rays reflected off the head of the refugees' last arrow.

I admit, I ran, like a coward, like a fool. Honestly, I'd rather accept my punishment than undergo an encounter with the Glimmer. When I later dared to go back, the scene was precisely like the cries and clangor had suggested. All were dead, rangers as well as refugees – broken, battered, lifeless. Better the gallows than that, better the gallows...

Transcript of interrogation with accused deserter in Mergile



Glimmer

These nearly invisible undead hate the living and will work to destroy all life.

Tactics. After having created three mirrors of itself, the Glimmer attacks from behind, surprising the target and scaring them mad by projecting their own fears right back at them. Fighting the Glimmer is like combating sunbursting shreds and glimmering rays in an otherwise black vortex of nightmarish apparitions.

Glimmer

Medium undead

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +4, Wis +5

Damage Resistances cold, fire, force, necrotic, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner complete chaos

Shadow black as a starless night reflected against calm waters (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment —

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

Mirrors (Recharge 5–6). The glimmer can use its bonus action to create up to three duplicates of itself.

When attacked, the GM rolls 1d12. Only on a 10–12 does the attack hit the actual glimmer, otherwise it aims at a duplicate (AC 15). When only two duplicates remain, an attack is successful on a 9–12. When only one duplicate remains, an attack is successful on a 7–12.

Insubstantial. The glimmer can pass through objects and creatures without issue.

ACTIONS

Deadly Visions. The glimmer chooses a creature within 60 feet and manifests the fears of the creature as a vision that only it can see. The creature must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) psychic damage on a failure or half that on a success. On a failure the creature also gains 1 temporary Corruption.

REACTIONS

A New Mirror. When one of its mirrors is destroyed, the glimmer can restore it.

As WITH SO many of the barbarian tribes, the Vajvod tell tales of their enemies that stretch long into the night, long enough to see the fire reduced to smoke and embers. Despite the fear and respect communicated in these stories of battles hard fought, some enemies have cost so many lives that their mention has become a taboo. To admit to such losses would be to admit weakness, despite the truth that to speak of such enemies would be to forewarn and forearm.

ONE MONSTROSITY THAT, for this reason, rarely is heard of around the fires is the Glimmer. On the battlefield, the gleam of sunlight off some trinket, weapon or armor might herald something more ominous than the truth of a hard-won battle. The glint of the sun should not move with such purpose, a coruscation of fragmentary light that wheels and flickers with cold purpose. The Glimmer roils and blazes through the air with ease, like the flash of swords without the substance, but with all the malice and vile intent.

IF ORDO MAGICA or the Black Cloaks have been able to learn what the Glimmers actually are or where they come from, it is not something they have announced publicly. Those who want to know must therefore trust in legends and rumors, such as the sagas told among many clans that surmise some connection between the creatures and the necromantic practices of ancient Symbaroum. Other rumors state that the few Ambrians who have made it to the lands beyond the Ravens and back again have encountered tales which seem to be about the Glimmer, in writing or possibly in conversation with the remaining residents of the east – legends describing how a whole army or invasion force was massacred by glimmering spirit beings, or alternately by a lone, omnipotent Glimmer King.

FOR THOSE WHO believe in luck, few Glimmers have marked their presence beyond the borderlands of the Ravens. Yet, that they extend their reach at all suggests the Glimmers have spread and that they reach ever further with little to block their advance. Maybe they are attracted to combat and bloodshed; maybe this means that the escalating confrontations of the Davokar region will lead to more suffering than those involved can even begin to imagine...

Adventure Set-up

AS A SUGGESTION, the Glimmer is primarily used as a complicating factor, rather than as the main enemy of an adventure. No matter if the characters are on a treasure hunt struggling against rivals and/or beasts, if they hunt cultists in some nest of free settlers, or if they are on a common monster hunt, chances are that a Glimmer is in the vicinity.

Maybe they initially encounter the creature's victims, or hear about its rampage from some local resident or traveler? Maybe a character with the Lor-emaster feature realizes the gravity of the situation? In that case, it may prove necessary to form awkward alliances in order to combat the Glimmer. Another option is of course to have the Glimmer appear right in the midst of a violent encounter between the characters and their competitors/prey. If the characters know that they are going Glimmer hunting, they might want to bring something (sand, salt or another fine grained material) to throw at the monster, hoping to discover which images are true and which are false. Generous GMs might allow them to throw the material as a bonus action and have the mirror image disappear if it is the one targeted (see below).

Glimmer Amulet

This modified version of a soul stone can capture the spirit of a Glimmer – a fact likely uncovered by the notorious sorcerer and artifact crafter Mad Valando when he tried to trap the spirit of his newly slaughtered servant. Later, when the Whip of Prios placed Valando in chains, his blood stone amulet was taken to the Twilight Monastery for closer inspection. As soon as its properties were uncovered, the pendant was gifted to the leader of the group responsible for hunting down its maker, Sister Losadra.

The Glimmer Amulet counts as a lesser artifact. Normally, the stone is a deep blood red, but when close to violence its captive gets restless from bloodlust, making sharp rays of light shoot out at irregular intervals. These rays can confuse enemies in melee combat: attackers have disadvantage on attack rolls. The downside of this is that if the result is a natural 1, the soul trap explodes and the Glimmer gets free, just as hungry and strong as it once was.

Glimmering Hope, Laubio

Glimmering light, a glimpse of hope,
that we shall not falter, that we will cope.
A lustrous shine, a flicker so pure,
promising good times for evermore.

But answer me this, oh splendid light,
for whom do you shine through the dark of the night?
You murdered my friend, my grandpa and crone,
kill any other, and I'm all alone.

Gis this perchance, your ultimate goal,
to lay every human, dead in a hole;
to cleanse this domain, of woman and man,
who covets and hungers and takes all they can.

Could this be the case, take note of my words,
cease your protection of mammals and birds!
You're fighting in vain, yes this is true,
cause women and man will devour you.

Glint

"Did you hear what happened to that pathfinder who led us astray last year, Aranman?"

"Not exactly, only that the town watch clubbed him to death outside the Salons of Symbaroum."

"He was possessed! No, not possessed, more infected. Or infested. A parasite large as an apple was lodged in his throat and had... you know, taken over..."

"Oh, right, a glint. Let me guess, he was described as being unusually quiet of late, and grew notably skinny, and the town watch accused him of attempted murder, one or more?"

"Yes, exactly! But... What? A glint? You know what it is?"

"Of course, everyone who has ventured into Davokar knows. Glints are parasites; they dig into the skull. Hah, they exist just about everywhere in the woods."

"Oh well... Right, that does it!"

"Does what?"

"By Prios, you will never see me set foot in that cursed Davokar ever again!"

Conversation heard at the Toad's Square in Thistle Hold

GHE GLINT IS a tick-like creature, large as a clenched fist and with glowing insides glimpsed between black back-plates. Their origin is highly debated, but according to some reports they seem to be found more frequently in and around corrupted areas. Maybe this is where they come from, or they are drawn there. In any case, they apparently do not need such grounds to prosper.

THE GLINT LAYS in wait until a suitable host comes close. When this happens, it attacks with the aim of getting in through the mouth to lodge itself like a pulsating cyst in the throat. Sleeping victims are preferred, but even a fully awake creature can be targeted. Once in the throat, it sends its control organs through the softer parts of the palate, up into the host's brain, to take over the body as a means to satisfy its own ends and hungers. The main objective of a glint is to find more suitable hosts; many in the same location, if at all possible. The latter explains why both glints and glint-carrying hosts sometimes are found far away from the darker parts of Davokar.

THE SECRETIONS OF the glint contribute to the strength and quickness of the host, but its placement in the throat also hinders the carrier from drinking and eating - leading to death from starvation in one to two weeks' time. When the host dies, either from starvation or some other cause, the glint leaves the corpse and starts hunting for a new victim. However, before it leaves, it places a larva in the abdominal cavity of the carcass; a larva that feeds off the rotting flesh and is born as a new glint in about a month.

A CREATURE INFECTED by a glint gains the Glint-carrier template. All beings with a mouth big enough for the glint to force its way in can be infected, but thoroughly corrupt creatures seem to be immune to this particular infestation. It should also be noted that the shapeshifting creatures called Bestials appear to have a special relationship with glints; see page 14 for further information on the topic.



Revealing Glint-carriers

When meeting a glint-carrier, in combat or on the streets in one of Ambria's border settlements, it is possible to notice that something is not right with the creature. If the sun is up, it may be the deformed neck that arouses suspicion; if night has fallen, the glowing parasite can be seen to color the mouth of the carrier red. As usual, a Wisdom (Perception) check must be made against a Dexterity (Stealth) check from the glint itself.

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GLINT-CARRIER TEMPLATE

A creature infested by a glint keeps its statistics, except as follows.

- ◆ **Challenge.** The creature's challenge rating increases by one step.
- ◆ **Immunities.** The creature is now immune to the charmed and frightened conditions.
- ◆ **Resistances.** The creature now has resistance to psychic damage.
- ◆ **Speed.** The creature adds 10 feet of movement to each of its existing types.
- ◆ **Hit Dice.** The creature gains 2 Hit Dice, improving its maximum and current hit points accordingly.
- ◆ **Infection.** The infected creature cannot eat or drink. Each morning it must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, gaining a level of exhaustion on a failure. The spell *lesser restoration* or similar magic ends the infestation. A character with the Medicus feature can attempt surgery (DC 20 Dexterity check), causing 2d12 piercing damage to the glint on a success or a level of exhaustion and disadvantage on future saving throws due to the infestation to the victim on a failure.

Glint

An individual glint tries to infest a creature as soon as possible and directs a controlled creature towards other likely victims.

Tactics. The parasite aims for the largest and most skilled warrior in sight, and tries to infest it as quickly as possible.

Glint-carrier, Aboar

Although some veteran explorers joke that every aboar carries the spirit of a glint, these animals are truly desperate and mean.

Tactics. The infested aboar attacks without mercy, and does not rest until all enemies are dead. If it falls, a glint is let loose.

Glint-carrier, Guard

Lookouts, especially at the edges of a hunting camp or village must be very careful, for they can easily become infected if they doze off while on duty.

Tactics. The infested guard wades through the battle, hunting for the strongest enemy fighters. If it falls, a glint is let loose.

Glint

Tiny beast

Armor Class 20 (nimble)

Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)

Speed 15 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	21 (+5)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner deeply buzzing

Shadow blushing red, like a glowing coal

(Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

Nimble. The glint's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Infest. The glint tries to fly into the creature's mouth and lodge itself in its throat. The creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, becoming infested on a failure. An infested creature loses control over its actions at the end of its next turn and gains the benefits of *Swift* (+10 ft. to each movement type) and *Sturdy* (+2 Hit Dice) after a long or extended rest.

as a man, stood for two whole days, completely - the initial screams of torment, before own onto a raging bonfire.

ard time comprehending the response ns spawned, but apparently this is a formed to appease the darkness of the the hope that it will leave the clan called the insect the Blight Bug, g that it is a form of abomination, but

Glint-carrier, Aboar

Large beast

Armor Class 18 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 105 (10d10 + 50)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +8, Wis +5

Damage Resistances cold, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60, passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner braying with glowing throat

Shadow deeply red, with glowing streaks of fire (Corruption: 3/4)

Equipment

Charge. If the aboar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the aboar takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

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

Hoof. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Stomp. If the aboar passes by a creature within 5 feet of it, it can make an attack with its hoof.

Adventure Set-up

EN EMACIATED MAN stumbles into a town or village which recently has experienced combat between the residents and some hostile force (possibly crazed cultists, elves or famished rage trolls). The man soon dies and is thrown into the mass-grave where the fallen enemies also were buried. There, a glint is let loose to go hunting, after having placed a larva in the belly of the former host.

The glint makes its way to the camp for daythalers, elderly people and paupers which is located close to the settlement, where it infests a series of destitute people who quickly starve and are thrown in the mass-grave. Finally, the glint is exposed by a former treasure hunter, and the glint-carrying pauper is captured and burnt, along with the glint.

The characters arrive at the location about a month later, just as half a dozen glints have gorged themselves, becoming fat and large enough to go on the hunt – this time, inside the settlement walls, looking for sturdier hosts...

Glint-carrier, Guard

Medium human (Barbarian)

Armor Class 13 (wolf skin)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +4, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian

Challenge 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner relentless and single-minded

Shadow deep green with fiery streaks (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment 3 throwing spears, 1d10 ortegs

Hunter's Instinct. The guard can use its bonus action to mark one creature as its chosen target. The first time it does damage to the target, it does +2 bonus damage. It can use its reaction when the target moves to make a ranged weapon attack.

ACTIONS

Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Himann

COU

We arrived at Outback late in the evening. All was still. Too still. The massive oak gates, worthy of an Ambrian fort, were intact. The palisade, standing upon mighty embankments, remained unbroken. Initially, our cries and knocks at the gate went unanswered and we could do nothing but wait, irresolute with darkening Davokar at our backs.

One of the scouts sniffed the air and wheezed; »The stench, can you smell it?« Before we had time to respond, a weak, trembling voice was heard from the gatehouse: »Climb, quickly, climb!« A rope was lowered down and we hurried up. In the light of the fading sun, standing atop the palisade, we saw the many dirt piles around the settlement – and inside it. »Swann,« our most experienced scout muttered and spit three times over his shoulder. »This explains the stench: this place is doomed and we along with it.«

From the missionary Hulandra's journal, found on her starved corpse

EMONG THE DAVOKAR region's tunneling monstrosities, the gwann is probably responsible for taking the most Ambrian lives. This goes for both the normal sized gwanns who often team up in large packs to attack colonies and outposts, and the massive slaughterers which look like their smaller relatives but fortunately prefer to hunt by themselves. Initially, after the Ambrians' arrival north of the Titans, the beasts were mainly a threat to travelers in the woods, but now it seems the gwanns have realized that the lowlands are full of accessible prey, on two as well as four legs. And there is no doubt that the feeling of dread is difficult to shake for those who have suffered a gwann attack: living with the knowledge that a predator, at any time, may break through the ground you walk, stand and sleep on is not easy.

EVEN IF THE number of gwann victims in Ambria is growing, it is of course the colonies, outposts and travelers of the forest who have the worst of it. You must learn to read the signs. The two most evident warnings are the gwann piles, created when the beast shovels up dirt to build its network of underground tunnels, and the horrible stench of the secretion it uses to mark out its territory. Furthermore, all who have the misfortune of running into a gwann must learn not to lower their guard even after, what seems to be, the killing blow has been dealt – the creature's death struggle can be almost as deadly as the attacks of a living individual.

LESS RELIABLE REPORTS indicate that gwann actually may be tamed, and that both Ambrian explorers and warriors of the clans have encountered trolls accompanied by seemingly loyal, obedient beasts. There are also stories that tell of visits to underground troll settlements, where gwanns have served as pets and guards. But considering this creature's often solitary and generally aggressive demeanor, these are most likely lies or misconceptions; if not, the trolls must know about some special, mystical means to break and tame its hunger and will.

Gwann

These smelly, clawed diggers are a danger across all of Ambria as well as Davokar.

Tactics. The normal-sized gwanns always hunt in packs of between five and ten individuals, and use their tunneling ability to slowly grind down the prey while avoiding counterattacks.

Gwann

Tiny beast

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 5 (2d4)

Speed 10 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner shrill chattering

Shadow grainy dark brown, like light, loose topsoil

(Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

Pack Tactics. The gwann has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the gwann's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

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

REACTIONS

Death Blow. When the gwann is reduced to 0 hit points it splays out its claws in a death seizure. If the attacker is within 5 feet of the gwann, make a Claws attack roll against the attacker with disadvantage.



Adventure Set-up

HE PLAYER CHARACTERS are somehow drawn into a peculiar murder mystery, where the victims have been torn apart by the murderer's claws; a murderer that seems to have attacked from below ground only to vanish down into collapsed tunnels. At first, no connections can be found between the victims, but further investigation reveals that they have all dealt with a certain artifact – the treasure hunter who found it, the antique dealer who certified it, the collector who bought it, the thief who stole it, and the mystic who hired the thief.

The killer is one of the huge gwanns that the clanfolks call slaughterers, and it is controlled by an illgoblin or a troll that wants to retrieve the troll-made artifact. The solution may be to watch a probable next victim and wait for the attack, hoping to slay the murdering beast and then follow its (not yet collapsed) tunnels in order to find the master. Alternately, the characters can find out who currently has the artifact and somehow claim it, to give it to the gwann – or its master, if possible. To simply kill the creature will not stop the murders; it only leads to a pause in the killings, until the master has tracked down and bound a new slaughterer to be sent on the same bloody errand.

Gwann as a Familiar

Apparently, mystics may bind to normal-sized gwanns with the spell *find familiar*, but according to Davokar's witches this has only been possible for trolls and ogres. Whether this has to do with the beasts having a special connection to these races, or if there are specimens that could be convinced to enter into a spiritual connection with a human being, remains to be seen.

Gwann, Slaughterer

These much larger versions of gwann are a dangerous pest across all of Davokar.

Tactics. If the enemies stand close together, the gwann tries to create a sinkhole beneath them; if not, it stays below ground and makes use of its superb senses to attack targets on the surface. When all are dead it starts to feed.

Gwann, Slaughterer

Large beast

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (8d10 + 32)

Speed 20 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner shrill chattering

Shadow grainy dark brown, like light, loose topsoil
(Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

Stench. Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the gwann must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the gwann's stench for 24 hours.

Tunneler. If the gwann leaves a creature's reach by burrowing it does not provoke an opportunity attack.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gwann makes two attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Sinkhole (Recharge 5–6). The gwann burrows directly at the feet of a creature, creating a 10-foot diameter hole. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the hole, taking 2d6 bludgeoning damage and becoming prone 20 feet beneath the ground's surface.

REACTIONS

Death Blow. When the gwann is reduced to 0 hit points it splays out its claws in a death seizure. If the attacker is within 5 feet of the gwann, make a Claws attack roll against the attacker with disadvantage.

Illgoblin

EFEW GOBLINS CHOOSE to challenge their naturally short life-cycle by seeking assistance from some power of the woods. The resulting pact means that the goblin changes its fate, from the prospect of becoming a troll, to life as the servant of a more powerful being. Most newly exalted illgoblins initially strive to uphold their own personality, but under the weight of the master's crushing will, most let go of their dreams in order to use all their skills and cunning hoping to please their benefactors.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE those illgoblins who never abandon their independence, meaning that their existence turns into a difficult and dangerous balancing act between doing the master's bidding and fighting for personal goals. The master effectively has the illgoblin's soul in its hand and may punish the servant, even from afar, if it fails in delivering on the master's wishes, or behaves in some unwanted way. The punishment remains until the illgoblin has remedied its failures or resumed its strive towards achieving the master's goals. Obviously, the master can also choose to reward a loyal servant, with gifts in the form of monstrous traits, powers and rituals.

The outcome of the battle was certain before it began. The sheer number of rage trolls and swarming goblins that sundered our column made it impossible to form a unified defense. The attackers came with a kind of black power, as if strengthened by something, or someone. At times I thought I heard the rhyming words of a lisping child, like an ancient nursery rhyme forcing my warriors to attack their comrades.

Divided we fell, group by group. I was one of those who were spellbound, and found myself kneeling before a wall of trolls and goblins, barely able to move. With all my willpower, I raised my book of prayers like a shield, but no words came past my lips. The enemies stepped aside to make way for a small creature. The rhyming child. A goblin? No, a former goblin.

Its eyes were a serpent's, its tongue forked, the light danced across its scaly skin. Its gaze was hypnotic and its voice hissing as it spoke: »You travel the land of the King Serpent Gadraltos; half of what you harvest around Gadraltos' Rock will befall the ruler, death being the penalty for tax evaders. Remind your queen of this simple fact and our realms will prosper, side by side.« The creature, who called itself Squagmotus, let me leaque after having used its claws to carve the tax statutes of its master into my chest.

Excerpt from the Army Court's interrogation protocol
with field preacher Frendola, accused of desertion and cowardliness



Adventure Set-up

THE CHARACTERS ARE off hunting for treasure and need a guide. One of few available is the goblin Gammy Gulda, who according to rumors around the Toad's Square knows the route to where the characters are headed. Problem is, she is an illgoblin; her true goal is to lead the characters to the lair of her master, an ancient necromage.

Gammy Gulda does her best to hide her bestial features and tries to play the part of a somewhat tragicomic goblin – a former fortune hunter who, gravely hurt by an aboar, no longer can search for treasures, but instead helps others in the woods.

During the journey through Davokar, Gulda will uphold the charade of a relatively incompetent goblin, but she assists the characters when it seems appropriate – she wants to gain their trust and she wants them to reach the destination alive. When they get close to the master's necropolis, she will sneak aside to cast *sending*, to contact the necromage and describe the characters as best she can, to give him a chance to prepare. A character who manages to follow Gulda when she performs the spell will hear her describe them all. Also, if this character is proficient with Arcana, they can identify the spell cast.

If Gulda is found out, she will act desperate and lie (a character's Wisdom [Insight] versus her Charisma [Deception] opposed check) about the "wraith holding my family captive." Her goal remains the same: to lead the characters to the necromage.

Playing an Illgoblin

Players can choose to create an illgoblin character, or even have their goblin character enter into a pact and become an illgoblin in play. Use the goblin origin with the following changes. The character's appearance adopts one or a couple of features reminiscent of its master – replace the traits Short-lived and Survival Instinct with the burdens Dark Blood and Bestial (see the *Ruins of Symbaroum Player's Guide*, page 151). Also, the player and Gamemaster must agree on which gifts the character can gain from entering the pact, based on who the master is and what it wants to achieve. Other than that, the agreement follows the rules of Pact Making in the *Ruins of Symbaroum Game- master's Guide* (page 170).

Illgoblin, Necromage Servant

This illgoblin serves a necromage. Its dark blood (robust) feature is already included in its Hit Dice total.

Tactics. The illgoblin moves around its enemies, spewing darkness over them. She trusts that the combination of spirit walk and her gravely cold feature will keep any melee fighters out of range.

Illgoblin

Small humanoid (Illgoblin)

Armor Class 13 (thick robes)

Hit Points 45 (7d6 + 21)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +4, Perception +6, Stealth +4, Survival +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Ambrian, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner peers cunningly

Shadow brown and white-speckled with black veins, like a cracked quail egg (Corruption: 4/12)

Equipment component pouch

Bestial. The illgoblin has disadvantage on Deception, Performance and Persuasion checks. It has advantage on Intimidation checks.

Gravely Cold. The illgoblin can activate this feature with a bonus action. For 1 minute, each creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of the illgoblin must pass a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 6 (1d6 + 3) cold damage and lose 10 feet of its movement speed until the end of its turn.

Innate Spellcasting. The illgoblin's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (+6 to hit, spell save DC 14). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: chill touch, spirit walk

3/day each: black breath, darkness, sending

1/day: magic circle

ACTIONS

Bone Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Pacts and Powers

The following table contains several suggested powers and potential side-effects for the illgoblin.

PACT-MAKING POWERS				
Power	Features	Possible Goal	Punishment*	Typical Gifts
Arch Troll	Trollish features, often horns	Reclaim troll-made artifacts from treasure hunters and monsters	Clouded mind until a change is made.	Monstrous traits associated with trolls; spells from the Troll Singer list; may bind to a Gwann with <i>find familiar</i>
Lindworm	Snake attributes	Conquer or defend a certain territory	Risk of being enthralled at untimely moments, until a change is made.	Monstrous traits associated with serpents; spells having to do with the control of mind and will
Necromage	Death signs	Lure treasure hunters to its lair to expand its army of undead servants	"Rigor mortis"-like condition until corrections are made.	Monstrous traits associated with undead; spells from the Sorcery list
Spider Queen	Spider attributes	Bind mortals to its web of intrigues	Stinging poison bite that remains until the illgoblin changes its ways.	Monstrous traits associated with spiders; may bind with a single Etterherd (2 HP; +4 to-hit; 1 piercing damage and poison; spider climb, web sense and web walker features; no resistances or immunities; see page 148)
Winter Elf	Unearthly features like snow-white hair, lack of iris	Safeguard a taboo area from treasure hunters	Nightmares until a change is made.	Monstrous traits associated with elves; spells benefiting the winter elf's goals and temperament

* All punishments have the same mechanical effect: the illgoblin cannot earn XP until the punishment is removed.

The punishment is lifted once the illgoblin starts acting in line with the master's will, in a pleasing way.

THUS SPOKE AROALETA

“... and the hatred grew between brother and sister, Manaud the Gluttonous and Manaua the Wrathful, sent monster against monster in raging battle. For two moons the people suffered; bloodied, eaten, crushed. Then the battle was over; the wounded victor a god of the people, always fearing the hunger of the beaten...”

King Toad

It was when we backed away from the ambush that we reached the riverbank. This was all according to plan, as we had our riverboat waiting for us on the water, ready to pick us up should there be enemies lurking in the dark of the forest.

Kalara signaled the boat, which weighed anchor while I kept the oncoming enemy at bay with well-aimed arrows. I was so focused on the task at hand that I almost fell into the river, but Kalara caught me at the last moment. Before I could thank her, she was swept away at tremendous speed, right into the muddy waters.

The creature in the river was simply enormous, like a black shadow in the deep. It drew my friend in with its tongue and swallowed her whole. I yelled for the vessel's crew to turn back, but they did not; soon the boat floated over the black underwater shadow. The creature's tongue hit the railing, snatching away the helmsman. The captain stood frozen in horror as the tongue emerged once more, dragging her and the boat down into the deep.

Why I survived I do not know. Perhaps the monster was busy chewing on the hull of the boat and the bodies of my friends. The last thing I saw was two enormous eyes beneath the surface, pale with a golden glitter, watching me coldly. I can no longer visit the Toad's Square and its cursed toad skeleton without hearing the echo of the creaking and cracking that occurred as our boat was chewed to bits...

Eleono, former trophy hunter from Kurun

KFOR ALL THE amphibian predators lurking in the streams and ponds of Davokar, the king toad is probably the most famous. The creature, known to the clans as manauit, is as devious as it is glutinous, and if one is to believe the eyewitness accounts circulating among fishermen and sailors, they can grow large enough to swallow smaller vessels. Some even claim that the skeleton on the Toad's Square must come from a relatively normal sized king toad.

SOME SCHOLARS MAINTAIN that the toad creature develops in stages, just like elves and trolls, which would explain why there have been so few reported encounters with truly gargantuan individuals – the number of king toads decreases with each stage of development, as

many of them do not survive the transformation. But another reason for the scarce reports could of course be that almost no one survives an encounter with the giant toads.

WHATEVER IS TRUE regarding stages and life cycles, all who travel along the waters of Davokar should order their lookouts to keep an eye out not only for pirates and shallows, but also for hidden toad monsters. Younger manauits often hunt in groups of three to four individuals, usually lurking in the shade of the riverbank. They can grow as large as ogres, and have no problem pulling in animals that come to drink or travelers passing by on water vessels, but when it comes to actually killing their prey, these monsters rely on their powerful jaws.



Toad Legs as a Delicacy

The Ambrian elite is always looking for new culinary experiences, preferably those that cannot be easily procured and with prices that are therefore astronomical. The meat from a king toad's thighs meets this requirement and, if properly cooked, also has a butter-smooth structure and a delicious flavor. Best served with mashed root vegetables and garlic gravy.



THE OLDER AND much larger king toads have additional weapons in their arsenal. Firstly, they are always surrounded by younger relatives to help them hunt; secondly, they are so huge that they can easily devour an armored liege troll before it has time to react, let alone fight back. Indeed, the region's inhabitants are very lucky that these king toads are so rare, as they have little competition in terms of toughness, appetite and destructive capabilities.

Adventure Set-up

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS arrive at a free settlement on the border to Dark Davokar, either on their own initiative or in search of some missing person/ expedition. The houses are standing on poles in a wetland, built not around some public square, but around a muddy pond.

The settlement is inhabited by Ambrians who, after crossing the Titans, chose to leave the realm behind

and devote themselves to the aspect of the Pathfinder known as the Trapper. Now they worship the king toad in the pond as an incarnation of the god, peacefully coexisting with it and its younger followers – the toads protect them against the dangers of the forest, in exchange for their reverence and servility.

The player characters are welcomed into the settlement and invited to a feast where they are offered wild boar, turnips, roka sauce, and wild berries. And beverages. Lots and lots of beverages, which later that night are spiked with a sleeping drug (such as Drone Dew, page 181 in the *Ruins of Symbaroum Player's Guide*). A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check indicates that the drink tastes somewhat different; a DC 10 Intelligence (alchemist's supplies or poisoner's kit) reveals exactly what has happened.

Dizzy or not, the player characters are finally pushed into the wetland, where the smaller king toads may pop up anywhere in their attempt to lure them toward the center of the pond...

King Toad (Older)

Gargantuan beast

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 234 (12d20 + 108)

Speed 50 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	12 (+1)	28 (+9)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Skills Athletics +15, Perception +7, Survival +7

Damage Immunities acid, cold, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses passive Perception 17

Languages —

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

Manner blinks slowly

Shadow bluish-green, like water moss on a rock just below the surface (Corruption: 0/5)

Equipment —

Amphibian. The king toad can breathe in water and air.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the king toad fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Retract Tongue. If the king toad starts its turn with a Large or smaller creature grappled by its tongue, it can use its bonus action to retract its tongue and bring the creature within 5 feet of its body.

Standing Leap: The king toad's long jump is up to 40 ft. and its high jump is up to 20 ft., with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Grappling Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 30 ft., one Large size or smaller creature. *Hit:* the creature is grappled (escape DC 25).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d8 + 10) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 25). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the king toad can't bite another target.

Swallow. The king toad makes one bite attack against a Huge or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the king toad, and it takes 25 (10d4) acid damage at the start of each of the king toad's turns. The king toad can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the king toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 ft. of movement, exiting prone.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The king toad 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 king toad regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Tongue Attack. The king toad makes a grappling tongue attack.

Swallow. The king toad can make a swallow attack.

Tongue Retract (Costs 2 Actions). The king toad can retract its tongue.

King Toad (Older)

These massive creatures are one of the most dangerous threats in the wilderness.

Tactics. The older king toad is always accompanied by three of previous years' offspring and uses them ruthlessly for its own purposes. They all hide in dark or muddy water whenever possible, and attack simultaneously from different directions to gain advantage over their prey.

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing all ties) the king toad can stir up the mud in its pond, obscuring vision for all creatures within 60 feet of it, other than king toads. The king toad cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

King Toad (Younger)

The offspring of the older king toads are much smaller than their forebears, but still dangerous in their own right.

Tactics. The young king toad hides in pools and watercourses, catching its prey with its tongue before pulling it beneath the surface.

The King of Volgoma

One of the most popular legends about the king toad concerns the King of Volgoma. Whether in Ambrian taverns or around barbarian campfires, tales are told of a giant sea monster that has repeatedly been sighted in Lake Volgoma – as large as a two-masted vessel, with a mouth that can swallow a sailboat whole, crew and all. Many even regard the monster's existence as a fact, rather than a fairy tale, due to the large number of consistent reports and the fact that observations have been made continuously throughout history.

Those who take the legend seriously include Master Lona at Ordo Magica's Kurun Chapter, Baron Olagai Haraag, and Aldamei, youngest son of the widowed Baroness Edindra Mederen. They have all hired groups of monster hunters to find evidence of the monster's existence, preferably something that points out exactly where in Lake Volgoma the King has its underwater palace. Should someone actually manage to slay the creature, it is safe to assume that these three will be prepared to go very far in a bidding war for the carcass!

King Toad (Younger)

Huge beast

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 116 (8d12 + 64)

Speed 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	27 (+8)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)

Skills Athletics +10, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner blinks slowly

Shadow bluish-green, like water moss on a rock just below the surface (Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment —

Amphibian. The king toad can breathe in water and air.

Retract Tongue. If the king toad starts its turn with a large or smaller creature grappled by its tongue, it can use its bonus action to retract its tongue and bring the creature within 5 feet of its body.

Standing Leap. The king toad's long jump is up to 34 ft. and its high jump is up to 17 ft., with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Grappling Tongue. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 30 ft., one Large size or smaller creature. Hit: the creature is grappled (escape DC 20).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 20 (3d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 20). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the king toad can't bite another target.

Spit. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) acid damage.

Swallow. The king toad makes one bite attack against a Large or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the king toad, and it takes 12 (5d4) acid damage at the start of each of the king toad's turns. The king toad can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the king toad dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 ft. of movement, exiting prone.

Living Thorns

LHERE ARE MANY types of dangerous flora in Davokar. One of the most widespread examples is the strangling and pricking thorns that slowly move through the woods, searching for good sites to lay in wait for prey – possibly close to a clearing with luscious grass, a body of water or some ruin; places which tend to catch the attention of both beasts and cultural beings.

LIVING THORNS ONLY move at night, crawling and tumbling on their meaty branches. At dawn, they take root to rest and heal any wounds, before the long and patient wait for large or small prey animals begins. Smaller targets are attacked as soon as they come close, while bigger creatures are lured to step into the midst of the bush, where the leathery branches grow sparser. If the hunt is successful, the prey is squeezed to death and then emptied of life-giving juices and nutrients. All that is left are skin, bone and any equipment; remains which can be used as bait when trying to capture future prey, but which in most cases have a deterring effect and hence prompts the thorn creature to relocate.

REPORTS FROM THE northern and inner parts of Bright Davokar tell of barbarian settlements whose residents have learned to tame the living thorns; they lure them in with live bait, and then continue to feed them so they in time grow into a living perimeter defense, surrounding the palisade or embankment. Even wilder stories from Davokar's darkest parts describe ruins, vales or fields completely covered by living thorn bushes, but many scholars and know-it-alls dismiss these tales. So many thorn creatures remaining together in one place for a long time would most likely see all of them going to their thorny grave from starvation.

Adventure Set-up

LIVING THORNS WILL likely appear during the characters' travels in Davokar, to spice up an adventure which is about something entirely different. They may for example creep up to a campsite and attack right after dawn, when the characters have awakened and ask themselves why the site looks different from the night before. Alternately, they encounter some antagonist who can control or is allied with a group of thorn creatures, like the witch in Salmar's narrative.

Another option is that the characters find themselves in a situation where someone is using living thorns as a private army – possibly a sorcerer, witch or undead with the capacity to enslave other beings. It may be some cult leader that the characters themselves have killed or driven out into Davokar, but if this does not fit your particular story they may instead be involved in stopping a retaliatory action against some acquaintance or quest-giver.

Nature's Lullaby

A character who has the Nature's Lullaby feature can use it to pass through whole fields of living thorns. As long as the song or music goes on, they only sway to the melody, without attacking or moving.

"Living thorns? Like some kind of strangling vines? Folly and fantasies, it may be the stupidest thing I've ever heard!" Aside from a heretical expletive at the moment of surprise, those were Order Master Ulagra's last words in life.

We had traveled long through Wild Davokar, and were hopelessly lost. Our supplies were dwindling and what we found in the woods only made us sicker and more confused — a clear sign that we had entered the dark: even if the forest seemed relatively bright and harmonious, it was treacherous in many ways. Just when we feared that all was lost, our guide warned that we were not alone. Only moments later, we all could see her: a witch, sitting on a huge, moss-covered stone, as if in a trance, listening to the wind whispering in the leaves.

She looked up as we approached. Nothing but a thorny bush separated us from her. Master Ulagra opened his mouth and aske — no, he ordered the witch to help us. When she didn't react, our honorable Master of the Order was offended and grew angry, threatening to burn her off the boulder, even summoning an orb of sulfurous fire between his hands to underline the threat. The guide, whispering and pleading, tried to calm the pyromancer's fiery wrath, but in vain. Not even the information that the thorny bush at the base of the stone was moving in answer to the threat had any effect besides the previously quoted, patronizing harangue about folly and fantasies.

The fortune hunter Salmara's account after she was found by a group of Queen's Rangers



Living Thorns (Familiar)

Witches of the green path can use living thorns as familiars (see the spell *find familiar*). Such a familiar obeys the will of the witch, meaning it does not share the circadian rhythm of wild specimens. Instead, the familiar moves, tumbling and winding, in the witch's steps; it acts when it is expected to and rests when the witch does.

Tactics. The thorns use their root trap to capture prey and then attack it with their thorny vines.

Living Thorns (Familiar)

Small plant

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 4 (1d6 + 1)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities slashing

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner tumbling, swaying

Shadow speckled pale green, like newly sprung foliage

(Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

False Appearance. While a living thorns plant remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

ACTIONS

Thorny Vines. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Root Trap. If a creature comes within 5 feet of the living thorns, the plant can grapple the creature (escape DC 12).

Living Thorns (Wild)

These wild specimens are found throughout Davokar.

Tactics. The thorns use their four attacks per turn to capture the prey, in order to crush it to death in a strangling embrace.

Living Thorns (Wild)

Large plant

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities slashing

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner swaying, stretching

Shadow shifting bright-green, as a swaying bush
(Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

False Appearance. While a living thorns plant remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

Strangle. If the living thorns has a creature grappled, it can use its bonus action to cause 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage to the creature.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The living thorns plant makes four attacks with its grasping vines.

Grasping Thorns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage and, if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (Escape DC 14).

REACTIONS

Root Trap. If a creature comes within 10 feet of the living thorns, the plant can grapple the creature (escape DC 14).

Managaal

We stood in a row, silent and excited. All of us were marked by corruption; all of us hoped to get rid of the stigmas, dreaming of being able to walk around undisguised, unmasked, without fear. The thought made my heart beat faster. **C**The creature before us was fettered to the wall, like a pinned up, gigantic bat. It squirmed and hissed; it reached for us with the thorny tongue playing in its predatory maw. It was thirsty and we were willing. The row moved steadily forward, as one by one we were licked bloody by the creature. Our Master's death lord stood ready to pull monster and cultist apart, so that the latter would not be licked to death. **C**It was nearly my turn, but the woman before me refused to be separated from the monster's kiss. Master saw the danger and cried out to his death lord to part the two; the edge of the rusty sword cut through the head and shoulder of the woman, and the creature jerked back its tongue to save it. Then our Master berated us, about never allowing the beast to drink itself full. And after that, you charged in, so I never received the cleansing kiss. **C**That you mean to burn me, I know. But what will you do with the blight beast?

MHE BEASTLY MANAGAAL hunts for blight marked creatures, drinks their blood, and seems to be able to filter the Corruption from the blood by adding it to its own life force. According to myths, these remarkable daemons were created by the hex masters of Symbaroum in a vain, and mainly failed, attempt to cleanse themselves of darkness. Regardless of whether this is true or not, the creature does have the capacity to free its victims from Corruption, wholly or partly, but only so long as it does not drink its fill.

UP UNTIL A managaal has managed to placate its thirst and hunger, it can use the accumulated Corruption as a power source, to catch more victims or get away from threatening situations. But once it is full (i.e. when its accumulated Corruption is at its own Threshold), it stops and spends the following turn spewing out a new managaal - a black, winged child, flapping about in bloody vomit. These dark spawns are said to be very aggressive, and nearly as dangerous as a grown managaal, not least since their apparent frailty leads others to see them as more tragic than threatening. Even worse: the managaal who spews up the dark spawn becomes positively rabid from Corruption hunger. Woe to the wretched adventurer who happens to be close by when spawn and parent go on the hunt together!

THE MANAGAAL IS very rare, but is nonetheless relatively well known since it is mentioned in several Symbarian sources. For one thing, there are descriptions of its origin and hunting methods, but there are also referrals to the creation of an artifact called Vile Water. Distilling the blood of a managaal is said to be one way of creating such an artifact, and for that purpose a newly born spawn is supposedly sufficient, but an adult is even better.

Transcript from the Black Cloaks' interrogation of Aramo, surviving cultis

Create Managaal

Once a managaal is full of accumulated Corruption it spews up a new managaal, a dark spawn. This black act of creation empties the managaal of corruption, and it becomes so crazed with hunger that it immediately and automatically breaks all physical and mystical shackles currently binding it.

Fettering a Managaal

A captured managaal can be bound in an inverted magic circle, just like a daemon (see page 203 in the Player's Guide). The circle, along with any physical restraints, are broken if the managaal spews forth a dark spawn (see the textbox Create Managaal below).

Adventure Set-up

ACULT IN ONE of Ambria's towns has managed to capture a managaal and means to use it to the fullest, first to cleanse themselves of corruption, then to create Vile Water.

The first phase goes as planned, but as the distillation begins one of the cultists (maybe the Master Alchemist or Artifact Crafter) suffers a blow of Corruption and

becomes thoroughly corrupt. Moreover, the blight-born cultist escapes out into town.

The characters are visiting the settlement when the newly awakened abomination runs amok. After having bested the creature, they discover strange puncture wounds on its neck, armpits and groin. Someone with the Bushcraft trait can testify that these wounds have not been made by any common beast; anyone proficient with Arcana may, after a passed DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, recollect descriptions of a

Creating Vile Water

To use a managaal for the purpose of creating Vile Water, the creature must be at least half full of corruption. Moreover, it takes a codex or manuscript which describes the actual procedure – sources of knowledge that can be found in Davokar's dark ruins, or bought from cultists and sorcerers for the price of a small fortune.

It takes a full day to slowly boil down the creature's blood to the desired thickness; then, a Master Alchemist (someone proficient with alchemist's supplies and a proficiency bonus of +4 or higher) and a Master Artifact Crafter (someone proficient with an artifact catalogue and a proficiency bonus of +4 or higher) must each make a DC 15 Intelligence check, using their appropriate tools. If both checks are successful, ten drops of Vile Water are created if the managaal was an adult, or five if it was a spawn. Should any of the checks land on a natural 1, the individual in question suffers 1d6 permanent Corruption.

ARTIFACT: VILE WATER

Vile Water consists of pure Corruption, like an opposite Water of the Dusk (page 141 in the *Gamemaster's Guide*). It looks like black mercury and gives off dark fumes of Corruption if not contained in a vial of glass, crystal or similar material. The only way to attune to this artifact is to accept 1 point of permanent Corruption.

Black-Light. In the hands of one who has accepted Corruption, the vial can radiate with the dark of the Abyss, thereby blackening an area even if the sun is high in the sky. This means that a place (for instance a room indoors or a forest clearing) becomes magically dark for 1 hour.

Requires: Bonus Action
Corruption: None

Revelations of the Night. The liquid can be dropped on living tissue. Each drop grants an XP award equal to defeating a

creature with a challenge rating of $(1d6 +$ the character's proficiency bonus), at the cost of 1 permanent Corruption. When all drops are used, the vial is empty and the artifact spent.

Requires: Action

Corruption: 1 permanent Corruption/drop

Black Synergy. He who bows before the supremacy of the Dark can use its blackness to enhance the powers of Sorcery. The wielder of the Vile Water can add 1d4 to an attack roll, the damage, or the DC of a saving throw of a Sorcery spell they cast. They can do this once before taking a short or longer rest to recover this feature.

Requires: Reaction
Corruption: None

Salvation of Darkness. The master of the artifact can crush the vial with a thought, thereby releasing its darkness. All creatures present with at least 1 Corruption (temporary or permanent) immediately suffer 1d12 permanent Corruption. Beings that already have permanent Corruption are only affected if the outcome is higher than their current Corruption – if so, they suffer the difference. If the outcome is equal to or lower than their current Corruption value, nothing happens. This also affects the wielder; only creatures with zero Corruption are safe from harm.

Requires: Free Object Interaction
Corruption: (see description)

Managaal (Spawn)

Small phenomenon

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 12)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +3, Con +4

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner crouching pitifully

Shadow burgundy, shifting towards purple as it accumulates more Corruption (Corruption: 0/6)

Equipment

Thirsty. If the managaal has no Corruption in its vessel of darkness, it has advantage on its attacks.

Vessel of Darkness. The managaal can absorb excess Corruption. The vessel can hold up to 12 points of Corruption. If a managaal begins its turn with Corruption in its vessel, it reduces its vessel Corruption by 1. If the managaal would consume additional Corruption, it instead vomits forth a managaal spawn and the vessel's Corruption becomes 0.

ACTIONS

Bloody Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage and the target loses 1d4 temporary Corruption, with the managaal gaining the same amount.

REACTIONS

Sidestep. The managaal spawn can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.

Dark Destiny. If the managaal would consume additional Corruption past the 12 points that its vessel of darkness holds, it instead vomits forth a managaal spawn and the vessel's Corruption becomes 0.

Thirsty. If the managaal has no Corruption in its vessel of darkness, it has advantage on its attacks.

Vessel of Darkness. The managaal can absorb excess Corruption. The vessel can hold up to 12 points of Corruption. If a managaal begins its turn with Corruption in its vessel, it reduces its vessel Corruption by 1.

ACTIONS

Thorny Tongue. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage and the target loses 1d6 temporary Corruption (to a maximum of the creature's current temporary Corruption), with the managaal gaining the same amount in its vessel of darkness. The target is grappled (escape DC 9).

REACTIONS

Blood Drink. If the managaal has a creature grappled, it does 2 (1d4) piercing damage to it and the target loses 1 temporary Corruption (if it has temporary Corruption remaining). If so, the managaal gains 1 temporary Corruption into its vessel of darkness.

strange beast said to suck Corruption from others, called a Managaal.

The adventure continues with the characters trying to find the source of the Corruption, either by following the blight beast's physical trail or by investigating the individual that was blight born. In the latter case, it is probably a notable alchemist or artifact crafter, meaning that interviews with or break-ins at the homes of people in his circle of acquaintances (or the use of rituals) can lead the characters to the dark chapel of the cultists. A complication – or an opening for groups that have a hard time moving forward – is that the cult is in need of a new alchemist/artifact crafter, and decides to kidnap one. Maybe even one of the characters can become the target, if they are known to master the required skills?

Managaal (Adult)

The adult version of this vile creature seeks out the corrupted in order to slake its thirst and hopefully produce spawn.

Tactics. The beast tries to captivate its enemies in order to drink their (preferably corrupted) blood.

Managaal (Spawn)

A newly formed managaal spawn attacks almost any creature nearby, hoping to find a victim of Corruption and complete its life cycle.

Tactics. The spawn tries to drink the blood of one (preferably corrupted) victim at a time.

Managaal (Adult)

Large phenomenon

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 133 (14d10 + 56)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	17 (+3)	19 (+4)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)	22 (+6)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Con +7

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner plays with its thorny tongue

Shadow purple, shifting towards deep black as it accumulates more Corruption (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment

Captivate. The managaal uses its bonus action and stares at a single creature with its devil-like eyes. The creature must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become stunned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

Marlit

The tracker proved to be worth her salary – she caught the scent after a mere afternoon in the woods. Judging by the tracks, it was a relatively small marlit, but “big enough to make a splendid cape,” as Bardel, our leader, put it.

We trailed the creature through the evening and into the night. It moved erratically to the northeast, out on wetlands which slowed our progress. Naturally, the marlit itself had no problems where it moved along, up in the foliage, but after a while we noticed that it started moving in a wide circle. It took some time before we figured out why, before Bardel and our guide discovered other marlit tracks in the tree tops: our intended prey was no longer alone.

After some mumbling and worried glances, Bardel explained what was going on. We were no longer hunters, but prey, and those hunting us were both large and many in number. The twist was sinister, to say the least; frightening enough even to make Dumdum anxious.

Bardel was trying to reassure the ogre when the first cry echoed through the forest. Gaping in a mixture of surprise and fright, we saw our tracker being hoisted from the ground by several grappling tongues. I ran! Everybody ran. Only me and Tugvar escaped...

Eleono, former trophy hunter from Kurun

MTHE MASTERFUL HUNTER called marlit by the clanfolk is described as a reptilian beast, larger than a man. It moves around in the foliage with a skin that changes color and pattern in a way which makes it very hard to discover. As for hunting grounds, it seems to prefer Davokar's outer regions, but once the prey is downed it retreats to the wilder and darker parts where the packs gather to share the daily bounty. At least this is how the predator in question is described by members of the northern clans.

IT MAY VERY well be that the marlits in the north differ from those further to the south; that the northerners are like members of a large clan or tribe, while the ones down south are more like families. Or it could be like the Goeds say, that the further north you go in the forest, the more dangerous it gets and the greater the reason for sticking together, which also holds true for predators. Master Argoi, Chapter Master in Kurun

and Ordo Magica's authority on troll studies, claims that there may be yet another reason for the alleged difference – that the marlits up north gather around some forest spirit or mighty beast which they provide with food and protection, for instance an arch troll or a lindworm.

SINCE THE SKIN of the lizard is in demand among both barbarians and the people of the Queen, many monster hunters have specialized in hunting marlits. They risk their lives, going up against this cunning, patient predator that hunts in packs and often employs the method of having lone, wandering bait-beasts lure foolhardy hunters into well-planned ambushes. On the other hand, because of the danger, the marlit hunters have high status in places like Kastor and Thistle Hold, and they would likely not hesitate if someone could lead them to where one of the great northern packs gathers.



Section 8:24, Famous marlit hunters and their passing

Aneas of Mark Lowborn braggart, mainly known for his self-endearing poems and for having killed and flayed the beast whose skin is now worn by Mayor Nightpitch as a hunting cape. The hunter's demise became known when his spear-hauler, Maltuld, returned alone from a hunting trip, carrying the right earlobe of his master - what remained after the self-mutilation Aneas happened to perform as he was pulled into the foliage.

Jonhor of Baiaga The handsome barbarian Jonhor - immensely popular among both women and men; also cherished by the odd ogre - became the brightest monster hunting star of Kastor for a period of three years, until his death. At the time of his disappearance, worried admirers went out to search the woods but returned empty-handed, save for Jonhor's peculiar leather vest and a few ill-matching pieces of his tattooed skin.

Hlhaaka Brusque but well-regarded tutor in the art of monster hunting, from the Karabbaddokk tribe but up to her death active in Thistle Hold. She died during a field trip with hunting pupils, including the youngsters Mateo Derego and Alvio Argona, officially after having defended her students from a huge marlit. However, rumor has it that the remains displayed stab wounds rather than bite marks, and also that one of the noble youngsters returned without his fencing sword.

Fredo the Slaughterer Talkative entrepreneur who founded the tailor store Fredo's Marlit Attires in Yndaros, and who enjoyed traveling in the hunt for raw material and thrills. It is said he died because of a wager, after having claimed that he was able to slay a full-grown marlit with nothing but his teeth. Distasteful as it may be, all that remains of him are his four golden teeth, found and excavated by his sons from a, reportedly, steaming lump of marlit excrement.

Excerpt from "Victims of Davokar", register established at the Queen's Legation in Thistle Hold

Marlit

The marlit's hide allows it to hide anywhere and then strike with surprise.

Tactics. The marlit cooperates with its companions in order to achieve surprise attacks or flanking. Then they grab and pull the target in using their tongues, and bite it to death.

Marlit

Large beast

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner purrs and gurgles

Shadow multifarious green, like a sunlit oily leaf

(Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment

Ambusher. In the first round of a combat, the marlit has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Camouflage. The marlit has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in any terrain.

Retract Tongue. If the marlit has a creature grappled it can use its bonus action to drag the creature to itself.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The marlit makes two bite attacks.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d4 + 6) piercing damage.

Grappling Tongue. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d4 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Uncanny Dodge. When a creature that the marlit can see hits it with an attack, the marlit can reduce the damage by half.

Adventure Set-up

A WEALTHY AMBRIAN, AS for instance Count Arnon Melion or one of his close relatives, is preparing to host a masquerade ball and wants to make the event memorable for the prominent guests – the Queen, the dukes and most of the kingdom's elite. The idea is to prepare extraordinary costumes for all, sewed from color shifting marlit skin.

The quest-giver has bought information from a credible source, detailing the whereabouts of one of southern Davokar's largest packs of marlits. He wants to send a hunting party to the location, supported with expertise needed to travel far into the woods. The characters can join the expedition, which initially runs smoothly – until it arrives at the destination.

Apparently, the pack is under the protection of the Iron Pact. When the actual hunt is afoot, projectiles as well as mystical powers are used in defense of the lizards. Even if the hunting party manages to slay the handful of wardens present in the area, they now have to hurry: reinforcements are inbound from The Halls of a Thousand Tears. If things go really bad, the characters become known to the elves, which may cause trouble later in their adventurous lives...

Marlit, marlit, you yellow hare,
you wouldn't suffice as a scarecrow.
you dart like a rabbit, now here, now there,
afraid of your very own shadow.

You lowest of creatures ever born,
unwanted like ulcers and racket.
You're worthy of nothing but hate and scorn,
until you're turned into a jacket.

Lampoon signed One-Legged Elnar, Ravnica

Nefarani

WY ALL INDICATIONS, the Nefarani are what is left of a warrior guard that was bred in Symbar to combat the increasingly numerous enemies of the emperor. Since the fall of Symbaroum, they have swept through northern Davokar, where they have been hired by various barbarian chieftains to slay monsters or do battle with other clans. As the nefarani

communicate with each other in total silence, no one knows how they decide where to go or whom to fight for. However, it is clear that they are constantly seeking someone to serve, and that they will not stay with the same master for more than one major battle.

IN RECENT DECADES, the nefarani have made their way south and fought in battles between barbarians and Ambrians, usually – but not always – on the side of the barbarians. Although they can all speak, and will do so to outsiders if need be, they are collectively represented by a spokesperson, recently identified as Asenath. In combat, this woman is no more a leader than anyone else, which has led Ambrian military strategists to conclude that the nefarani fight the way they speak: silently and, somehow, collectively. Some scholars even hypothesize that nefarani is actually the name of a powerful, godlike spirit that has possessed an entire army of warriors.

AT ANY RATE, the nefarani are known not to age as others do, and will only die by the blades of their enemies. With no new nefarani being born or created, they are slowly fading away. However, those still alive gain power with every fallen brother or sister, growing stronger over time. According to scholars who have studied them closely, there is a widespread belief among the nefarani that the last of their kind will finally have a vision about the higher purpose of their collective existence – a vision that, with the combined strength of the fallen siblings, will help the sole survivor determine the fate of the world.

Chey fought in close formation, moving as one large body, rather than as individuals. They fought without words or spoken orders; grunts of exertion and moans of pain were all that came from them. Only when one of them fell did they scream. First one called out the name of the fallen, then the others did the same, all at once. They then fought on in silence, though, if possible, even more frenetically. **C**They were few, we were many – we slew them all, at the cost of heavy casualties. I heard rumors that there are more like them; that what we fought was but the rearguard of a larger force. Bahili, Teremun, Madaai, Hadar, Idona. Yes, even now, my beloved will sometimes wake me up as, in a cold sweat, I scream their names in my sleep.

Colonel Alusa, on the battle at Karo's Fen in year 8



TODAY, 27 NEFARANI are all that remains of the original force of roughly one thousand warriors. Their individual strength is already considerable, and whenever one is killed, those that survive become stronger (see their stat block).

Adventure Set-up

HE NEFARANI CAN be used as tough opponents for combat-oriented characters, or as a mystery in themselves. This adventure seed focuses on the latter, but also offers potential for the former – depending on how the characters decide to tackle the situation.

The characters find themselves in a place under siege when suddenly the nefarani show up, offering to aid the enemy; a battle is imminent, and with the nefarani involved, the defenders are not likely to prevail. Surprisingly enough, the nefarani do not participate in the first attack, but discreetly send a negotiator (Asenath) to speak with the characters, who have presumably

distinguished themselves in the first battle and are clearly not part of the defenders' main force. As it turns out, the nefarani do not wish to fight here, but someone in the area has kidnapped one of their brothers, and they want him back before nightfall. Otherwise, the nefarani will attack and retrieve him themselves. Should the characters ask how Asenath can be so sure that her blood brother is there, she answers: "He cries out to me from underground. They are stealing his blood."

The truth is that a Black Cloak/sorcerer/Ambrian Panzer alchemist/local mystic has captured a nefarani to, through alchemy, extract the answer to the mystery of their mighty blood bond; a secret many would pay almost anything to learn. The mystic's companions will initially try to fight the characters, but when that no longer seems like a viable option, the mystic offers the characters a part of his/her future wealth on the condition that they do not return the prisoner; an offer which, if accepted, means battle against the nefarani, or at least an intense escape from the doomed location.

Varying Weapons

Not all nefarani choose to use the same weapons at all times. Here are three other example configurations that might be encountered:

Archer. Make the following changes:

- ◆ Change AC to 16.
- ◆ Remove **Estoc**.
- ◆ Add quiver with 12 arrows to Equipment
- ◆ Add "**Composite Bow**. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does 17 (2d8 + 8) piercing damage." to actions.

Spear-fighter. Make the following changes:

- ◆ Remove **Estoc**.
- ◆ Add 3 spears to Equipment
- ◆ Add "**Spear**. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack." to actions.

Heavy Weapons. Make the following changes:

- ◆ Change AC to 16.
- ◆ Remove **Estoc**.
- ◆ Add "**Halberd**. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage." to actions.

The Last of the Nefarani

What happens when there is only a single nefarani left alive is still unknown. Should such a situation arise, it is up to the Gamemaster to decide what best suits their particular gaming group and campaign, but we would suggest the following:

- ◆ The last nefarani realizes that no one could ever replace the last emperor of Symbaroum, and withdraws to Symbar to make sure that the Throne of Thorns remains vacant.
- ◆ The last one has a vision about a certain person being chosen to sit on the Throne of Thorns in Symbar, and joins him or her to make sure that the prophecy is fulfilled.
- ◆ A variant of #2, where the chosen one has no wish to sit on the throne of Symbar. The last nefarani will not accept this, but kidnaps said person and brings him or her along to Symbar to complete the mission.
- ◆ The last one has a vision about a world without humans and Corruption, and commences an all-encompassing purge.

Nefarani

These blood-linked warriors have a destiny related to the Throne of Thorns itself.

Tactics. The nefarani fight silently, disciplined as a selfless collective, always trying to give each other advantage by flanking the enemy.

Nefarani

Medium humanoid (Nefarani)

Armor Class 18 (woven silk + shield)

Hit Points 114 (12d8 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +8

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +5, Survival +5

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, stunned

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Ambrian, Barbarian, Elvish

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner eerily synchronized

Shadow mottled dark gray, like old iron
(Corruption: 2/6)

Equipment

Might From the Fallen. When a nefarani falls, the following events occur: each nefarani (regardless of distance) gains a Hit Die and its current and maximum hit points are increased by 10 (1d8 + 5); each nefarani increases one attribute score by 1 point (adjusting any modifiers and derived values as

needed); each nefarani screams out the name of the fallen; each non-nefarani creature that can hear the screaming must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of all nefarani. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of their turn, ending the effect on a success. (Every second time this occurs, the creatures' challenge rating should increase by one step, possibly changing the nefarani's proficiency bonus.)

Mystical Connection. Nefarani are in constant psychic contact with each other. Each individual has advantage on attack rolls as long as another conscious nefarani is within 5 feet of the same enemy.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. The nefarani makes two attacks with its primary weapon. If it has a secondary weapon it uses its bonus action to attack with it as well.

Estoc. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does 17 (2d8 + 8) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Acrobatic Fighter. When an attack roll is successful, the nefarani makes a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check using the attack roll result as the DC. On a success, it takes half damage from that attack.

Nightmare

NIIGHTMARES ARE DISEMBODIED ghouls that move between various unwitting hosts in constant search of more corrupted ones. Some scholars believe them to be deceased sorcerers who, having refused or been denied the final rest, continue to pursue their dark desires long after their physical demise; other sources claim that they are necromages who have lost their bodies yet linger in the world by virtue of their insatiable appetite. Corrupted creatures seem to be more susceptible to the nightmare's invasion, though thoroughly corrupted ones are immune.

THE HOSTS LEAD normal lives during the day, but at night they are possessed and forced to do the nightmare's bidding. The possessed perceive these nightly activities as increasingly wild dreams, probably thinking that their dirty feet and fingernails are the result of sleepwalking - at least until the nightmare starts killing and devouring the corpses, or whatever other desires that particular nightmare happens to have; it seems to vary from ghoul to ghoul. If the victim fights back, the host will of course carry these wounds in the morning, as clear signs that something is terribly wrong.

BANISHING A NIGHTMARE requires that the host is either killed or thoroughly corrupted, or that the individual is exposed, voluntarily or otherwise, to a cleansing Exorcism. But the nightmare may of course leave on its own and target someone else, provided that the new host makes physical contact with the old one. For that very reason, the nightmare sometimes seduces, or breaks into the home of what it hopes will be the next host, in order to get close enough to touch it.

Adventure Set-up

AN OLD FRIEND, mentor, or some other person dear to them, asks the characters for help. After a time of increasingly bad nightmares, they have developed a rather unwelcome sleepwalking habit, and believe that they might be possessed - the question is, by who or what, and why?

It soon becomes clear to the characters that their friend is no longer in their right mind; studying forbidden books and visiting malevolent ruins has corrupted them beyond what is healthy. Drawing closer to the dark, the friend has also grown extremely curious about what the possessing force could want. Of course, they would like to be free of the ghoul, but not right away - not until someone has solved the mystery of what the ghoul is looking for under the city!

For the characters, this becomes a dilemma. They can either oblige their friend by spending each night in the nightmare's company, or prepare a treacherous exorcism in order to save the friend against their will.

The most exciting scenario would of course be if the characters succumb to the same fascination about what the ghoul is seeking. Perhaps the friend's nightmares are somehow linked to one of the gaming group's goals, or at least to that of some individual character?

THUS SPOKE AROALETA

*"... and while the body
and power were hers, the
eyes and desire were not;
words and deeds, solace
and lust, were that of
a hungering spirit. But
blind to his dear and
beloved, the liege was
unable to see, the alien
gaze, the sundering
claws, that soon brought
his life to an end..."*

Unkle Janos was always a peculiar man, slightly odd, but not in a threatening way. Just different, you see – a bit too interested in the macabre, perhaps, but no more than the average bored scholar. You know how these bookworms can be, isolated from reality, from the blood, the stench, and the squalor. I have seen a lot of them in my family circle. My mother was in many ways the same. She did not even give birth to me, and therefore never physically experienced the connection between life, pain, and blood. For her, bodily fluids would instead be exclusively associated with unhealthy desires and death.

Of course, it bothered me when my dear uncle started spending time with the poets in the graveyard; they met at night, reciting poetry over open, empty graves or, even worse, to the decay. From there, perhaps it was not such a big leap to enter the mausoleums as well, and do the same in the direct vicinity of the dead. Then something happened; what I do not know. The City Watch was called to the burial grounds after someone had dug open a grave; shortly thereafter, one of the poets was found dead in an otherwise empty crypt. That was when I decided to confront my uncle, and went to see him.

I found him emaciated, exhausted, showing signs of madness, with bruises on his hands and dirt under his fingernails. Still, he assured me that he was well, and that he no longer had anything to do with the poets. To verify whether he was telling the truth, I waited outside his house, and as suspected, he climbed out of his bedroom window wearing nothing but his nightgown. I called out to him, and as he turned toward me, I was petrified. Believe me, the eyes staring back at me from Uncle Janos' eye sockets were not his own.

Liveta, Adept of the Order, in her report to the Black Cloaks



Nightmare

These insubstantial undead are natives of the spirit world and are cast back to that realm by a successful exorcism.

Nightmare

Medium undead (extraplanar)

Armor Class Special (see below)

Hit Points 54 (12d8)

Speed 30 ft. (or Special, see below)

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

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +5

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Damage Immunities (only when incorporeal) acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13 (or higher)

Languages those its victim knows

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner giggles childishly

Shadow glossy black, like the sweaty hide of a pitch-black horse (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment —

Incorporeal Movement. When the nightmare is not possessing a creature it is invisible and 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.

Possession. One humanoid that the nightmare touches must succeed on a Charisma saving throw (the DC is 10 plus the target's total Corruption) or be possessed by the nightmare; the nightmare then

Tactics. A nightmare without a host has only one thing in mind – finding a new body to possess, as soon as possible.

disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The nightmare can now take control of the body – when the nightmare is in control, the victim retains no memories of its actions or events during that time. The nightmare can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics and surface knowledge, but doesn't gain access to the target's secrets, class features, or proficiencies. Its armor class is 10 plus the target's Dexterity modifier and its to-hit value is its proficiency bonus plus the higher of the target's Strength or Dexterity modifiers.

The possession lasts until the creature is slain, the nightmare ends it as a bonus action, or the nightmare is turned or forced out by an effect like the exorcism spell. When the possession ends, the nightmare reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this nightmare's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

ACTIONS

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 or higher to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d8 +0 or higher) piercing damage.

Lifedrain. Melee Spell Attack: +2 or higher to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

REACTIONS

Fade. The nightmare shifts itself towards the Spirit World, taking only half damage from an attack.

"Hear ye, hear ye, the Bohemian Cannibal captured! Last night, after ten maimed and partially devoured victims, Jorval, the romantic bard behind the popular poem 'To rest in your arms', was caught red-handed, sinking his teeth into a dead youngster's thigh. While maintaining his innocence, he admits to sometimes having woken with blood on his face; thinking it was only a nighttime nosebleed.

Friends and rivals in shock; Kurto, the Powerpoet, was heard shouting his most recent lampoon 'Digested your arms' outside the Depths of the Titans just before dawn. Despite the accused's denial, Commander Alvo Steelneck has no doubt that the Bohemian Cannibal has been caught; execution scheduled tomorrow on the Triumph Plaza."

Town crier in Yndaros

Night Swarmers

NHE EMBODIMENT OF Corruption, is how Master Cornelio, Chapter Master in Thistle Hold, describes the Night Swarmers. Father Elfeno, First Theurg in the same town, was as drastic in his judgment when he called them "Swarms of the Eternal Night", after having been told about a catastrophic expedition to the Serpent Temple of Syravan; only one member returned, with serious blight marks as the sole pay for his effort. However you describe these blighted creatures, there is no doubt that any fortune hunter that dares venture into the depths of Davokar is at risk of waking them to swarming life.

AS SINGLE CREATURES they are not very impressive, barely the height of a human palm and thin as splinters. But they are never encountered alone. According to reports from the forest, they assemble in great numbers at locations oozing with or radiating Corruption, often in haunted ruins or on grounds where major battles or momentous events once took place. Master Cornelio based his analysis on these kinds of reports – concluding that the Night Swarmers can appear, or rather be born, as an effect of massive outbreaks of corrupting energies, and that they may survive thanks to the lingering blackness, to spring into action when living beings enter their territory.

THE WITNESS STATEMENTS collected at the Twilight Monastery indicate that these swarmers are territorial and that they will not pursue intruders very far. Furthermore, the archives contain information describing swarms of approximately one hundred individuals, and some locations that hold more than one swarm. According to less reliable rumors, careless explorers may find themselves in even worse situations; this may actually have happened already, without any survivors to tell about it. Cautionary tales told among several of the clans describe areas plagued by thousands of swarmers, which, if stirred into action, form a virtual cloud of clattering, corruption-dripping tiny jaws. How an explorer should behave if attacked by such a "murder cloud", there is no one, neither witch nor wizard, who dares say or even offer suggestions.

Adventure Set-up

NIIGHT SWARMERS ARE mainly meant to be an obstacle or complicating factor during travels in Davokar, especially when the player characters are exploring ruins or journeying in regions where the Iron Pact once battled the perverse deities and abominable creations of Symbaroum. But they may of course be given a more prominent role.

Perhaps someone is performing private excavations beneath a smaller town or outpost, and happens to break through into a night swarmer lair. The characters may be there when this occurs or be tasked with investigating what has happened and in that case arrive at a settlement which is deserted, apart from the blight-born humans and animals which come out at night.

Another option is to have a vengeful witch gain access to a mystical link which lets her possess a swarm, and send it to attack the residents in a free settlement or outpost that has displeased her. The possession can be revealed with the ability Shadow-sight and a passed Perception check, after which the possessing power can be tracked down and dealt with.

Crackling Premonition

No matter if it is a swarm or a murder cloud, the night swarmers lie dormant in the ground, in wall cracks or beneath the bark of trees until a living target comes within reach. From the moment they are roused, it takes two turns for the collective to get ready – up until then, the swarm is too scattered to attack or be attacked.

A creature can make a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the crackling, rustling sound which comes from the night swarmers' movements; combined with Bushcraft or Wilderness Explorer, it also gives insights about what is actually about to happen. During the second turn, everyone present can see the swarmers emerge, take flight and start rallying. Of course, the intruders can choose to run away; the Game-master determines (or rolls 1d6 to decide) how many turns they have to run before the pursuers stop hunting them.

It was unbelievable! We made it all the way to the legendary Serpent Temple of Syravan without casualties, actually without suffering any kind of wounds, infections or poisons. Master Muldar was like a child on Queen's Day. He jumped around by the foot of the hill and shouted profanities at his mother, who apparently had never believed in or supported his ambitions, saying that the treasures would become the death of him. Boy, was she right...

Me waited until the following morning before parading up the slope and entering through the vines covering the entrance. Many of us immediately heard it – the clicking, the crunching and the skitter of falling pebbles. But Muldar would not listen, and he did not heed our warnings. He refused to permit us to turn around. I was the only one who disobeyed.

As soon as I saw the pale, tiny creatures emerge out of the ground, the walls and the vegetation I turned and ran. Before I even reached the entrance, the creatures had assembled in several hungering swarms that soon attacked my companions. Shortly thereafter, howls and abominable screams echoed from the top of the hill. If Muldar's men had happened to awaken something or if the howls came from them... Well, I'd rather not know...



From the mystic Galfenio's debriefing with Mother Mehira

Night Swarmers Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny abominations

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner chattering, swirling

Shadow flickering black, like swirling soot flakes in starlight (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment —

Blood Frenzy. The night swimmers have advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The night swimmers make two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage or 1 piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. Each successful bite also causes the creature to gain 1d4 temporary Corruption.

REACTIONS

Scatter. The swarm may separate as they are being attacked to cause the damage to be halved, as few of the individual creatures are struck.



Night Swarmers Murder Cloud

Huge swarm of Tiny abominations

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 110 (13d12 + 26)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

Manner a rustling, whining storm

Shadow raging black, like a downpour in pitch black darkness (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment

Blood Frenzy. The night swarmers have advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

Harmful Aura. If a creature is within 60 feet of the night swarmers when it must roll to determine if it gains a Mark of Corruption (*Player's Guide*, page 38), it has disadvantage on that roll.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the night swarmers fail a saving throw, they can choose to succeed instead.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The night swarmers make two bite attacks.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage or 3 piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. Each successful bite also causes the creature to gain 1d6 temporary Corruption.

REACTIONS

Scatter. The swarm may separate after a successful attack to cause the damage to be halved, as few of the individual creatures are struck.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The night swarmers 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 night swarmers regain spent legendary actions at the start of their turn.

Move. The night swarmers can move up to their speed.

Attack. The night swarmers can make an attack with their bite.

Cluster (requires 2 actions). The swarm surrounds the head of a creature, causing that creature to be blinded until the swarm moves away or is destroyed.

Night Swarmers, Swarm

Most night swarmer colonies can form one or more swarms to defend their territory.

Tactics. The swarm has nothing in mind besides gorging until it is full, and it does not quit until the target becomes blight-born or leaves its territory.

Night Swarmers, Murder Cloud

When a night swarmer colony is large enough, they combine into a singular larger swarm, known as a murder cloud.

Tactics. The murder cloud has no special tactics, but aware of their automatically harmful aura, the individuals are extra eager to get to the warm flesh before it is spoiled by Corruption.

Lair Actions. If the night swarmers are in their lair, they can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause the local Corruption to surge. Each character with Corruption must make a Charisma saving throw, with the DC equal to 10 plus their current total Corruption. On a failure, they gain a point of permanent Corruption and set their temporary Corruption to 0. The night swarmers cannot use this lair action if they are incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, they can't use it until after their first turn in the combat.

If you run into Night Swarmers, flee for your life! If you cannot flee, attack with fire. If you don't have fire, gulp purple sap while fencing like a maniac. And if you have gone to Dark Davokar without purple sap, it's your funeral!

Master Cornelio's Advice

Ravenous Willow

Father wanted to show me Davokar. He said we must understand the forest, now that we are living in its shadow. He said that we must see through the lies being spread by elves and witches; yes, even by our own Sun Church, in order to prevent simple folk from mistaking the wild beauty of the woods for something other than the enticing illusions of the Eternal Night.

We got ourselves a berth on a small sailboat north of Kastor and disembarked on the northern bank soon after reaching the Eanor River. We were supposed to spend three days in the dark, no more. But it would become only one night for me, and an eternity for father. He was slain that very first night.

The last rays of sunlight shone through the foliage, gleaming on something at the foot of a towering, crooked tree, its branches completely bare. Father chuckled, saying that the find strengthened his conviction – that Davokar is full of treasures from the once glorious Symbaroum; that the treasures are simply laying around, waiting to be found by fearless wanderers. He ran the last bit, and this saved my life, for as soon as he reached them, the tempting objects vanished in the blink of an eye, and the tree came to life. Father had barely drawn his sword before the strong branches embraced him, squeezing him so tightly that his steel armor buckled. I ran. Ran. Ran...

Baron Erlamei Elderras' granddaughter after returning from Davokar

HE RAVENOUS WILLOW is a treelike, blood-sucking creature that, for obvious reasons, is easily overlooked in the woods of Davokar. An analysis of eyewitness accounts indicates that both the size and appearance can vary considerably. This may be linked to the individual's age and nutritional state – that they can seem old and sick (or even dead) until they feast on the warm juices of their prey, when crimson leaves suddenly shoot out on their branches and the bark gains a healthy luster. Much also suggests that they can develop different types of abilities, perhaps as a result of where they first sprouted or what they usually eat.

THE SAME ACCOUNTS state that these woodland creatures always live alone, far away from others of their

kind, possibly because the competition for food would otherwise be too great. It seems that they can remain still for weeks, waiting for birds, squirrels and sometimes even larger animals to come near. Then they wrap their tentacle-like branches around the victim, strangling it or breaking its bones, before feeding on its blood.

RAVENOUS WILLOWS MOVE slowly, but then again, they do not need to be quick, as they (or at least some of them) can snare their prey with Entangling Vines or try to block its escape with their roots. It is also said that the monster has the ability to lure creatures in by mystical means; to dress its branches with the illusion of covetable fruit, or sprinkle the ground with juicy tussocks or gold-shimmering objects which, they have learned, some prey find utterly irresistible.



Adventure Set-up

LIKE OTHER EXAMPLES of Davokar's predatory flora, the ravenous willow may very well be encountered on the player characters' travels, but the devious killer tree can also serve as the main opponent in smaller scenarios.

One option is to let the ravenous willow be positioned inside a ruin which the player characters will visit in search of treasure, knowledge or a certain artifact. With the Root Wall trait, it will then try to isolate one or two of them from the rest of the group, in a courtyard or similar open space.

Another alternative is to let a ravenous willow be worshiped by some cult, whose members are kidnapping people to be offered as sacrifices. The cult could be based in a town or village on the border with Davokar, or inhabit an outpost somewhere in the depths of the forest. In any case, the adventure could culminate in a battle with the bark-clad deity.

Ravenous Willow (Young Strangler)

Huge plant

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 161 (17d12 + 51)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +13, Con +8, Wis +7

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages —

Challenge 14 (11,500, proficiency bonus +5)

Manner swaying, flailing movements

Shadow furrowed gray and brown, like rough bark
(Corruption: 0/11)

Equipment —

False Appearance. While the ravenous willow remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

Mirage. The ravenous willow can produce an illusion to attract prey. A creature can detect the illusion by making a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Ravenous Willow (Young Strangler)

While smaller than other ravenous willows, these plant creatures are extraordinarily dangerous.

Tactics. The strangler first raises its root wall near enemies with ranged weapons, before letting loose on the melee combatants. It will usually restrain and try to crush one enemy, while using the second action to strike with its branches.

Root Walls (3/day). The ravenous willow can use a bonus action to erect a root wall. Each root wall is 10 feet high, 10 feet thick and consists of 1 to 4 10-foot wide sections. Each section is AC 18, has 50 hit points and is resistant to bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons. No root wall section can be further than 60 feet from the main body of the ravenous willow.

ACTIONS

Multattack. The ravenous willow makes an attack with its vines and then with its branches.

Entangling Vines. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d10 + 8) bludgeoning damage and, if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (*Escape DC* 18).

Gnarled Branches. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (2d12 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Crushing Embrace. When a grappled creature attempts to escape and fails, the ravenous willow can squeeze it to do 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage.

Mirage

Ravenous willows have the mystical gift to create illusions, intended to lure potential prey closer. It is possible to resist this trick, but there are still countless Ambrisans who have lost their lives shortly after "discovering" scattered coins or a half-buried relic by the roots of a motionless willow...

Ravenous Willow (Old Crusher)

These creatures are among the largest of the walking flora of Davokar.

Tactics. Filled with barely-contained anger over the burning, chopping and cleaving of lesser creatures, this colossal crusher launches a thundering attack. How it uses its attacks may vary, but heavily armored enemies are always the primary target of its wrecking limbs.

Ravenous Willow (Old Crusher)

Gargantuan plant

Armor Class 19 (natural armor)

Hit Points 279 (18d20 + 90)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +17, Con +12, Wis +10

Skills Athletics +17, Perception +10

Damage Resistances bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages —

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP, proficiency bonus +7)

Manner stomps forth unstoppably

Shadow a ragged greenish brown, like bark coated in moss (Corruption: 0/16)

Equipment —

False Appearance. While the ravenous willow remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

Mirage. The ravenous willow can produce an illusion to attract prey. A creature can detect the illusion by making a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Root Walls (5/day). The ravenous willow can use a bonus action to erect a root wall. Each root wall is 10 feet high, 10 feet thick and consists of 1 to 4 10-foot wide sections. Each section is AC 18, has 50 hit points and is resistant to bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons. No root wall section can be further than 60 feet from the main body of the ravenous willow.

Siege Monster. The ravenous willow deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multattack. The ravenous willow makes three attacks with its branches.

Gnarled Branches. **Melee Weapon Attack:** +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. **Hit:** 31 (2d20 + 10) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature it is grappled (escape DC 26).

REACTIONS

Crushing Embrace. When a grappled creature attempts to escape and fails, the ravenous willow can squeeze it to do 21 (2d20) bludgeoning damage.

Scorner

THE DAEMONIC ABOMINATION that goes by the name Scorer is insufficiently studied and poorly understood. However, significant for the daemon in question, is that it can become invisible to the naked eye, and that it kills by crushing the victims in its brutally strong tentacles. Regarding the invisibility, there are accounts claiming that both mystical powers and various substances (especially flour, dyes and other fine-grained dust) can make the creature at least partially visible, revealing a shape that one can fight or defend against.

LESS RELIABLE SOURCES state that some alchemical elixirs and lesser artifacts may make the abomination visible, but regardless of method this gives rise to other problems. This tentacle-armed monstrosity is supposed to be so unnatural and otherworldly that the sight of it induces a terror that will paralyze or send all but the fiercest blight beast hunters fleeing like frightened children.

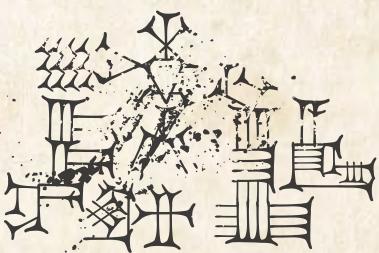
JUDGING BY SONGS, tales and written portrayals, encounters with Scorners are nothing new but they are rare. Should the attacks have been more frequent, the knowledge on how to reveal and combat the creatures would probably have been further developed. But maybe this is about to change, since the intrusions into the darker parts of Davokar mean an increase in the number of accounts – often combined with descriptions of “tears in the fabric of creation” or “porridge-thick blight mists”...

Summon Scorer

A demonologist can summon a scorer by performing a version of summon daemon. Scorners are rated equivalent to guardian daemons.

THUS SPOKE AROALETA

“... and Kasion and Bruto aimed their blades, at noble tyrant, towards silverblack heart. In the dusk of the throne room were rebels and prince, but also a lurking danger; the blood of the rivals slowly merged where broken bodies soon fell down...”



Cuneiform writings at the Azure Temple, which according to some indicates that the first Scorer forced itself on the world through a mirrored, parodically distorted etching of the Symbolist ritual *unseen servant*.



Collection of symbols carved into a floor plate in one of Odaban’s best preserved ruins; it supposedly describes the gravely failed assassination attempt on Prince Almanthor. The Prince died, and so did the rebels.

Rshould never have insulted Baron Oramei. The rumors about him being in league with sorcerers are not the least exaggerated: to this I can testify in these, the final hours of my miserable life. The Baron's troops are circling my castle, and the fortifications I once raised to my protection are now the walls of my death chamber. They killed my alchemist first, with an arrow, so now they can just sit and wait while the Baron's death magic murders us in here, one by one: crushes us to shapeless skin sacks full of broken, pulverized bones.

Rwrite this alone in my chamber, with my wife and children chased out into the hallway, as pointless offerings to the abomination. It will not settle with them. I am wearing armor that will not protect, am locked behind a door that will not hinder, and on the table rests my mother's sword, which can hardly save me from an enemy that cannot be seen. The abomination's embrace will soon crush my lungs and break my spine, while I sit with sword in one hand and pen in the other. May all abominable beings of the Yonderworld haunt the Baron of Haaras for all eternity.

Baron Saludo's Farewell, year 25, Alberotor



Adventure Set-up

HE SCORNER CAN be used in several ways, one of the most interesting being illustrated by Baron Saludo's letter on the previous spread: the characters are in a place attacked by a sneaking, invisible Scorner that they have to fight in order to save themselves and anyone else present in the building or structure. If the game master wants to expand on the scenario, the characters may instead be reached by a distress call from inside the site, so that they have to get past the besieging force before rescuing the residents and arranging a counter-attack.

Another option is that the characters are in a more open location, exposed to the attacks of a Scorer. Maybe they first have to combat the creature, to later explain its presence? If so, it should be quite easy to find out where the abomination comes from. Could it be a demonologist or a malicious cult? Or maybe a festering world wound has opened up near or even inside the settlement?

My beautiful lass,
like a scowler to me,
so close to me always,
even when I can't see.

My heart did you break,
my bone structure too,
in that sweetest embrace,
when I ceded to you.

Verse from the love song *Scorning Beauty*

Scorner

This invisible daemon is sent to pursue the enemies of its summoner.

Tactics. Uses its invisibility to maneuver around the enemies and attack them one by one. It starts with mystics, scholars and others who may possess the means to counteract the invisibility, then finishes off with the rest.

Scorner

Huge fiend

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 63 (6d12 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +7, Wis +5

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages understands and speaks the caster's language

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner terrifying

Shadow furiously, swarming black (thoroughly corrupt)

Equipment —

Invisibility. The scorner is invisible.

Terrifying. If a creature can see the scorner (by using truesight or other features or spells) at the start of their turn, they must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. At the end of their turn they can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. A creature that successfully saves against this feature is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The daemon makes four tentacle attacks.

Tentacles. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. **Hit:** 13 (1d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). If a creature is already grappled by this tentacle, it takes 13 (1d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage automatically.

The Call of Darkness (Recharge 6). Each creature that is within 30 feet of the scorner must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure they take necrotic damage equal to their total Corruption or half that amount on a success.

REACTIONS

Preemptive Attack. When a creature comes within reach, the daemon can make a tentacle attack.

Skullbiter

SHE ARMORED KILLERS known to the staff mages as Shield Beasts, and to the clanfolk as Skullbiters, probably have their breeding ground somewhere near the castle of the staff-wielding mystics. That is where they usually appear and demonstrate their battle tactics, as simple as they are devastating: huddle behind their carapace, then roll straight at – and through – the enemy's defensive line, into the heart of the opposing force. There, they rear up, baring their jaws. A huddled shield beast is not easily wounded, which the staff mages can attest to. One must patiently wait for them to rear up, and then strike hard.

IT SEEMS THAT the shield beasts cannot be corrupted, but take physical damage from Corruption in a way that is reminiscent of dwarves. Some scholars claim that they really are transmogrified dwarves, while most simply believe that the beasts and the dwarves are children of the same deranged science – that they were bred through similar methods, without being related in any other way.

IN ANY EVENT, the fact that they take damage from Corruption can be used against them, mainly by seeking out routes above ground that are so corrupted as to be contagious, and therefore harmful to shield beasts. Moreover, mystics who are able to use Corruption successfully as a weapon may of course do so against the skullbiters, even though the staff mages would never consider this possibility or tolerate someone else resorting to such methods.

SHIELD BEASTS COME in different sizes. As hatchlings they are the size of hogs, and after having filled their bellies with the flesh of their enemies, it does not take long for them to grow as large as a horse, into veritable crushers. Much later, having reached their full strength, they stop growing, but use the nutrients from slain enemies to lay eggs as large as (and easily mistaken for) boulders. These eggs are themselves a threat to adventurers, as they have a tendency to hatch just as warm-blooded creatures are passing by.

The eastern passage to the burned temples is closed. There are shield beasts lurking underground. They broke through our front after only two attack waves. I am surprised that we could even withstand the first crushing assault; such was its shielded might. Once they had broken through, when they were in our midst, it was staff mage against shield beast, duel upon duel. We all know how such battles usually end.

I retreated, staff whirling, toward a broken pillar whose top now serves as my writing desk. I am the only one left. There are forsaken staves, broken staves, scattered across the ground below. The beasts dragged their crushed victims down into the burrows. Their own dead, too, to strengthen the survivors through cold-blooded cannibalism. I cannot but feel a certain respect for this foe. As someone said: it is as if they were created to battle staff mages. Even if they were not bred for that purpose, they are certainly very well equipped to withstand the power of our staves, break through our warriors' ranks, and strike directly at our pathetically feeble flesh.

The sun is slowly setting, and the violings are gathering. I must either head back down and risk the fury of the shield beasts, or be pecked to death by a hundred greedy beaks as soon as night falls.

One of many accounts of shield beast attacks that are kept in the archives at the staff mages' castle, deep within Davokar.



The Staff Mages' Arena

Even though there are some indications that the shield beasts are spreading south, and both the clans and the Ambrians are taught to recognize their tracks, the staff mages are still the ones who suffer most from the creature in question. Individual staff mages have even remarked that the shield beast is the single biggest reason why they have not yet located Symbar, and that they are obstructing all attempts at mapping the northern ruins of Davokar.

To remedy the situation, the staff mages have created an arena in a secluded part of their castle, to train their warriors and mystics to withstand the threat. There they are breeding shield beasts for study, and staff mages and warriors are taught how to fight them in controlled combat situations – only in the form of hatchlings, of course, but it is still very useful for future encounters.

Skullbiter Hatchling

These newborn skullbiters are hungry but not foolish.

Tactics. Skullbiter hatchlings are cautious by nature and prefer not to attack on their own, unless the victim appears to be wounded, in which case they never hesitate.

Skullbiter Crusher

These full-grown skullbiters are the typical type encountered in Dark Davokar.

Tactics. The crusher uses the typical tactics of a skullbiter: to burst through the enemy's defensive line

Skullbiter Hatchling

Small beast

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d6 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Damage Resistances psychic; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 90 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner plays with its claws

Shadow mottled gray like coarse gravel (Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment —

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the skullbiter can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can sense.

Carapace. The skullbiter can close itself up in its shell and roll towards its enemies. When rolled up, enemies have disadvantage on attack rolls and the skullbiter cannot attack. Rolling itself up or unrolling requires a bonus action.

Earthbound. The skullbiter's Corruption total reduces its current and maximum hit points. If its Corruption total is above 0 and the skullbiter reaches 0 hit points then it becomes unconscious, waking up after a short rest. The skullbiter does not gain Marks of Corruption when it exceeds its Corruption Threshold. Another creature can slay the skullbiter by inflicting total damage equal to or above its original, unmodified maximum hit points.

ACTIONS

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

REACTIONS

Roll Over. When a smaller creature comes within reach and the skullbiter is rolled up, it can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

and, once in their midst, slay the weaker enemies first. They then eat all of the dead or badly wounded, both their enemies and allies.

Skullbiter Queen

Only a few skullbiters survive long enough to reach this ultimate stage.

Tactics. The queen's main goal is to survive and lay more eggs. She ignores enemies as long as they do not get in the way of her escape to a secure nesting place.

Skullbiter Crusher

Large beast

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistances psychic; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 90 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner waddling back and forth

Shadow mottled gray like coarse gravel (Corruption: 0/6)

Equipment —

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the skullbiter can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can sense.

Carapace. The skullbiter can close itself up in its shell and roll towards its enemies. When rolled up, enemies have disadvantage on attack rolls, the skullbiter has resistance to all damage, and it cannot attack. Rolling itself up or unrolling requires a bonus action.

Earthbound. The skullbiter's Corruption total reduces its current and maximum hit points. If its Corruption total is above 0 and the skullbiter reaches 0 hit points then it becomes unconscious, waking up after a short rest. The skullbiter does not gain Marks of Corruption when it exceeds its Corruption Threshold. Another creature can slay the skullbiter by doing additional damage equal to or above its original, unmodified hit point total.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The skullbiter makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Roll Over. When a smaller creature comes within reach and the skullbiter is rolled up, it can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Skullbiter Queen

Gargantuan beast

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 159 (11d20 + 44)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	7 (-2)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +12, Con +9, Wis +9

Skills Intimidate +6, Perception +9, Survival +9

Damage Immunities psychic; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 90 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages —

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

Manner hissing haughtily

Shadow glossy silver-gray, like a dirty diamond
(Corruption: 0/11)

Equipment —

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the skullbiter can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can sense.

Carapace. The skullbiter can close itself up in its shell and roll towards its enemies. When rolled up, enemies have disadvantage on attack rolls, the skullbiter has resistance to all damage, and it cannot attack. Rolling itself up or unrolling requires a bonus action.

Earthbound. The skullbiter's Corruption total reduces its current and maximum hit points. If its Corruption total is above 0 and the skullbiter reaches 0 hit points then it becomes unconscious, waking up after

a short rest. The skullbiter does not gain Marks of Corruption when it exceeds its Corruption Threshold. Another creature can slay the skullbiter by doing additional damage equal to or above its original, unmodified hit point total.

Legendary Resistance (2/day). If the skullbiter fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. The skullbiter makes three bite attacks.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (1d12 + 7) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Roll Over. When a smaller creature comes within reach and the skullbiter is rolled up, it can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 17 (1d20 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The skullbiter queen 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 skullbiter queen regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite. The skullbiter queen makes a bite attack.

Carapace. The skullbiter queen either rolls itself up or unrolls itself.

Smash (Costs 2 Actions, must be rolled up). The skullbiter queen rolls towards a target up to 30 feet away. The target must succeed at a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (1d20 + 7) bludgeoning damage on a failure or half that damage on a success.

Adventure Set-up

SKULLBITERS ARE MAINLY a threat to those attempting to infiltrate Dark Davokar, but it is of course tempting to have them show up in more civilized areas as well – with the help of unwitting or malevolent agents. Scholars may have come across the eggs and, convinced that they would be able to handle such a threat, brought them to a settlement for study. This leads to a catastrophic massacre: the settlement soon becomes a breeding pit for newly hatched shield beasts – a threat which, if not dealt with immediately, results in a crushing onslaught of full-grown skullbiters, and later in a queen dwelling somewhere beneath the settlement, which basically means that the place is doomed.

A similar scenario could be caused by someone – a monster cult or agents of a particularly hateful attacker – smuggling skullbiter eggs into their enemies' midst, and then watching from afar as the settlement or castle is devastated by the predators.

In both cases, the characters could get involved as someone is killed by a hatchling, after which they must

figure out what is going on based on the clues available to them – namely, the corpse, tracks on the ground and the empty egg. Such a scenario will have the greatest effect if set in a place which the characters are fond of or dependent on; this would intensify the drama and strengthen the characters' will to solve the situation.

Egg Cluster (Trap)

Those who come within 30 feet of an egg cluster must pass a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure, the eggs hatch, releasing 1d4 + 2 skullbiter hatchlings. Another option is to destroy the cluster with weapons and powers, in which case the cluster must sustain a total of 90 damage in a single turn (armor class 12). On a failure, 1d4 hatchlings emerge or 1d4 + 1 if the group did less than 45 damage in their attempt.

Sly River Hunter

The worst I've seen on the river? Well, it was a long time ago, but I remember it as yesterday – the noise, the cries, the blood.

I don't believe I was older than eight or nine. Mother had sent me to the riverside with the fishing rod and an order for a dozen trout for supper. It was a nice day. River Eanor ran fat and strong, the sun glittered on its surface; a day I immediately knew would end in a whipping, since both weather and water suggested that I wouldn't catch much.

Right before the sun was at its highest, a small sailboat came gliding with the stream. Young as I was, I still knew the river currents as well as the inside of my eyelids, so I immediately saw that something was wrong – as if the vessel pulled to the portside. Also, it scraped against Arfert's Cay, in spite of the high water level. The crew was not unaware. A boy, no older than me, rushed to the railing holding a boathook; he leaned out and poked at the hull, with the hook as a spear. This was just when the boat floated past me...

Two gigantic claws appeared from the water, gripped the boy's neck and squeezed so the blood sprayed in all directions before pulling him under. Panic erupted. The crew fled towards the other railing, but then the claws appeared there to nearly chop a woman in two. Wide-eyed I watched the crew members being pulled down below the surface, one by one, and a bit further down the stream, the vessel capsized.

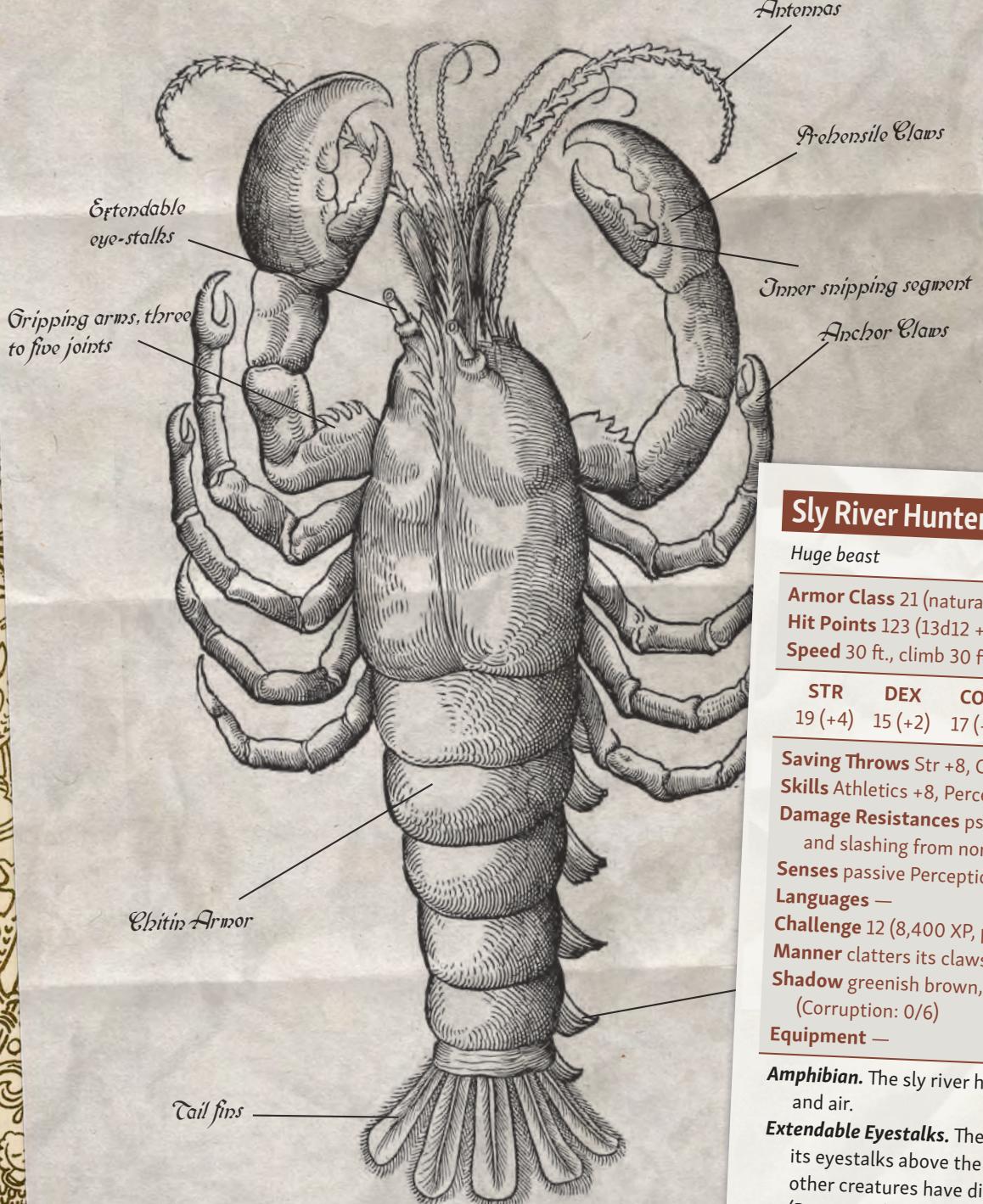
How many were aboard I do not know. Maybe ten. Maybe fifteen. What I absolutely do know, is that none of them ever set foot on land again ...

The fisherman Svanne's childhood memory, told at Kastor's soup kitchen

Discovering River Hunters

The huge, vaguely transparent river beast is very difficult to spot through the rippling surface; even when looking right at it – it takes a DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice it. The same goes for taking note of the slender eye stalks it uses to spy over the surface and select its victims. In both of these cases, an active, verbalized search is required for the players to be allowed to roll the checks.

Figure 1: Sly River Hunter



Sly River Hunter

Huge beast

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)

Hit Points 123 (13d12 + 39)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +7, Wis +6

Skills Athletics +8, Perception +10, Stealth +10

Damage Resistances psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Senses passive Perception 20

Languages —

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

Manner clatters its claws

Shadow greenish brown, like an algal bloom in water
(Corruption: 0/6)

Equipment —

Amphibian. The sly river hunter can breathe in water and air.

Extendable Eyestalks. The sly river hunter can extend its eyestalks above the waterline. While submerged, other creatures have disadvantage on their Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect the sly river hunter.

Nimble Escape. The sly river hunter can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The sly river hunter makes two claw attacks and a mandibles attack if possible.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 17).

Mandibles. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 0 ft., one grappled target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Nibble. If the sly river hunter has a target grappled, it can make a mandibles attack against that target.

Sly River Hunter

This hungry beast haunts lakes and rivers in and around Davokar and Ambria.

Tactics. The sly river hunter uses the water as cover, spies with its antenna eyes and attacks targets with the prehensile claws to pull them beneath the surface. The target basically fights the claws, until it is pulled into the water.



Hunter's Pâté

A pound of river hunter tail meat
 Meat from 10-12 belly claws
 A bunch of dill
 A cup of cream
 Seasoning to taste

Dressing

Half an onion
 Two cups of water
 Three cups of fish broth
 A squeeze of citrus juice
 Hot spices

Garnish

One roe orb of river hunter
 One stalk of dill

Adventure Set-up

THE RIVER HUNTER is perfect for spicing up waterborne voyages in Ambria and Davokar, but it is also possible to make the creature into the main act in one or two smaller adventures.

One possibility is that the characters are contacted (directly or indirectly) by the parent of a young noble who has been killed by a very large river hunter. This quest-giver is afraid that some hunting party will capture the beast, and that its meat will be served at one of the social receptions he or she is often invited to. The quest-giver is prepared to pay a hefty salary (in thaler, items or services) for the characters to get to the murderer first, kill it and burn the carcass.

In this way, the characters get drawn into the intense hunt for a river hunter whose fame has attracted up to a handful of other hunting parties. The characters may try to keep to themselves, but will then risk having other groups join forces with the aim to scare away or beat down any rivals. However they choose to proceed, they need to think things through, because at least a couple of the competitors work in the name of high-born employees!

MANY BEASTS HUNT in the murky waters of the rivers, but few of them with such sneakiness as the Sly River Hunter. With its short belly-claws it holds on to the river bed, the hull of a boat or the underside of a dock, while letting its long-stemmed eyestalks spy over the surface. It then uses long prehensile claws to pull the prey down into the water, towards its grinding mandibles and a wet death.

THE RIVER HUNTER'S usual strategy is to lay still on the river or lake bottom, and judging by Ordo Magica's vivisections it mostly feeds on fish and smaller amphibians. But it is far from unheard of for them to develop a taste for human flesh, or for bigger specimens to attach themselves to river vessels and pick off the crew along the way – normally at a pace of one crew member per day and so discreetly that other reasons for the vanishings are considered.

DESPITE ITS DEVIOUS danger, there are actually groups specialized in hunting river hunters. In fact, this has become more and more common since the culinary potential of the creature has been discovered by Ambria's nobility; both the meat and the huge roe orbs are sold at a very high price in the kingdom, and it is said that Sunshine Duchess Esmerelda has a handful of privately employed hunting parties. The hunters follow rumors about disappearances on rivers and lakes, and then use themselves as bait to lure in their prey, ready to take the fight below the surface if necessary.

Spite

THE OVERGROWN INSECT which barbarians call the Spite exists solely to procreate. The creature can be found throughout the Davokar region, underground as well as above, and judging by the stories circulating among treasure hunters and explorers, the size of their colonies ranges from a handful of individuals to several hundred of them. Expeditions unlucky enough to encounter any of the larger, often subterranean, spite nests should turn back and pray that they are not detected...

GADLAG, ADEPT OF the Order at the Kastor chapter, has submitted a text which many fortune hunters would do well to study. An excerpt from his findings can be read below, but he also stresses that the creature can

be deadly to humans and that its infestations are not the only thing to worry about. Sure, the spite may prefer to place its offspring in hibernating elves and trolls, or even in conscious trolls whose regenerative ability furthers the evolution of the larvae, but it is not very picky when choosing its host.

THE FACT THAT infected individuals ignore their own infestation as well as that of other people has on two occasions led to violent incidents in Ambria. Both were caused by groups of fortune hunters returning from the woods, infested with the venomous larvae of the spite. In a haze of paranoid aggression, these groups assaulted all who tried to help them, and caused great damage before they could be subdued.

Grown spites are inclined to target hibernating or cocooned members of the elder folk, sinking their barbed stings into the back of the victim's neck. The insect then sheds the rear part of its own body, thus leaving its offspring behind to thrive and evolve.

The infestation manifests itself in a red, swollen, purulent amniotic sac far down on the host's neck, with a forked out-growth along its throat, protruding from the skin on both sides of the larynx. The larvae then grow inside this attached sac, while the host's body is poisoned and its mind and senses clouded – the latter to such an extent that the creature no longer has the self-control and awareness necessary to perceive the infestation of the spite.

The venom in the host's blood provides perfect conditions for the maturation of the larvae, but also seems to be the insect's greatest weakness. Tests have shown that a strong antidote can neutralize the toxin, thus, effectively and immediately, eliminating the parasite. The stinger, amniotic sack, and the larvae can then be removed by a trained Medicus, although doing so often results in great pain and serious injury.



Adventure Set-up

RUMOR HAS IT that a band of ruthless killers is raiding the farms of some barony on the border with Davokar. The player characters are given, or take on, the task of hunting down this group. Their first stop could be a solitary inn that was attacked a couple of nights ago. It turns out that the killers were calm upon arrival, but became angry when some of the patrons stared at them and a waitress asked if there was something she could help them with – they killed or wounded as many as they could before disappearing into the night, heading east.

The next stop could be a homestead. The family living there has been slain, as have all the maids and farmhands in their service, and the corpses have attracted predators or some other threat. After a thorough search of the estate, the characters find one of the killers with the parasite still in his neck (can be identified with the Loremaster feature or a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check). A trail of blood leads off in a suitable direction, and can be traced with Bushcraft or similar traits/features.

Finally, the characters catch up with the infested killers. Perhaps they have stationed themselves inside a smaller border fort, along with one or more hostages? The characters must get inside without triggering the paranoid madmens' aggression, preferably in a way that allows them to neutralize the killers without using lethal force. The question is to what extent the group can be considered responsible for actions performed under the influence of the spites...

Spite Sickness

The venom which the spite releases into the bloodstream of its host takes effect on the round after the process has begun. It has the following effects:

- ◆ The host creature becomes paranoid, confused and aggressive. It completely ignores the infestation and is considered poisoned.
- ◆ The host creature cannot recover levels of exhaustion.
- ◆ The host creature gains the Rage feature (page 218) if it does not already have it and uses it in every combat.
- ◆ Each morning the host creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the host's Intelligence score is reduced by 1. If the host's Intelligence is reduced to 0, it dies as the result of some self-inflicted (and likely foolish)



injury. If the infection is ended early (see below) then the host creature recovers 2 points of its Intelligence score per day until it reaches its original score.

The infestation lasts $10 + 1d6$ days. Should the host survive this long, $1d4 + 1$ spites emerge from its neck, each making an automatically successful bite attack for 1d4 rounds until they fully emerge and fly off to find a new host for their eggs.

A creature with the Medicus feature can make a DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check to identify the infection and a DC 14 Dexterity (Medicine) check to remove the infestation, doing 4d8 damage on a failure or half that amount on a success to the host creature as part of the process. The spell lesser restoration will end the disease.

Incident report

Witnesses claim that the woman was pale, dirty, drooling, and making guttural sounds which were sometimes reminiscent of a rooting pig, sometimes of an angry goose or a rutting young bull. She was jumping up and down, waving her fists and attacking anyone who came near. Eventually Watchman Lerk saw past the dirt and recognized her as Lea, one of Goldengrasp's assistants. He approached the woman, unarmed, attempting to calm her down, which explains how she managed to leap forward and bite his throat open. I saw no option but to order my men to fire. She died gargling with five crossbow bolts through her body.

Squad Leader Pello
Town Watch, Thistle Hold

Spite

This creature focuses exclusively on producing the next generation of spites, which will be similarly obsessed.

Tactics. The spite silently attacks after first having tried to gain advantage over the victim by surprising it from behind or above. It always prioritizes targets with regenerative abilities, but otherwise does not discriminate between potential victims.

Spite

Tiny beast

Armor Class 18

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner buzzing hypnotically

Shadow dull green with winding lines of grayish white, like an overwintering weed (Corruption: 0/2)

Equipment —

Ambusher. In the first round of a combat, the spite has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

Nimble. The spite's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage

Stinger (1 only). Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature gains the spite sickness (see box). The spite detaches the stinger, taking 1 point of damage.

REACTIONS

Dodge. When attacked the spite adds its Dexterity modifier to its armor class for this attack roll only. If the attack roll is under this new total then the attack misses.

Troll Shadow



Troll Shadow

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These creatures, recognizable by their gaunt physique and unhealthy complexion, should be avoided whenever possible. Alone they are merely a distraction, but in groups they become a growing threat; they steal whatever they can find, often destroying what they do not understand. In larger groups they generate some kind of mystical power that is a serious threat to the integrity of a ranger squad.

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→ It should also be said that troll shadows seldom have any knowledge worth collecting or using, unless one happens to be in search of an artifact, as these pitiful lifeforms seem able to detect the scent of such items. The downside is that what little help one receives comes at a greater cost than the mission can afford.

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→ The basic rule is simple: Keep a safe distance, or increase the distance by leaving something small for them to eat or occupy themselves with.

*Better to kill them on sight,
or you will regret it!*

FROM THE PUPA of a goblin, a rage troll usually emerges; sometimes an ogre, and in rare cases six so called troll shadows come crawling out of the shriveled cocoon - small, twisted, scrawny creatures who, according to legend, rip babies from their cradles, strip hen houses of both eggs and birds, and sometimes join forces to attack careless travelers. Experienced wanderers of the woods sometimes refer to them by the derogatory term "Dark Fairies," but even seasoned treasure hunters are reluctant to face large collectives of troll shadows, as the creatures not only gain courage from their increased numbers, but a strange mystical force as well.



EVEN THOUGH TROLL shadows appear to originate from the race of trolls, they have no sense of kinship with them, nor with goblins or ogres. They seem afraid of just about everything, including their own troll cousins, though not of changelings, to whom troll shadows are drawn with great excitement. Perhaps it is true what some witches say: that troll shadows view the existence of the changeling as an exalted version of their own deformity. In any case, since changelings reside in Ambrian towns and barbarian settlements, troll shadows can appear there as well, often accompanied by a changeling who may or may not be delighted by their company.

BOTHERSOME AS THEY may be, troll shadows do have one beneficial and potentially useful ability: they can sense the presence of, and therefore track down, mystical artifacts. Since rumors of this ability started circulating throughout Ambria's border settlements, many fortune hunters, explorers and money grubbers in general have tried to use it for personal gain. Some stories describe fortune hunters who encountered troll shadows in Davokar and followed them to what turned out to be well-stocked treasure troves of untold riches; other rumors tell of explorers who have caught and enslaved one or several individuals to aid in the exploration of untouched ruins.

WHATEVER THE TRUTH may be, it is hardly safe to travel with a group of troll shadows – even shackled ones. Also a small collective can cause serious problems, for the sake of revenge or simply to amuse themselves, and the effect of such mischief can of course be disastrous for a group that has ventured deep into the forest of Davokar...

The Allure of Changelings

One of the stranger things about troll shadows is that they, for whatever reason, cannot help but fall in love with every single changeling that crosses their path. If the changeling is indifferent or downright dismissive, the admirers lose interest after 1d4 months – the only way to get rid of them before then is to kill them, unless they happen to pick up the scent of a free artifact (see the text box Sensing Artifacts).

On the other hand, should the changeling welcome the admirers, he (or she) can use them as if he was Privileged (see page 75 in the *Player's Guide*) in relation to the troll shadows – the changeling gets a second chance to succeed with all social challenges and only needs to pass a check when asking for something difficult or dangerous.

Sensing Artifacts

The only thing troll shadows love more than changelings is mystical artifacts, which leads some scholars to conclude that they were actually created for the purpose of sniffing out lost or secretly created mystical items.

Exactly how this is done is unclear, but collectives of troll shadows are undoubtedly drawn to so-called free artifacts – that is, artifacts that have never had a master, or whose masters have died or broken their link to such objects. The distance to the artifact seems to be significant in that, the larger the

collective is, the farther away the item may be – the range of the collective's ability is about a half mile (one kilometer) per member.

Unscrupulous treasure hunters (particularly changelings) can use this gift, provided that they manage to lure or capture at least four individuals. When these troll shadows gather in a collective, they will instinctively be drawn to the nearest free artifact, without knowing exactly what or where it is. If the artifact is found and bound to a master, they will immediately start searching for another one.

Adventure Set-up

HE CHARACTERS BECOME involved in a situation where a landlord is having trouble with "pests" on their property; it could be a place in Davokar or in a town where the sewers allow the troll shadows to move freely through the area. The troll shadows have taken an interest in the place because they can sense the presence of an artifact inside or beneath a building.

One option is to have the scenario take place at the inn of The Witch & Familiar in Thistle Hold. In that case, it all started with a few troll shadows bothering guests at night by tapping on the foundation, roof and basement walls of the house. But over time their numbers have grown, and there are now enough of them to become a real problem; prompting both the staff and guests to search the lower levels of the building or tear down walls in search of hidden compartments. Eventually it goes so far that a guest is killed after having crawled down the basement floor drain and, as the passage widened, fell to her death.

One way to solve the problem is to locate the troll shadows' hideout in the sewers; another is to use their love of changelings to lead them away from the city. Perhaps it is possible to negotiate with them, or give them an artifact? Or are they in fact being commanded by a changeling who either led them to the inn or found them there, and now uses his allure to lead them on the hunt for the artifact?

Troll Shadow

These strange troll-kind can sense magical items, especially when they gather in large numbers.

Tactics. Troll shadows avoid confrontation until they can form a larger pack. They then rely heavily on their collective power, while stabbing nearby enemies with rusty knives.

Troll Shadow

Small humanoid (Troll)

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 13 (2d6 + 6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5, Perception +2, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Ambrian

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner anxiously wide-eyed

Shadow Pale red, like unripe lingonberries

(Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment none

Artifact Sense. The troll shadow can sense the presence of magical objects. See opposite page for details.

Collective Power. For every set of four troll shadows present within 30 feet of at least one other group of four troll shadows, each troll shadow group gains the ability to cast a spell (requiring no material components). If the group has 12 or more members, a troll shadow can use its action to cast hold person. Roll 1d4 + 2 for temporary Corruption and assign 1 point to each troll shadow in the group, using those troll shadows that have the least total Corruption. If a group has at least 8 members, one troll shadow can cast hideous laughter, gaining 1d4 + 1 temporary Corruption (distribute the Corruption as above). If a group has 4–7 members, it can cast vicious mockery, distributing 1d4 temporary Corruption as above.

ACTIONS

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

Vengeful Terrain

VENGEFUL TERRAIN IS the collective name of several dissimilar phenomena with a common origin: when Corruption takes hold of the physical world, it sometimes spawns hateful, blight stricken elementals. Some scholars have put forth the theory that each patch of vengeful terrain is in fact a living incantation, consisting of mystical power which has gained life and a will of its own, and that remains alive thanks to the life force or Corruption of the victims it claims.

FROM WHAT IS known, vengeful terrain only appears in and close to corrupted nature (see page 20) or in places where grand mystical ceremonies have been performed, bequeathing a hateful legacy. In addition, there are witch hunters who claim to have found scriptures written by sorcerers, indicating that dark elementals may be possible to conjure through the practice of horrible rituals, involving sacrificial murder. This is also underlined by certain mosaics and murals found in Davokar's ruins, portraying mystics which appear to summon vengeful elementals in combat. Such powers would indeed be powerful tools in the wrong hands, making all witch hunters eager to find and destroy them.

AMONG THE MORE or less credible reports which supposedly tell of encounters with vengeful terrain, Ordo Magica's scholars have been able to sort out four special types, named Hunger Fury, Choking Undine, Gobble Gnome and Ire Sylph. The first of these is described as living fire, glowing in the ground or moving between flammable materials, waiting for living creatures to incinerate; the undine appears in the form of water that bubbles and whirls when it should be still, and which lashes out at all who come near in an attempt to force its way down their lungs to drown them.

THE GOBBLE GNOME is described as "jealous and murderous ground that slowly heaves up and down," and it is said to open up beneath its victim's feet and then slam shut in a crushing embrace. Finally the Ire Sylph, which seems to be able to roost just about anywhere, waiting to lift passing creatures into the air and throw them against hard surfaces with the intent to kill, or at least damage them severely.

Sleep my little almond biscuit
Fire chases you, to death
Water showers you, to death
Winds are throwing you, to death
Earth devours you, to death
The dreams will keep you sheltered

Nursery rhyme engraved on a bronze doll found in a prince's tomb

Adventure Set-up

PLAYER CHARACTERS WHO move in corrupted environments can come up against vengeful terrain in many ways and quite often. However, there may be other, more interesting set-ups for the Gamemaster to build upon...

One example may be that the characters are hunting the leader of a dark cult, in Davokar or quite possibly in one of Ambria's towns. When they close in on the hide-out of the cultists, it becomes apparent that they have performed the ritual *conjure vengeful terrain* in strategic places. And not only that: the cultists themselves are immune to the wrath of the elementals, and use this as much as possible when fighting the intruders.

As a suggestion, the cult members may be a motley bunch devoted to the Eternal Night, hoping to be rewarded when darkness finally falls. Or it can be an exceptionally corrupt group within Ordo Magica, whose members are experimenting with dark elementals, and who are foolishly claiming to be working in a little understood mystical branch that they alone are brave and clever enough to explore.



NEW SPELL

Conjure Vengeful Terrain

5th-level Sorcerer conjuration (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 30 ft.

Components: V, S, M (burning incense for Ire Sylph, soft clay for Gobble Gnome, sulfur and phosphorus for Hungry Fury, or water and sand for Choking Undine)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour*

You call forth a dark elemental servant. Choose an area of air, earth, fire, or water that fills a 10-foot cube within range. The dark elemental appropriate to the area you chose appears in an unoccupied space within 10 feet of it. For example, a Hunger Fury emerges from a bonfire, and a Gobble Gnome rises up from the ground. The elemental disappears when it drops to 0 hit points or when the spell ends.

The elemental is friendly to you and your companions for the duration. Roll initiative for the elemental, which has its own turns. It obeys any verbal commands that you issue to it (no action required by you). If you don't issue any commands to the elemental, it defends itself from hostile creatures but otherwise takes no actions.

If your concentration is broken, the elemental doesn't disappear. Instead, you lose control of the elemental, it becomes hostile toward you and your companions, and it might attack. An uncontrolled elemental can't be dismissed by you, and it disappears 1 hour after you summoned it.

* If the caster sacrifices a Small or larger creature as part of the casting process then the duration becomes 'until dispelled'.

Choking Undine

This dark elemental rises out of its water source and advances upon the player characters.

Tactics. The Undine embraces one victim at a time and does not let go until it is dead.

Choking Undine

Large elemental

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d10 + 48)

Speed 30 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner boiling, bubbling

Shadow shifting blue, like the ripples on Lake Volgoma (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

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

Whelm (Recharge 4–6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If it is Large or smaller, it is also grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and unable to breathe unless it can breathe water. If the saving throw is successful, the target is pushed out of the elemental's space.

The elemental can grapple one Large creature or up to two Medium or smaller creatures at one time. At the start of each of the elemental's turns, each target grappled by it takes 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A creature within 5 feet of the elemental can pull a creature or object out of it by taking an action to make a DC 14 Strength check and succeeding.

REACTIONS

Flowing Body. When struck, the choking undine can reduce the damage of an attack by half.

Gobble Gnome

This elemental erupts from the ground, ready for battle.

Tactics. The gnome moves below the targets and tries to get as many of them as possible to fall into its self-made pit trap, where it attacks them with heavy blows.

Gobble Gnome

Large elemental

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner heaving, cracking

Shadow flowing brown, like a landslide (Corruption: 0/3)

Equipment

Earth Glide. The elemental can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, the elemental doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

Siege Monster. The elemental deals double damage to objects and structures.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Gobble. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target, Medium size or smaller. *Hit:* the target is swallowed, it is blinded and restrained; and it has total cover against attacks and other effects. The elemental can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the elemental dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

REACTIONS

Harden Body. The gobble gnome gains +3 to its armor class against one attack.

Hunger Fury

Large elemental

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 102 (12d10 + 36)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities fire, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Ignan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner sizzling, rustling

Shadow whirling orange, like a dancing flame
(Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment —

Fire Form. The elemental can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. A creature that touches the elemental or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage. In addition, the elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage and catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Illumination. The elemental sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light an additional 30 feet beyond that.

Water Susceptibility. For every 5 feet the elemental moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

ACTIONS

Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

Fire Throw. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/60, one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) fire damage. If the target is a creature or a flammable object, it ignites. Until a creature takes an action to douse the fire, the target takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

REACTIONS

Flare. When a creature makes an attack against the elemental it can briefly become much brighter, providing disadvantage on the attack roll if the creature uses sight to target its attacks.

Hunger Fury

This burning elemental arises from any blaze and begins to set everything on fire.

Tactics. The Fury attacks with fire from a distance but is not afraid to enter melee since its burning hunger damages all who come close.

Ire Sylph

This elemental comes forth from any strong breeze or wind whipping through the trees.

Tactics. The Sylph soars around the battlefield throwing its enemies about, against rocks, trees and down precipices if possible.

Ire Sylph

Large elemental

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)

Speed 0 ft., fly 90 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

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

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Auran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

Manner whining, howling

Shadow raging white, like a swirling snowstorm (Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment —

Air Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Whirlwind (Recharge 4–6). Each creature in the elemental's space must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 15 (3d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage and is flung up 20 feet away from the elemental in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes an object, such as a wall or floor, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

If the saving throw is successful, the target takes half the bludgeoning damage and isn't flung away or knocked prone.

REACTIONS

Disappear. When a creature makes an attack against the elemental it can briefly become invisible, providing disadvantage on the attack roll if the creature uses sight to target its attacks.

World Serpent

I can report that the colony Free Wilds no longer exists. What we found there is not easily described, but now that I have had time to gather my thoughts, I will try to explain what must have befallen the colony. Slaughter. Massacre. Total annihilation.

How can I know with certainty what happened? Well, because I saw with my own eyes the slithering daemon snake that devoured the inhabitants, their livestock and most of their homes. If you do not believe me I can show you my right leg, which bears the mark of its three rows of teeth. It bit straight through my armor and then tossed me aside, seemingly uninterested in a steel-clad piece of meat.

My companions were not so lucky. I managed to rescue Hatha from the creature's belly with a well-aimed strike, but she is in no condition to testify as the serpent's gastric acid burned her eyes, and the experience of being swallowed whole has wrecked her mind – whether her madness is temporary or permanent remains to be seen.

Telema lesel, knight and leader of the rescue expedition to Free Wilds

WHE CREATURES COMMONLY known as world serpents are obviously not the actual World Serpent, but may very well be its enormous offspring. These tunneling monstrosities indiscriminately devour all lifeforms that get in their way, be it rangers exploring the Underworld or the inhabitants of the troll realms that exist down there. They rarely appear on the surface, but when they do, they will often cleanse entire colonies or outposts of people and animals alike. All that remains in their wake is a desolate settlement and a network of tunnels leading down into the Underworld.

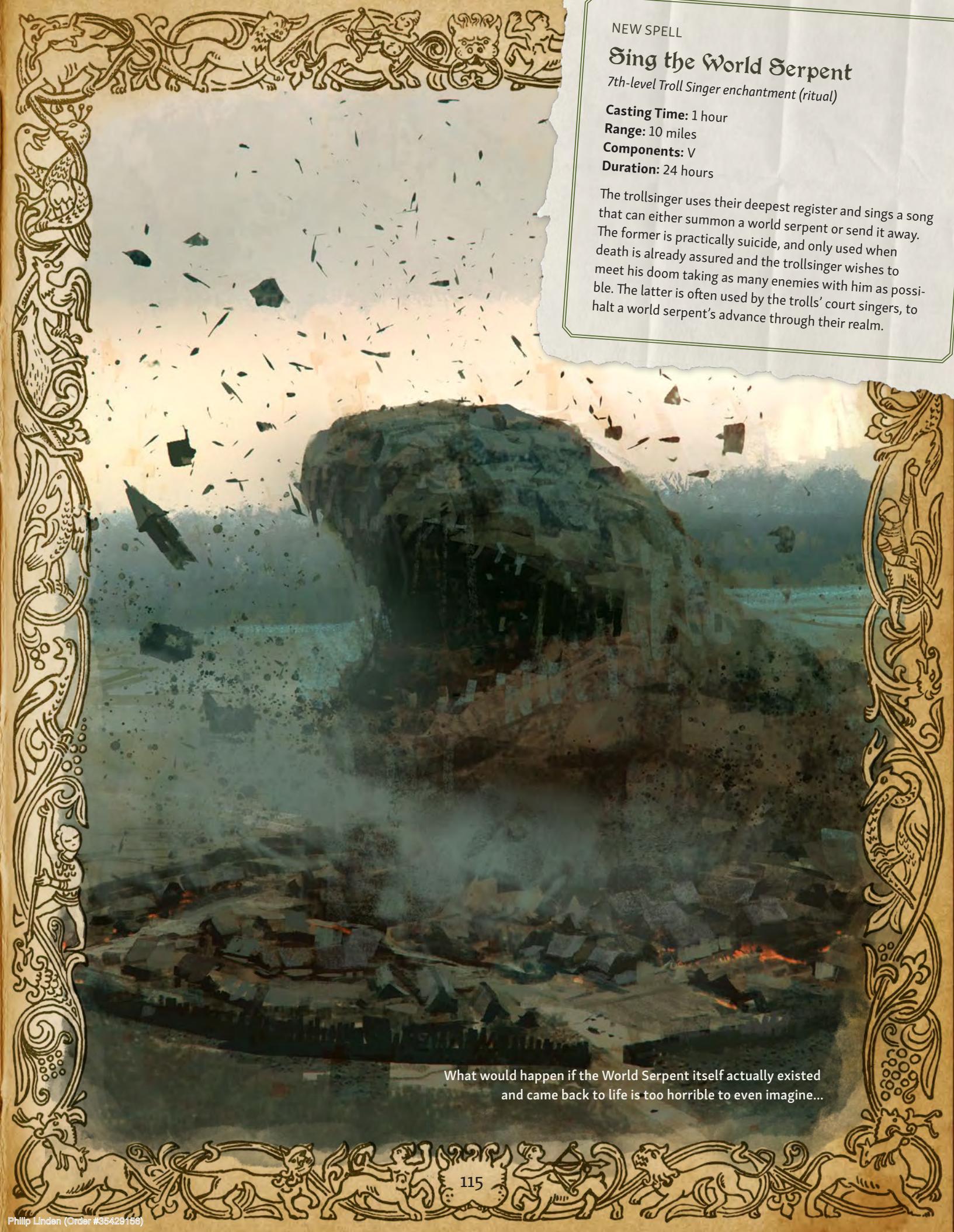
ORDO MAGICA'S UNCROWNED expert on the Underworld, Master Argoi, is perhaps right in guessing that the world serpents can sense vibrations from above ground, at least those that are strong and synchronized enough. That would explain why two marching Ambrian battalions were attacked by world serpents during the war against Haloban and his Jezites, and also why two major ruin expeditions were visited by unwelcome guests while trying to hack their way into hidden cellar levels. But even if this is true, one would still have to be very unlucky to encounter a world serpent up on the surface.

MOST ATTACKS THAT have been reported since the Ambrian exodus across the Titans, aimed at barbarians or the Queen's own people, have taken place below ground, or at least in mines and caves connected to the Underworld. The witness statements are both many and consistent, detailing how the serpents swallow humans, ogres and trolls whole, equipment and all. Such encounters have also given rise to unexpected heroes, like the Ambrian squire Begomo Snakeslicer and the barbarian warrior Vaivana, who both freed their commanders from a serpent's belly after dealing it a killing blow.

~~~~~ ♦ ~~~

THUS SPOKE AROALETA

“... and the prince  
of the west marched  
bravely on, singing  
horror, chanting fear,  
to meet mighty Uron  
in battle; the serpent,  
the greatest, consumed  
by dread, struck the  
world in trembling fear.  
For nine full days, the  
terror was all, till Uron  
retreated in shame.”



NEW SPELL

## Sing the World Serpent

7th-level Troll Singer enchantment (ritual)

**Casting Time:** 1 hour

**Range:** 10 miles

**Components:** V

**Duration:** 24 hours

The trollsinger uses their deepest register and sings a song that can either summon a world serpent or send it away. The former is practically suicide, and only used when death is already assured and the trollsinger wishes to meet his doom taking as many enemies with him as possible. The latter is often used by the trolls' court singers, to halt a world serpent's advance through their realm.

What would happen if the World Serpent itself actually existed  
and came back to life is too horrible to even imagine...

## World Serpent (Tunneler)

Huge beast

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 310 (20d12 + 180)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 25 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 28 (+9) | 3 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Immunities** acid, poison, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP, proficiency bonus +6)

**Manner** slithers unstoppably

**Shadow** glossy light-brown, like the slimy skin of an earthworm (Corruption: 0/10)

**Equipment** —

**Legendary Resistance (2/day).** If the world serpent fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Life Sense.** The world serpent has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect living creatures.

**Siege Monster.** The world serpent deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Tunneler.** If the world serpent leaves a creature's reach by burrowing it does not provoke an opportunity attack.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (6d4 + 7) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Large or smaller creature it is swallowed. If the target is swallowed, it is blinded and restrained; and it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the world serpent. At the start of each of its turns, it takes 11 (2d10) acid damage. The world serpent can swallow any number of creatures. If the world serpent dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 30 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Tail Swipe.** Melee Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 33 (4d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

### REACTIONS

**Roll Over.** When a Medium or smaller creature comes within 5 feet, the world serpent can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 15 (1d12 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

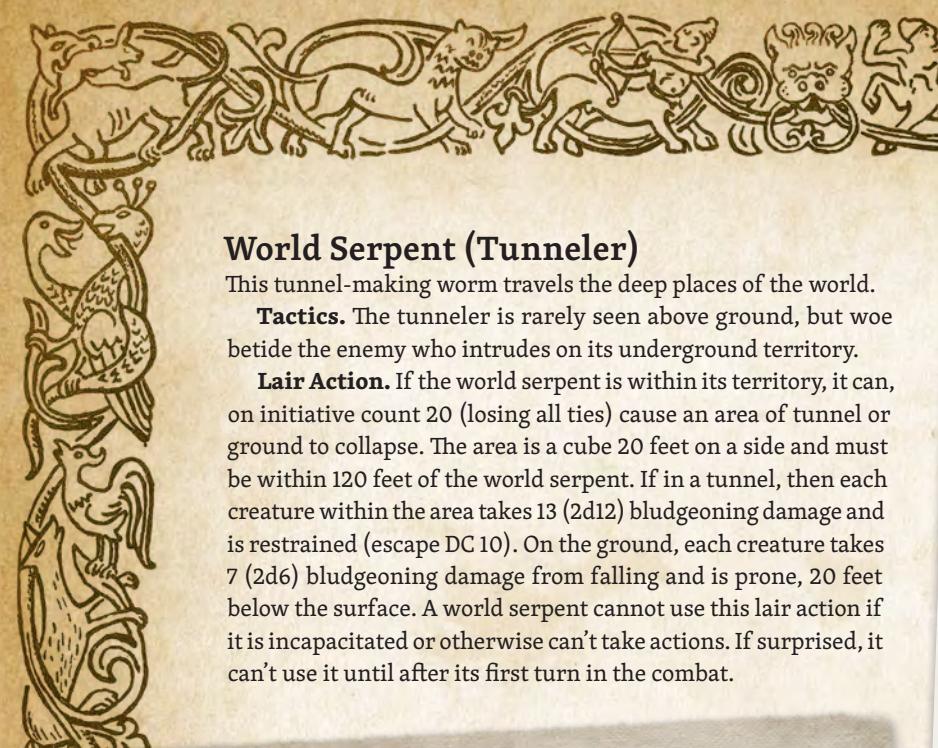
### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The world serpent 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 world serpent regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Bite.** The world serpent makes a bite attack.

**Tail.** The world serpent makes a tail attack.

**Earthquake (Costs 2 Actions).** The world serpent shivers its body, sending waves through the earth for 60 feet. Each creature must make a DC 21 Strength saving throw, taking 6 (1d12) bludgeoning damage and becoming prone on a failure. On a success, the creature takes half damage. Each structure in the area takes double damage automatically.

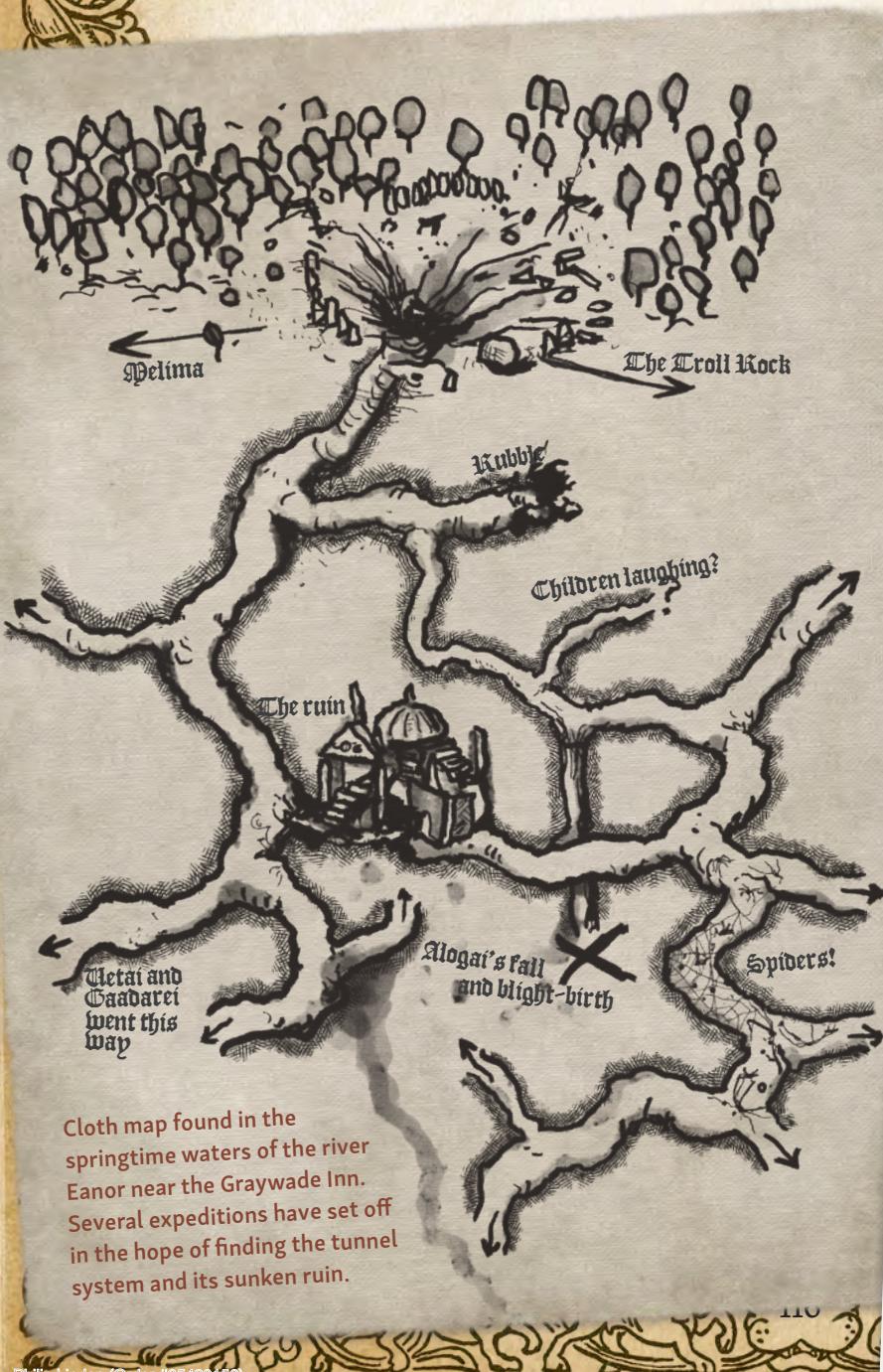


## World Serpent (Tunneler)

This tunnel-making worm travels the deep places of the world.

**Tactics.** The tunneler is rarely seen above ground, but woe betide the enemy who intrudes on its underground territory.

**Lair Action.** If the world serpent is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause an area of tunnel or ground to collapse. The area is a cube 20 feet on a side and must be within 120 feet of the world serpent. If in a tunnel, then each creature within the area takes 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage and is restrained (escape DC 10). On the ground, each creature takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from falling and is prone, 20 feet below the surface. A world serpent cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.



## World Serpent (Wallower)

Gargantuan beast

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 410 (20d20 + 200)

Speed 50 ft., burrow 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON      | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|----------|--------|---------|--------|
| 28 (+9) | 10 (+0) | 30 (+10) | 9 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

Skills Perception +10, Survival +10

Damage Immunities acid, poison, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

Senses tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages —

Challenge 26 (90,000 XP, proficiency bonus +8)

Manner rumbling, plowing

Shadow furrowed light brown, like dry soil that has cracked in the sun (Corruption: 0/14)

Equipment —

**Legendary Resistance (3/day).** If the world serpent fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Life Sense.** The world serpent has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect living creatures.

**Siege Monster.** The world serpent deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Tunneler.** If the world serpent leaves a creature's reach by burrowing it does not provoke an opportunity attack.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 34 (10d4 + 9) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature it is swallowed. If the target is swallowed, it is blinded and restrained; and it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the world serpent. At the start of each of its turns, it takes 13 (2d12) acid damage. The world serpent can swallow any number of creatures. If the world serpent dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 30 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Tail Swipe.** Melee Weapon Attack: +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. Hit: 41 (5d12 + 9) bludgeoning damage.

### REACTIONS

**Roll Over.** When a Large or smaller creature comes within 5 feet, the world serpent can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 20 (1d20 + 10) bludgeoning damage.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The world serpent 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 world serpent regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Bite.** The world serpent makes a bite attack.

**Tail.** The world serpent makes a tail attack.

**Earthquake (Costs 2 Actions).** The world serpent shivers its body, sending waves through the earth for 80 feet. Each creature must make a DC 25 Strength saving throw, taking 10 (1d20) bludgeoning damage and becoming prone on a failure. On a success, the creature takes half damage. Each structure in the area takes double damage automatically.

## World Serpent (Wallower)

This larger worm leaves huge furrows across the landscape when it travels.

**Tactics:** The larger, wallowing world serpent attacks from below to devour its prey.

**Lair Action.** If the world serpent is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause an area of tunnel or ground to collapse. The area is a cube 20 feet on a side and must be within 120 feet of the world serpent. If in a tunnel, then each creature within the area takes 21 (2d20) bludgeoning damage and is restrained (escape DC 10). On the ground, each creature takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from falling and is prone, 30 feet below the surface. A world serpent cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

## Adventure Set-up

**T**HE TROLLSINGER AND artifact crafter Axalgha has been captured by a group of cultists and taken to their hideout, perhaps somewhere in the Ambrian countryside or near some outpost in the woods. There she is forced to craft all kinds of objects for the cult - death masks, mystical focuses, soul stones, ritual daggers and so on. Realizing that she will not survive the captivity, Axalgha finally musters the courage to perform one last, desperate act: she "sings world serpent". The cultists do not suspect that something is wrong, as the troll always sings while crafting her artifacts.

The player characters are near the place where the trollsinger is held captive, when suddenly the world serpent bursts through the ground with devastating force; it devours a handful of people and livestock in a number of places near the allegedly haunted ruin where the cult has its hideout, as well as two cultists from the lower level of the ruin. It then withdraws to digest its meal, but a successful Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that it will certainly be back.

Provided that they do not immediately flee the scene, the characters may be able to figure out what caused the serpent to emerge. By identifying where the attacks took place, the ruin can be singled out as particularly suspicious. They may also get their hands on a terrified cultist who leaves the hideout wearing his ceremonial robe and death mask, hoping to escape the danger. When they understand what has happened, it is possible for them to face the serpent in open combat, or fight/sneak their way to Axalgha.

If they can guarantee the trollsinger's safety, she can sing the serpent away. But in that case the characters must distract it long enough for the song to be performed without interruption!



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## SECTION 2

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# Beasts et Monsters

*What is the Eternal Night? Or more precisely, where is it? The Lightbringer manuscripts, dictated by Prios, recorded by Father Abramar, teach that the creatures of the Eternal Night are those who turn their faces from the sun, who entice others to do the same, who in this way divert the power stemming from the faith and trust of the human spirit, and who thereby are to blame for the fading condition of Prios.*

*According to the above, the Eternal Night must be understood as life without Prios, an existence without light, where both trust and faith are anchored in something other than the One and the Laws of the Sun. However, with this comes the conclusion that the Night is already here, among us, in each soul ready to obey other commands than those of the Lawgiver.*

*The battle with the Hordes of the Eternal Night is nothing which awaits us in a distant future. It is already underway, in every action, in every breath. Chastise yourself as you chastise your neighbor, to always choose obedience. Not from fear, not in the hope of any reward, but with joy, in the knowledge that the right also is the true and that which keeps the Eternal Night at bay.*

*Excerpt from Hordes of the Eternal Night, Father Almagast*

# Abominations

**THE AMBRIANS USE** the term Abomination for what the barbarians call Blight Beasts – creatures in some way associated with the corrupt darkness of Davokar. It is unclear if all abominations are related or if it would be more accurate to speak of different kinds of abominations, but both Ordo Magica and the Twilight Friars do all in their power to learn more about the phenomenon.

In any case, the term covers a varied crowd of beings that seem to have one trait in common: they want to hurt humans; they wish for humans to ache, to suffer, preferably to die. And they wish this with such a passion that nothing else matters. You cannot reason with an abomination, nor compromise with or frighten them; the abomination appears to live for the destruction of mankind, one individual at a time, and it does not hesitate to destroy anything or anyone standing in the way.

## Blight-born Template

A CREATURE THAT exceeds its Corruption Threshold with permanent Corruption keeps its statistics, except as follows.

### Blight-born Aboar

Huge abomination

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 87 (6d12 + 48)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 24 (+7) | 12 (+1) | 27 (+8) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 1 (-5) |

**Saving Throws** Con +11, Wis +5

**Damage Resistances** cold, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** snorting dark blood, tossing head to and fro

**Shadow** a purple-black mass that bleeds black tears of the deepest Corruption (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the blight-born aboar can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Challenge.** The creature's challenge rating increases by one step.

**Immunities.** The creature is now immune to the charmed and frightened conditions.

**Size.** The creature increases in size by one step.

**Speed.** The creature adds 10 feet of movement to each of its existing types.

**Features.** The blight-born gains at least one of the following features: Acidic Blood, Aggressive, Congealed Blood, Corruption Filter, Corruption Sense, Corruption Siphon, Corruptive Blood, Harmful Aura, Regeneration, Wave of Corruption or the Blighted Horns reaction.

### Blight-born Aboar

Blight-born aboars wander alone in the depths of Davokar, killing everything that gets in their way, growing bigger and stronger and spreading Corruption through their blood and their now overgrown and oozing tusks.

**Tactics.** The blight-stricken Aboar snorts with longing to bury its tusks into warm flesh, and it never hesitates.

**Charge.** If the blight-born aboar moves at least 20 ft.

straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Corruptive Blood.** A creature that attacks a blight-born aboar with a melee weapon takes 1d6 acid damage and 1 temporary Corruption from its blood spattering onto their body.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The blight-born aboar makes a tusks attack and two hoof attacks.

**Tusks.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) slashing damage and 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption

**Hoof.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage

#### REACTIONS

**Stomp.** If the blight-born aboar passes by a creature within 5 feet of it, it can make a hoof attack.



## Blight-born Elk

These corrupted creatures widely display different examples of bodily stigmata: extreme dehydration; oozing blisters; horn-like and tail-like outgrowths; bleeding mucosal membranes; withered or twisted limbs; blackened or albino-pale skin. When it comes to personality and temper the transformation is absolute – everything that remains is destructive: envy, anger, hunger, hubris and hatred.

**Tactics.** None. The scent of living bodies drives the blight beast to attack, muzzle foaming with Corruption.

## Blight-born Elk

*Large abomination*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 94 (9d10 + 45)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 25 (+7) | 12 (+1) | 21 (+5) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Survival +4

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** wheezing and snorting

**Shadow** brownish black, like the hide of a decaying animal corpse (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Charge.** If the elk moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with its Many-pointed Black Antlers on the same turn, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Congealed Blood.** The blight-born elk is resistant to bludgeoning damage.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The blight-born elk makes an attack with its Black Antlers and its Clawing Hooves

**Many-pointed Black Antlers.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) piercing damage and 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.

**Clawing Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) slashing damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

### REACTIONS

**Broad Antlers.** The wild tangle of the blight-born elk's antlers provides natural cover against ranged weapons. When attacked, it twists unnaturally, placing the thorny antlers in the path of the missile. Add +3 to the elk's AC.

## Blight-born Fairy

Small, crooked, naked creatures with glossy black eyes and long claws where their nails used to be. Their skin shows hints of thin fur, and they are all surrounded by a pungent, sulfuric odor.

**Tactics.** They do not attack until they outnumber the target two-to-one; then they wait for a situation where they can take the enemy by surprise.

### Blight-born Fairy

*Small abomination*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 14 (4d6)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 5 (-3) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +7

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** giggles, squints

**Shadow** black with greenish-brown spots, like decaying leaves floating on a pond at night (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** whatever remains from its former life

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the blight-born fairy can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### ACTIONS

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

### REACTIONS

**Sidestep.** The blight-born fairy can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.

## Blight-born Human

Corrupted just like other creatures, human abominations however seem to hold on to some of their intellectual capacity and can linger in populated areas if they are careful. They keep in hiding, use infected persons as guards and couriers, and can with time surround themselves with a whole court of cultists obeying their every command. Sometimes, as in the notorious case of the widow baroness of the House Elsbet, it can take years before the source of Corruption is revealed.

**Tactics.** The abomination closes in on its victim and attacks with a passionate hunger.

### Blight-born Human

*Medium abomination*

**Armor Class** 14 (skald's cuirass)

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) |

**Saving Throws** Constitution +4, Wisdom +3

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4, Deception +4

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** trembling with power

**Shadow** fully corroded copper (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** whatever remains from its former life

**Berserker.** The blight-born can use its bonus action to enter a rage. While in a rage, it is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage and cannot cast spells. It has advantage on attack rolls and attacks against it also have advantage. Its attacks do an extra +2 damage. It loses its rage if it ends its turn without having attacked a creature since its last turn or taken damage since its last turn.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The blight-born's innate spell-casting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *chill touch*

3/day: *suggestion*

1/day: *exchange shadow*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The blight-born human makes two claw attacks.

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

## Blight Worm

The abomination known to the barbarian clans as the Blight Worm resembles the kanaran in many ways, but with one clear difference – the front part of the body is split, with two heads at its end. Almost all reports speak of individual specimens, but wilder rumors suggest that some expeditions have been so unfortunate as to disturb coiling, writhing snake pits full of these abominable creatures.

**Tactics.** The Blight Worm favors attacking lone, preferably sleeping victims, and if possible, targets blighted by Corruption. When it succeeds in finding a target, it encircles the prey and one of the heads initiates an Embrace while the other bites and begins to siphon off Corruption.

## Blight Worm

*Large abomination*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d10 + 15)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 23 (+6) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 5 (-3) |

**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** weaves heads in hypnotic pattern

**Shadow** pulsating, glittering blue-green (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Corruption Sense.** If a creature has one or more points of permanent Corruption, the blight worm has advantage on Perception checks to find or notice it.

**Corruption Siphon.** With a successful bite attack and a bonus action, the blight worm drains 1d6 temporary Corruption from the creature. If the creature still has temporary Corruption remaining, it gains 1 point of permanent Corruption.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The blight worm makes a bite attack and a crush attack.

**Embrace.** The blight worm makes a contested Strength (Athletics) check against an aware opponent or automatically grapples an unconscious one (escape DC 18).

**Crush.** The blight worm does 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage to a grappled creature.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) piercing damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

## Black Plague Termites

The red and black, thumb-length termites attack trees, both living and dead, leaving them hollow. And they are said to corrupt everything they touch – the trees they devour, the ground they tread upon, and the earth in which they nest.

**Tactics.** A swarm of termites will instinctively defend their queen and nest; they have no survival instinct and will keep attacking until their enemies flee or the swarm is destroyed.

## Black Plague Termite Swarm

*Small swarm of Tiny abominations*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 35 (10d6)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1 (-5) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 1 (-5) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** always moving

**Shadow** glossy-black like soaked charcoal (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 temporary Corruption plus either 5 (2d4) piercing damage or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## Chasm Stag

From the still pools of blighted sludge which sometimes come bubbling up through the cracks of the Underworld, the insectoid Chasm Stag is born – the size of a fox, but covered in a hard shell and as ravenous as other abominations. They often move in groups of three to five individuals, but even a single beetle can cause great problems, as the Intruder Daemons of the Yonderworld seem to find them valuable and worth protecting.

**Tactics.** Dashes silently towards the weakest targets aiming to poison them, and counts on the Intruder daemons to come to their aid if the prey proves to be tougher than expected. As soon as the poison takes effect, they start moving around to double the effect of their protection.

## Chasm Stag

*Small abomination*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d6 + 40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX    | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 21 (+5) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 1 (-5) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** moving and twisting

**Shadow** fractured glossy black, like a cracked backplate (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Dodger.** The chasm stag can use its bonus action to take the Dodge action.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage and if the target is a creature it must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

**Spit Slime.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

### REACTIONS

**Blighted Horns.** When a creature comes into reach, the chasm stag can rake it with its slime-covered horns. The creature must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or gain 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.

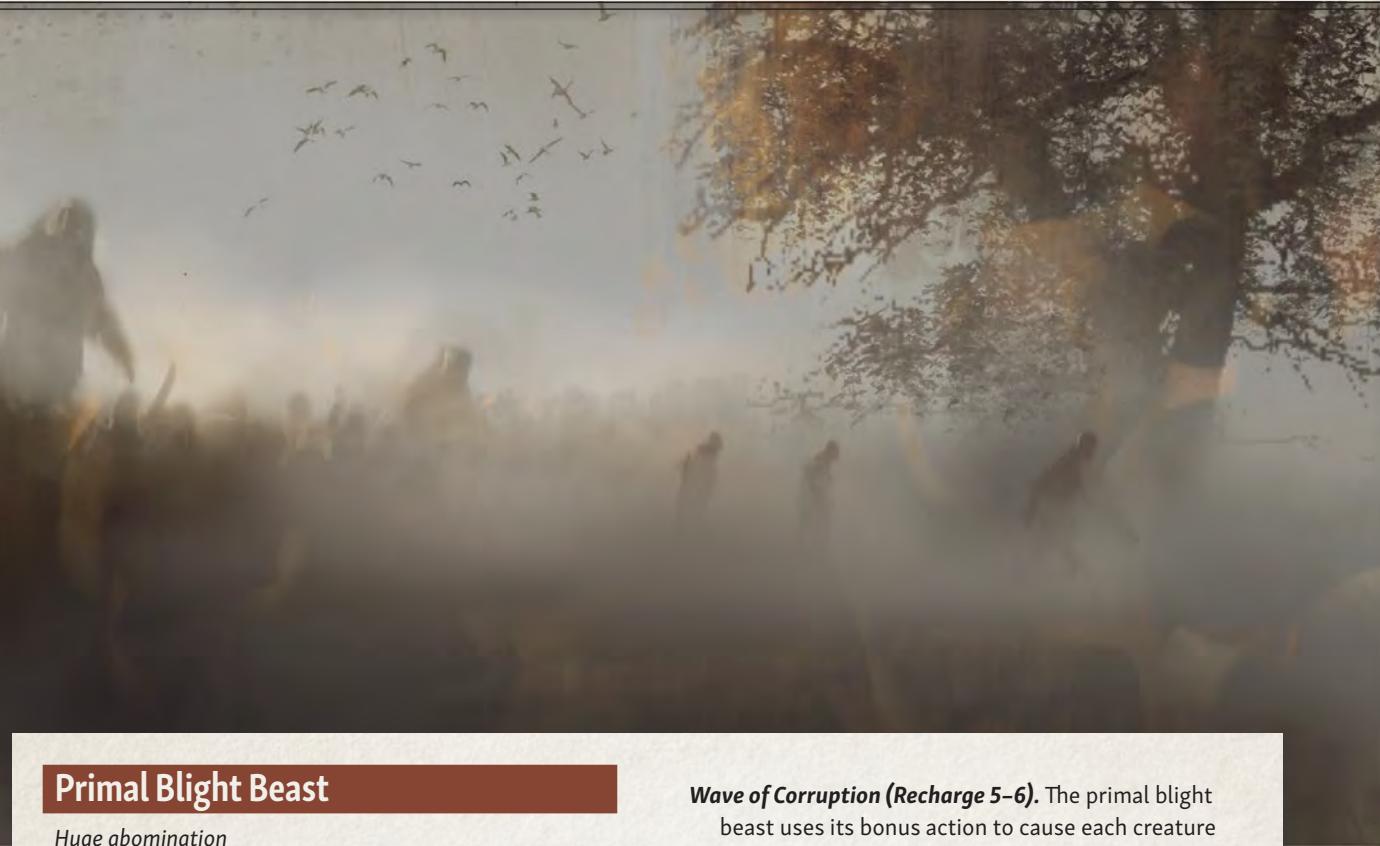


## Primal Blight Beast

However far the Corruption has gone, the blight-born are still recognizable for what they once were – human, ogre, troll or mare cat. But there are also scarce reports describing something else; something worse and more unnatural; creatures so alien and so hateful that they appear to embody the exact opposite of nature. It is speculated as to whether or not these primal horrors truly exist and if they in that case could be embodiments of the Corruption itself; personifications of the hunger and the hatred and the wrath.

Among the barbarians there is a long list of legends about Primal Blight Beasts and their origins. Most of them describe the abominations as born out of the marrow of something called the World Serpent, a mystical beast that according to some tales created Symbaroum. Others state that it was slain by Symbaroum's first emperor or that it still bides its time somewhere under the high seat of Symbar. A totally different take on the origins of the primal horrors, is that they appear spontaneously in places where the Corruption is at its strongest – in the ruins brooding on the darkest secrets, where puddles of acidic magic remain from the baneful practices of Symbaroum. Whatever the truth may be, both Ambrians and barbarians can count themselves lucky that the primal horrors prefer the dark depth of the forest instead of the sun-drenched lowlands.

**Tactics.** None. Its hatred towards all things living drives it to act without tactical concern – all that matters is destruction.



## Primal Blight Beast

Huge abomination

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 202 (15d12 + 105)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 27 (+8) | 20 (+5) | 24 (+7) | 2 (-4) | 18 (+4) | 3 (-4) |

**Saving Throws** Str +13, Dex +10, Con +12, Wis +9

**Skills** Perception +14, Stealth +10, Survival +14

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** passive Perception 21

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 16 (15,000 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

**Manner** undulating without moving

**Shadow** the deepest black, a light-consuming stain on the midnight sky (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Acidic Blood.** A creature that attacks the primal blight beast with a melee weapon takes 4 (1d8) acid damage and 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption from its blood spattering onto their body.

**Legendary Resistance (2/day).** If the creature fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Regeneration.** The primal blight beast regains 12 hit points at the start of its turn unless it took radiant damage since the beginning of its last turn.

**Wave of Corruption (Recharge 5–6).** The primal blight beast uses its bonus action to cause each creature within 60 feet of it to make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or gain 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The primal blight beast makes two attacks with its Defiling Claws.

**Defiling Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d6 + 8) slashing damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

### REACTIONS

**Bleak Scream.** When struck, the primal blight beast can let loose a scream that darkens every creature's heart. Each creature within 60 ft. of the beast that is not deafened must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking psychic damage equal to their total Corruption on a failure or half that amount on a success.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The primal blight beast can take 1 legendary action, 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 primal blight beast regains its spent legendary action at the start of its turn.

**Claws.** The primal blight beast makes a Defiling Claws attack.

**Recover.** The primal blight beast recovers its Wave of Corruption feature.

## Concerning Abominations and the Underworld

Countless contradictory tales claim to relate the truth about the origin of abominations. Some maintain that they represent an ancient race which has been around since long before the Elder Folks saw the light of day. Others claim that they have been created or bred by elves or men, by accident or knowingly and with some malicious intent.

Among the Elder Folks a common notion seems to be that the origin of abominations is directly linked to the fall of Symbaroum. One must of course bear in mind that those stories most often reach Ambrians via the throats of barbarians or goblins. But that being said, many of these old tales describe how the warlocks and alchemists of Symbaroum conducted horrible experiments, utilizing the supposed Pure Magic to upset the natural order, thereby giving rise to the abominations.

True or not true, a majority of the age-old legends also refer to something which is sometimes called the Underworld, sometimes Underhill, sometimes the Abyss. Supposedly there is a whole world beneath the roots of Davokar, filled with tunnels, sunken ruins, lakes of acidified magic and far worse phenomena than that. And there are actually some Ambrian explorers who claim to have wandered through this hidden realm, often after having descended into one sinkhole or another. But even if the authorities at Ordo Magica allow that there may exist local underground complexes, there is no one who would agree that the entire forest can be undermined by a vast "Underworld". As Seldonio himself once put it: "*Ludicrous, my dear Baron, what you claim is pure nonsense!*"

## The Wily

The origin of these vaguely elf-like humanoids prowling naked through the underworld, and for how long they have been there, are much debated topics among scholars. They might be a failed Symbarian experiment, or members of the Iron Pact who were corrupted and distorted in the war against Symbar. What is clear is that they display a terrible hunger for Corruption, and seem able to sense when someone is using mystical powers or artifacts in the Underworld.

**Tactics.** The wily are attracted to people using mystical powers or artifacts, and wait for an opportunity to enthrall them with their hypnotic gaze and then drink their Corruption.

### The Wily

*Small abomination*

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 44 (8d6 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 21 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 13 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Con +4, Wis +5

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** hiding in the shadows

**Shadow** pulsating purple with blackened capillaries (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** whatever remains from its former life

**Corruption Sense.** If a creature has one or more points of permanent Corruption, the wily has advantage on Perception checks to find or notice it.

**Corruption Siphon.** With a successful bite attack and a bonus action, the wily drains 1d4 temporary Corruption from the creature. If the creature still has temporary Corruption remaining, it gains 1 point of permanent Corruption.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The wily's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *chill touch, ray of frost*

3/day each: *enthral, suggestion*

1/day: *fear*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The wily makes two claw attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) slashing damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

# Amphibians & Aquatics

EVEN IF THE Davokar region, unlike old Alberotor, does not border on the sea, waters in the form of lakes and rivers are a vital part of Ambrian infrastructure. They are used for transporting goods as well as people, for propelling flour and sawmills, and they are harvested for fish, crustaceans, and amphibians. They are also home to a multitude of monstrous, predatory water creatures that are hunted for sport or for trophies, but that also claim the lives of countless fishermen and deckhands each year.

## Cave Ray

A recurrent story from subterranean expeditions tells of large, flat-bodied amphibians stalking the dark waters of the Underworld. They prey on the blind carp and vearons sharing their habitat, as well as on others who come near.

**Tactics.** The Cave Ray jumps up to wrap itself around the prey and throw it into the water. When it is submerged, the ray tries to hold onto it until it drowns.

### Cave Ray

Large beast

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 45 (6d10 + 12)

Speed 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 21 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 5 (-3) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +7, Perception +5, Stealth +4, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** hiding in the water

**Shadow** deep-blue shifting towards warm orange  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Amphibian.** The cave ray can breathe in water and air.

**Damage Transfer.** While it is grappling a creature, the cave ray takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the creature grappled by the ray takes the other half.

### ACTIONS

**Grapple.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Medium size or smaller creature. Hit: the creature is grappled (escape DC 17).

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

## Drilling Leech

The finned Drilling Leech, half-blind but poisonous, is as big as a cat and surprisingly agile in the water. Moving in clusters, they attach themselves to the hulls of boats and eat their way through, hoping that the crew will fall into the water. While chewing on the planks, the leeches will not let go, even if they are attacked, but then they must first be detected. With a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, whoever steers the ship notices that something feels wrong, as if the vessel pulls in a certain direction.

**Tactics.** Once the prey is in the water, the leech attacks in an attempt to poison it. It is relentless until the creature stops moving and then it attacks another creature.

### Drilling Leech

Small beast

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 17 (5d6)

Speed 0 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 3 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** waiting among the weeds

**Shadow** glossy brownish-yellow, like its slimy skin  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Ambusher.** In the first round of a combat, the drilling leech has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

**Aquatic.** The drilling leech breathes water.

**Poisonous.** If the leech is held with bare hands, it causes 3 (1d6) poison damage to the holder. If it bites a creature it can use its bonus action to flood its mouth with poison, causing creatures to take 7 (2d6) poison damage.

**Siege Monster.** The drilling leech deals double damage to objects and structures.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (2d4) acid damage as well.

## Hammer Eel

Huge beast

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 57 (5d12 + 25)

**Speed** 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 25 (+7) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Str +10, Con +8, Wis +5

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** swimming in deep water

**Shadow** glittering, rough silver-blue, like water colored velvet (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Amphibian.** The hammer eel can breathe in water and air.

**Swallow.** If the hammer eel begins its turn with a Medium or smaller creature grappled it can use its bonus action to swallow the creature. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the eel, and it takes 5 (2d4) acid damage at the start of each of the eel's turns. The eel can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the eel dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d12 + 7) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17).

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 17). If the hammer eel is grappling a creature with its claws it cannot make an attack with them.

### REACTIONS

**Sudden Strike.** When a creature comes within reach of the hammer eel, it can make a bite or claws attack as long as it is not grappling a creature with that attack method.

## Hammer Eel

Fortunately, the immense hammer eel is a rare sight in the rivers of Ambria and Davokar; such a creature prefers larger lakes like the Volgoma. Usually it preys on other amphibians, but if one grows really big, and really hungry, it may also attack seafarers by launching through the water, grabbing them with its short but strong grippers, and pulling them below the surface.

**Tactics.** The eel can choose between trying to grip and pull the victim into the water, or attacking directly with its shark-like jaws.

## Nipper

The Nipper is a smaller type of clawed river hunter that often hunts in pairs or groups of up to five individuals. Even if it cannot be compared to its more famous relative regarding size, slyness or culinary potential, the Nipper has been the death of many a river roamer.

**Tactics.** The Nippers use their belly-claws to hold onto and move around on deck, land or a bridge. They coordinate their attacks to gain advantage, and then grip and slowly gnaw their victims to death.

## Nipper

Small beast

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 31 (7d6 + 7)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** psychic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** clinging to rocks in the shallows

**Shadow** spotted reddish-brown, like a cooked crustacean shell (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Amphibian.** The nipper can breathe in water and air.

**Pack Tactics.** The nipper has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the nipper's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Cling.** The nipper has advantage on checks or saving throws to avoid being grappled or shoved.



## Skullan

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 68 (8d10 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 4 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 4 (-3) |

**Skills** Athletics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** partially submerged

**Shadow** tumbling blue and white, like the currents in a rocky rapid (Corruption: 0/1)

**Equipment** —

**Amphibian.** The skullan can breathe in water and air.

**Retract Tongue.** If the skullan starts its turn with a

Medium or smaller creature grappled by its tongue, it can use its bonus action to retract its tongue and bring the creature within 5 feet of its body.

**Standing Leap:** The skullan's long jump is up to 20 ft. and its high jump is up to 10 ft., with or without a running start.

### ACTIONS

**Tongue Grapple.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 25 ft., one Medium size or smaller creature. *Hit:* the creature is grappled (escape DC 14) and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed for 1 minute. A paralyzed creature can repeat the saving throw on the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

**Bite:** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the skullan can't bite another target.

**Swallow:** The skullan makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the skullan, and it takes 5 (2d4) acid damage at the start of each of the skullan's turns. The skullan can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the skullan dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 ft. of movement, exiting prone.

## Skullan

The large, dark green patterned and warty toad creature known as the Skullan may not be as impressive as a fully grown King Toad, but nevertheless, its paralyzing saliva makes it a monster to fear.

## Vapaya Swarm

*Medium swarm of Tiny beasts*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 36 (8d8)

**Speed** 0 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** circling in great circles, mouths open

**Shadow** striped and glossy red-green-yellow, like patterned fish scales (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Aquatic.** The swarm can breathe only underwater.

**Blood Frenzy.** The swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny vapaya. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) piercing damage or 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

### REACTIONS

**Shift.** If a creature comes within 5 feet of the swarm, they can abandon a current target and swarm that creature instead.

**Tactics.** The Skullan uses its tongue to pull targets from vessels passing on the water; once the victim is paralyzed, the feast can commence!

## Vapaya

Ambrian parents who worry about their children playing near water often warn them about the Vapaya. But this carnivorous fish actually prefers to stalk vessels on the region's rivers, especially pirate ships, since their attacks always involve one or two unfortunate souls falling overboard.

**Tactics.** The Vapaya swarm around one victim at a time, biting and biting until it is dead.

# flora

THAT DAVOKAR'S VEGETATION is dangerous is well known to all, but only those who have traveled the woods know the full truth about its dangers. It is not only poisonous or corrupted berries, flowers and thorns you must be able to detect and avoid; some of the regions most fearsome predators can be described as mixture of plant and animal. Living Thorns and Ravenous Willows were covered in the previous section, but they have several horrendous siblings to watch out for.

## Brimstone Oak

Huge plant

**Armor Class** 21 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 231 (22d12 + 88)

**Speed** 0 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 28 (+9) | 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 6 (-2) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Str +15, Con +10, Wis +7

**Skills** Perception +7

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP, proficiency bonus +6)

**Manner** patiently still

**Shadow** streaky brown-red, as bark basking in the glow from flaming embers (Corruption: 0/10)

**Equipment** —

**Entice.** The sheltering shadows of the tree and the pleasant warmth it emits combine to be attractive to passing creatures. A creature that has not already

## Brimstone Oak

These trees are related to the Iron Oaks and Kelders of Davokar, but coexist with a kind of fungus that generates sulfur and phosphor. Thanks to this symbiosis, the brimstone oak emits waves of heat that attract living animals. The same heat source can be used to produce fiery cascades which kill prey and give it a crispy surface.

**Tactics.** Uses its root wall to trap targets; then tries to kill them with its smoldering hot cascades.

been attacked by the tree and is within 120 feet of it must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or approach closer. A creature that fails three Wisdom saving throws in a row decides to rest within 30 feet of the brimstone oak's trunk.

**False Appearance.** While the brimstone oak remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

**Root Walls (3/day).** The brimstone oak can use a bonus action to erect a root wall. Each root wall is 10 feet high, 10 feet thick and consists of 1 to 4 10-foot wide sections. Each section is AC 18, has 50 hit points and is resistant to bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons. No root wall section can be further than 60 feet from the main body of the brimstone oak.

## ACTIONS

**Flaying Branches.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 20 ft., up to three targets. *Hit:* 35 (4d12 + 9) slashing damage.

**Burning Cascade (Recharge 6).** Each creature within a 60-foot radius of the brimstone oak must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) fire damage on a failure or half of that amount on a success.

## Kelder

There are many rumors about the cedar tree known as the Kelder. It is true that they pierce the skin of their prey with fine mycelium strands, but they cannot put their victims to sleep, only render them paralyzed for a short while, then hold them using their roots.

**Tactics.** The kelders inhabit the Davokar forest in groups comprising five to six individuals. They seek out what appear to be suitable resting sites and strike once any visiting prey have been paralyzed.

### Kelder

*Large plant*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 112 (15d10 + 30)

**Speed** 0 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 23 (+6) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 5 (-3) | 11 (+0) | 7 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Str +10, Con +6, Wis +4

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** patiently still

**Shadow** streaked and shiny dark green, like healthy pine needles (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** —

**False Appearance.** While the kelder remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

**Mycelium Network.** If a creature is within 40 feet of the kelder, it can use a bonus action to have its mycelium attack the creature. The creature must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

### ACTIONS

**Crushing Roots.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

## Killer Shrub

Fortune hunters who venture all the way into Dark Davokar will soon learn to fear the flesh-eating bush known as the Wriggle Twigs or the Killer Shrub. The bush cannot move, but its branches are like nimble tentacles, long enough for it to pull in and ensnare nearby prey.

**Tactics.** If some prey-animal passes within reach, the shrub tries to envelop it in a crushing embrace, otherwise it sends out its thorny vines to pull the mouth-watering target close. Should it be attacked from a distance, it can retaliate as long as the target is within reach of its grappling tongue.

### Killer Shrub

*Medium plant*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 38 (7d8 + 7)

**Speed** 0 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** waiting with branches trembling

**Shadow** glossy greenish-brown, like leathery bark (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Digestive Sap.** If the killer shrub has a creature grappled at the start of its turn, that creature takes 4 (1d8) acid damage.

**False Appearance.** While the killer shrub remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The killer shrub makes two attacks with its thorny vines.

**Thorny Vines.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage and the creature is grappled (escape DC 16).

**Grappling Tongue.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* the target is grappled (escape DC 16).

### REACTIONS

**Crushing Embrace.** If a grappled creature makes an escape attempt, the killer shrub crushes the creature, doing 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

# Herbivores

**NOT ALL CREATURES** roaming Davokar forest and its surrounding lands are predatory and vicious; you can encounter lots of marvelous animals of a gentler temper in the woods and mountains as well as on the lowlands. However, these plant-eating creatures can still be dangerous as they are often protective of their territories or offspring, and well-equipped to face their predators or other threats.

## Darak

Darak are pack-living herbivores that normally roam the plains west of Davokar, but it is not uncommon for individual beasts to be ostracized from the herd. These solitary nomads tend to stay in the woods and are often extremely aggressive in defending their territory.

**Tactics.** The Darak is too big and powerful to adopt special tactics – it simply crushes as many enemies as possible on the way into melee, then continues to ram all that come close.



## Darak

*Huge beast*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 38 (4d12 + 12)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 2 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** slow and lumbering

**Shadow** pale greenish yellow, like dried hay  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If

the darak takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

### ACTIONS

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

**Hooves.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

### REACTIONS

**Batter.** The darak turns towards a creature that attacks it, hoping to knock it down using its great bulk. The creature must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw or become prone.





## Moose

The moose is a common sight in Bright Davokar, sometimes wandering alone, sometimes accompanied by last year's calves.

**Tactics.** Maneuvers skillfully to avoid being caught in melee, staying constantly in motion while keeping its antlers lowered towards the chest of its enemy.

### Moose

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d10 + 18)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +3, Survival +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** tall and prideful

**Shadow** bright green with red spots, as a Rowan crown full of berries (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** —

**Charge.** If the moose moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with an antler attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

#### ACTIONS

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

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

### Arlheg the Meek

According to clan Karohar it is neither the Huldra, nor the High Chieftain or some elf prince that rules Davokar, but a spirit called Arlheg – often appearing as a majestic, huge moose.

## Rock Buck

The Titans and Ravens are home to this enormous and malicious breed of mountain goat. They patrol their territories and furiously defend their mountain passes.

**Tactics.** Challenges the largest of its opponents and tries to knock it to the ground.

### Rock Buck

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 82 (11d10 + 22)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 5 (-3) | 13 (+1) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +3, Survival +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** eyes full of challenge

**Shadow** whirling gray-white, like snow in squalls (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** —

**Charge.** If the rock buck moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

#### ACTIONS

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

**Kick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

#### REACTIONS

**Back-kick.** If a creature approaches the rock buck from behind it can kick them once they are in reach.

# Predators

DAVOKAR IS TEEMING with life, which of course is the primary reason why the barbarians choose to endure its perilous environment. However, accompanying the prey animals are a multitude of predators – beasts that often find themselves transformed into victims in the claws of trolls, abominations and others who happen to be larger than them.

The barbarians have developed a culinary culture that makes them happy to reject a tender deer loin in favor of meat carved from predators – the more dangerous the predator, the finer the meal. It is, for example, said that High Chieftain Maiestikar refused to see anything but Hunger Wolves and Aboars on his plate.

## Aboar

Wild boars are not a rare sight for travelers in Davokar, especially not out east in the territory of clan Vajvod where they are hunted for meat and tusks. It is also the Vajvods who have fostered the tradition of once a year, during winter when the snow makes tracking an easy task, sending a group of select warriors deep into Davokar, hunting the Aboar.

This mythical giant swine is said to be related to the liege trolls and even outshines them when it comes to both cleverness and brutality. Only on a couple of occasions

have there been credible reports of villages, outposts or travelers that have been attacked by an aboar – maybe because all potential witnesses have died in other attacks. On the other hand, it is far from unusual to hear farmers and others who work close to Davokar tell of strange happenings; occasions when they all of a sudden have found themselves being watched by some staring aboar, standing still at the forest edge or somewhere out on their farmlands. And none of the storytellers have the slightest doubt that a calculating and rational intellect hides behind the monstrous hog's wrinkled forehead.

**Tactics.** The Aboar uses diversion attacks to try to scare the enemy away from its territory; if that fails the giant boar trusts that its tusks, reflexes and thick hide are enough to plow down any aggressor.

## Baiagorn

The bear-like baiagorn is not very big, nor very strong but is instead one of the most ferocious fighters of the woods. Typically it wanders alone but is not afraid to attack prey animals that are significantly bigger than itself; it never runs from danger and thanks to its hot temper it often emerges victorious from even the toughest fight.

## Aboar

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 84 (8d10 + 40)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Con +8, Wis +5

**Damage Resistances** cold, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** Snorting and pawing

**Shadow** Deep red, with faint streaks of rust in the red (Corruption: 2/4)

**Equipment** —

**Charge.** If the aboar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Longer Rest).** If the aboar takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

## ACTIONS

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

**Hoof.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

## REACTIONS

**Stomp.** If the aboar passes by a creature within 5 feet of it, it can make an attack with its hoof.



The Baiaga clan, which has taken its name from these hot-headed bear beasts, has developed a method for taming baiagorns and teaching them some level of control. Paired with a skilled human fighter a baiagorn can be most effective – the beast attacks and absorbs the first hits while the barbarian hangs back waiting for the enemy to expose a weak spot. But a lone bear is hardly enough to pose a threat to a skilled warrior; for that a she-bear with a handful of yearlings is probably needed.

**Tactics.** A calm baiagorn is a careful creature, but if agitated or wounded it transforms into a roaring, foaming storm of claws that attacks its closest enemy or prey.

## Baiagorn

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 16

**Hit Points** 44 (8d8 + 8)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cautious

**Shadow** green as last year's pine needles

(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Nimble.** The baiagorn's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

**Rage (3/day).** As a bonus action, the baiagorn can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the baiagorn has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds 2 bonus damage. The baiagorn has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the baiagorn ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

### ACTIONS

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

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

## Beamon

Huge beast

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 105 (10d12 + 40)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 5 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** wary and alert

**Shadow** brown bordering on black, like newly oiled hides (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Keen Smell.** The beamon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The beamon makes two attacks with its paws.

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

**Paws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Swipe.** If a creature enters its reach it can make a single paws attack against that creature.

## Beamon

The black-furred bear creature known by the barbarians as the Beamon is a solitary soul that takes its dominance for granted. It certainly has many enemies, both beast and human. The beamon is prized by the barbarians for its meat, and for many northern clans its slaying is a coming-of-age rite. Any person who has successfully hunted a beamon is considered to be an adult, and those who manage to bring the beastly bear down single-handedly are regarded as fully-trained warriors.

**Tactics.** The Beamon relies on its strength and toughness, but is not stupid. If hopelessly outnumbered or facing stronger than expected resistance it will flee.

## Blood Cat

Like mare cats, the Blood Cat is furless, but with skin in shades of orange and purple, and with yellow eyes that always seem to be wide open. It only wants the blood of its prey, which is why it always comes with one or more followers in tow – servile minions, often jakaars or mare cats, who contribute to the hunt and are later allowed to feast on the bloodless carcass.

**Tactics.** The Blood Cat uses its acrobatic ability and its unpredictable movements in close combat, but has difficulty controlling its thirst: as soon as it encounters a single enemy in melee, it tries to captivate it and bite its neck.

## Blood Cat

Large beast

**Armor Class** 18

**Hit Points** 112 (15d10 + 30)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 26 (+8) | 15 (+2) | 7 (-2) | 17 (+3) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Acrobatics +11, Perception +6, Survival +6, Stealth +11

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** leading its followers

**Shadow** pulsating blood red (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Captivate.** The blood cat uses its bonus action and stares at a single creature with its wide yellow eyes. The creature must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become stunned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 16).

**Drain Blood.** If the blood cat has a creature grappled it can drain that creature's blood, doing 10 (3d6) necrotic damage to the creature.

### REACTIONS

**Acrobatic Fighter.** When an attack roll is successful, the blood cat makes a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check using the attack roll result as the DC. On a success, it takes half damage from that attack.

## Ferber Swarm

The feisty Ferber lives in families of between four and ten individuals. What this mustelid lacks in size, it makes up for in speed and tremendous courage, but that is not why the barbarians avoid it like the plague. They do so because of the disease which all adult ferbers seem to carry, and that threatens to infect anyone they bite.

**Tactics.** Ferbers do not back down, no matter the strength of the opposition. They prefer to overwhelm targets with superior numbers, dividing themselves so that there are two ferbers facing each opponent.

# Ferber Swarm

## PREDATORS

2

Medium swarm of Small beasts

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 38 (7d8 + 7)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 5 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 4 (-3) | 15 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** waiting on silver strands of web

**Shadow** greenish-purple (Corruption: 1/2)

**Equipment** —

**Infectious (Recharge 5-6).** If the ferber swarm bites a creature, it can use its bonus action to force the creature to make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature gains the Ferber Recklessness disease (see box to the right).

**Reckless Intensity.** When you begin combat, the ferber swarm must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become reckless – they have advantage on attack rolls against enemies, and enemies have advantage on attack rolls against them.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Small beast. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## Fey Beast

The Fey Beast is one of the most ferocious, unwavering predators in the region. In terms of physical shape and constitution, it resembles a jakaar or a large dog, but its gray or brown speckled fur is definitely feline. Like mare cats, the Fey Beast has a venomous gland right above its fangs, but while the mare cat's venom is lethal, the Fey Beast's will only paralyze the victim. And that is precisely what makes it such a fearsome predator: you can hardly spend a day in Thistle Hold without hearing stories of people who have been eaten, alive and conscious.

**Tactics.** Fey beasts hunt in packs, and would rather not attack unless they outnumber their prey by at least two-to-one. Together they hunt down the victims, and when all victims have been paralyzed, the feast begins. If a creature resists, they use their sidestep feature to gain distance, allowing another Fey Beast a chance at attacking.

## Ferber Recklessness

The disease that ferbers carry manifests itself as a heedless obsession with dangerous and reckless behavior. While a creature is infected, it has the reckless intensity feature of the ferber swarm and might also engage in other dangerous behavior. Magic such as *lesser restoration* or a specially made antidote elixir can relieve the disease.

## Fey Beast

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 20 (nimble)

**Hit Points** 90 (12d8 + 36)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Survival +4, Stealth +8

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** patient stalker

**Shadow** brownish-yellow, like the dry grass of a meadow (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the Fey Beast can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Keen Smell.** The Fey Beast has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Nimble.** The Fey Beast's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

**Pack Tactics.** The Fey Beast has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the Fey Beast's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

### REACTIONS

**Sidestep.** The Fey Beast can move up to half its speed without provoking an opportunity attack when another creature comes within its reach.

## Garouge

The giant bear known as the Garouge can mainly be found on the islands of Lake Veloma, or hunting in its waters. Its bluish white fur befits a predator of such icy temperament – its piercing gaze is enough to make even the bravest wizard flee. If its enemies insist on fighting, the Garouge will not back down; if needs be, the great bear will die protecting its cubs and/or mate!

**Tactics.** Initially the Garouge tries to scare the enemy or hunter away with its imposing appearance. If this fails, it targets the largest of its enemies, and attacks while trying to instill doubt in the victim's mind.

### Garouge

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10 + 18)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 4 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** intimidating, standing on hind legs

**Shadow** bluish-white, like mid-winter ice  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Keen Smell.** The garouge has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

### ACTIONS

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

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

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

### REACTIONS

**Intimidate.** When it detects the presence of a creature, the garouge can stand on its hind legs and attempt to intimidate any creatures that can see and hear it. Such creatures must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn and is immune to the effect for 24 hours once it is successful.

## Hunger Wolf

The huge hunger wolves are some of the most fabled beasts in the Davokar region. They are visually similar to jakaars, but can grow as big as ponies and are as impressively flexible as mare cats. Luckily, they rarely hunt in packs, but prefer to go at it alone or in pairs – something human fortune hunters should be very grateful for.

**Tactics.** The Hunger Wolf trusts in its cleverness and speed, and does not hesitate to attack larger groups of opponents. Should it be badly hurt, it uses its greater speed to flee and lick its wounds. But the Hunger Wolf does not forget, and will definitely seek vengeance.

### Hunger Wolf

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +3

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** growls with bared teeth

**Shadow** pale greenish yellow, like last year's grass in a forest clearing (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Expertise.** The wolf has expertise in Perception.

**Keen Smell.** The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing and smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Jakaar, battle-trained

Battle-trained beasts are quite common among the clans of the region, and none more so than the wolf-like jakaar. The barbarians have tamed these large canines for centuries, and in clan Odaiova it is more common than not for every family to train at least one jakaar to guard them at night and keep them company during the day.

**Tactics.** The battle-trained jakaars obey the commands of their masters, often working as bodyguards that can also be sent to attack enemies equipped with ranged weapons or mystical powers.

### Battle-trained Jakaar

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 4 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 4 (-3) |

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** slinks behind cover and strikes out

**Shadow** green like spring grass (Corruption: 0/1)

**Equipment** —

**Keen Smell.** The jakaar has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing and smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The jakaar has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the jakaar's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Jakaar, wild

The jakaar is a canine, as prone to capturing its own prey as it is eating from cadavers left by other beasts.

**Tactics.** The jakaars try to gain advantage by flanking their prey.

### Wild Jakaar

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** slinks behind cover and strikes out

**Shadow** green like spring grass (Corruption: 0/2)

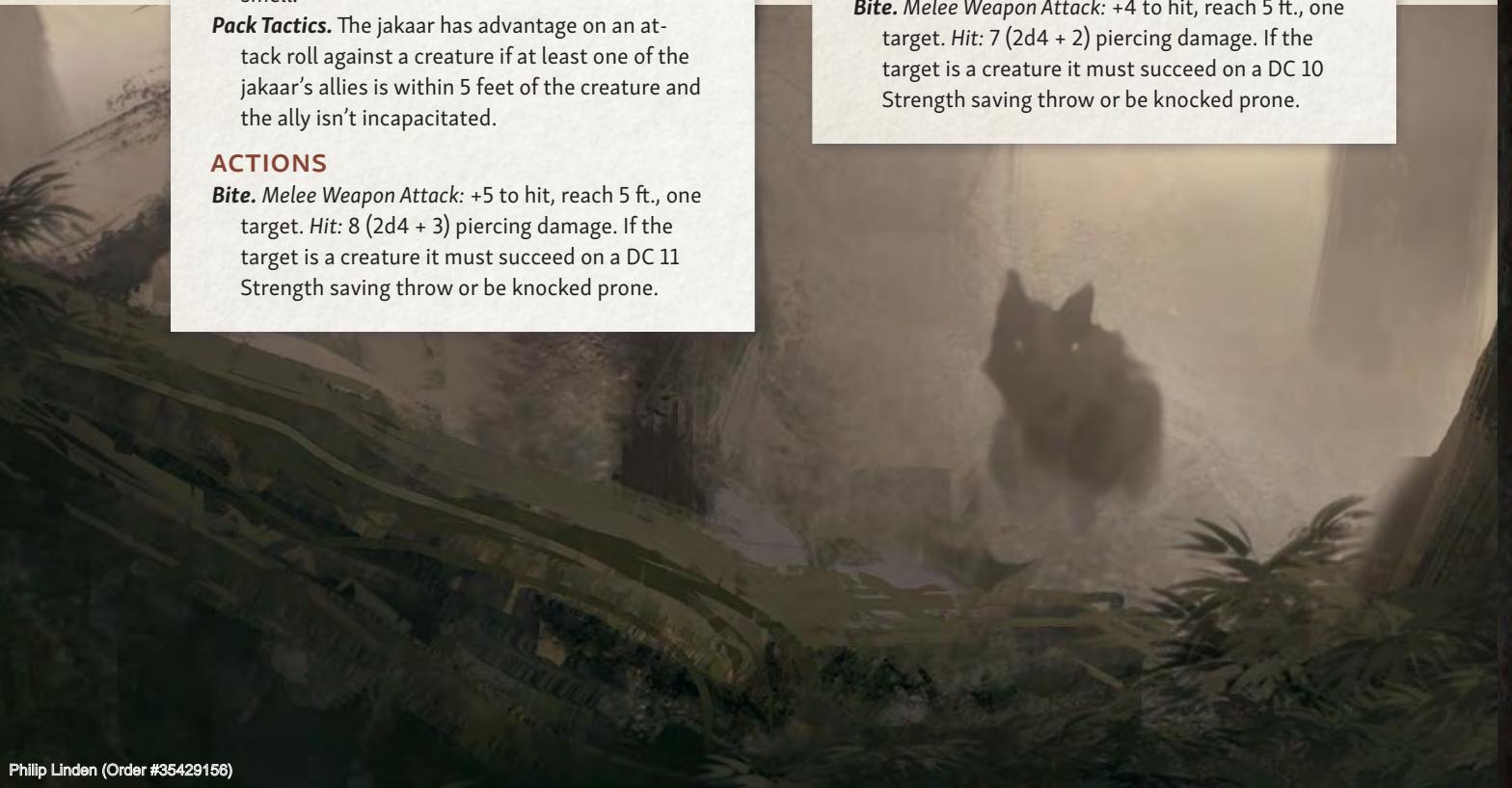
**Equipment** —

**Keen Smell.** The jakaar has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing and smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The jakaar has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the jakaar's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.





## Kanaran

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 63 (6d10 + 30)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 23 (+6) | 16 (+3) | 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) |

**Skills** Athletics +9, Perception +5, Stealth +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** waiting to strike

**Shadow** bright-green, like a swaying tree crown during high summer (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Crush.** If a kanaran begins its turn grappling a creature, it can use its bonus action to cause 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage to that creature.

**Damage Transfer.** While it is grappling a creature, the kanaran takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the creature grappled by the kanaran takes the other half.

**Forest Camouflage.** The kanaran has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in wooded terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature it is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the creature is restrained, and the kanaran can't constrict another target.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) piercing damage.

## Kanaran

Up to six paces long, the serpent called Kanaran or Restrictor specializes in attacking humanoids, and especially humans. It prefers to attack sleeping victims and has the ability to strangle and slither away with its prey so quietly that any companions of the victim never wake up – making for great cautionary tales to be told in combination with the suggestion never to be without a night watch while journeying in Davokar.

But the kanaran can also be a real threat to humans who are awake. Entwined by the serpent, hindered from using arms and weapons, the victim has no chance to defend itself and is soon strangled to death. Even worse is that the sly snake can maneuver a tangled victim to protect itself from others who try to rob it of its meal.

**Tactics.** The kanaran sneaks up on solitary victims and strangles them. Desperate snakes can attack an individual traveling with a group and then use the target as a shield during the attack; in such cases the kanaran usually strangles the whole company before it starts to feed.

## Kotka

The mighty kotka is one of the most feared predators in the Titans. It has thick winter fur of yellowish white with streaks of black across the back, terrible fangs, and great claws that can tear even the toughest ogre skin to shreds.

**Tactics.** Kotkas tend to hunt in pairs or groups of three adults; they usually sneak up on herds of prey and work together to isolate a single target. They do the same when facing a group of enemies – they focus on one target at a time, trying to gain advantage by knocking their prey down. Naturally, they will attack the largest, most tough-looking opponent first.



## Kotka

Huge beast

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 85 (9d12 + 27)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 13 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** carefully waiting to pounce

**Shadow** bright-green like the leaves of a birch  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** —

**Pounce.** If the kotka ends its movement within 10 feet of a creature, it may use its bonus action to leap onto the creature. If the creature is Huge size or smaller, it must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw or become prone.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The kotka makes two claw attacks and a bite attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

## Mare Cat

The Mare Cat is justifiably hated and feared in villages along the southern border of Davokar. They roam around in groups of around ten individuals and attack at night by squeezing through cracks in the walls or by tunneling under them. Unlike other feline predators, such as the huge Kotka or the Fey Beast, the furless mare cat is armed with a grievous venom secreted from glands above the fangs – a potent and highly concentrated toxin that commands a high price where it can be purchased.

Lonely, outcast specimens have been sighted as far south as in Redina, but the mare cat is essentially a forest predator and the biggest populations outside Davokar can be found in the woods of Seragon and Mervidun.

**Tactics.** The mare cats sneak up on their targets to surprise them, then move during the combat to keep their victims from being able to retaliate.

## Mare Cat

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 8 (-1) | 19 (+4) | 13 (+1) | 4 (-3) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +7, Stealth +6, Survival +7

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** stalking prey silently

**Shadow** darkish-green (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

### REACTIONS

**Sidestep.** The mare cat can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.

## Mosey Munk

The large, red-and-black patterned Mosey Munk seems to be a species of bear, but it has a venomous gland so powerful that it even serves as a weapon, in addition to the beast's fearsome jaws.

**Tactics.** The creature runs straight into melee where it, with its awful stench and powerful bite, takes on the most threatening enemy.

### Mosey Munk

Huge beast

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 200 (16d12 + 96)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 24 (+7) | 13 (+1) | 23 (+6) | 7 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Saving Throws** Con +9, Wis +5

**Skills** Athletics +10, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** lumbering slowly in the woods

**Shadow** a bone-white crawling swarm, like a cluster of wriggling maggots (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** —

**Maul.** If the mosey munk has a creature grappled at the beginning of its turn, it can use its bonus action to do 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage.

**Stench.** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of the mosey munk must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the mosey munk's stench for 24 hours.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d8 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failure or half that amount on a success.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage and the creature is grappled (escape DC 20).

### REACTIONS

**Body Check.** When a creature comes within reach, the mosey munk can slam into the creature with its body. The creature must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw or become prone.

## Orahaug

There have been numerous attempts to catch one of these massive worms alive, in the hope of extracting the extremely corrosive secretion they use to dig through earth and stone. Perhaps the two ongoing attempts at breeding Orahaugs will turn out well, but there is of course a risk that the beasts will get loose, attacking innocent people and cattle...

**Tactics.** Attacks targets that touch the ground or rock walls. Tunnels and curls up to avoid being damaged.

### Orahaug

Huge beast

**Armor Class** 21 (natural armor, see below)

**Hit Points** 127 (15d12 + 30)

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 25 (+7) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 1 (-5) | 11 (+0) | 5 (-3) |

**Damage Immunities** acid, poison, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** tremorsense 90 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** blindly tunneling underground

**Shadow** sickly bubbling green (Corruption: 2/5)

**Equipment** —

**Acidic Blood.** A creature that attacks an orahaug with a melee weapon takes 5 (1d10) acid damage from its blood spattering onto their body.

**Armored Carapace.** Most of the orahaug's body is protected by a carapace made of minerals extracted from the rock. A creature can aim for a patch of exposed flesh by taking disadvantage on the attack roll – the creature's AC becomes 16 instead.

**Tunneler.** If the orahaug leaves a creature's reach by burrowing it does not provoke an opportunity attack.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d4 + 7) piercing damage and 22 (4d10) acid damage.

**Spit Acid (Recharge 4–6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d10) acid damage.

### REACTIONS

**Roll Over.** When a Medium or smaller creature comes within reach, the orahaug can rotate its body to crush the creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes 13 (1d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage.



## Stone Boar

*Large beast*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 75 (6d10 + 42)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 23 (+6) | 10 (+0) | 24 (+7) | 5 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) |

**Saving Throws** Con +10, Wis +5

**Damage Resistances** cold, psychic; bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** snorting and pawing

**Shadow** cracked grayish black, like its own skin in close-up (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Charge.** If the stone boar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a head butt attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

### ACTIONS

**Rampage.** The stone boar makes two hoof attacks and a head butt.

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

**Hoof.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

### Stone Boar

This huge, ravenous beast is called the stone boar even if it has no resemblance to other tame or wild boars. If it weren't for its sturdy, leathery hide (in high demand among Ambria's makers of fashionable leather armor), all would probably rather turn and run before risking a bloody confrontation. But as it is, any stone boars in either the Ravens or the Titans have to put up with being hunted by Ambrian monster hunters.

**Tactics.** With few exceptions, the Stone Boars live and hunt in pairs. They use their crushing Rampage as much as possible, and are not afraid to suffer opportunity attacks to break from a melee and make a new charge.

## Vearon

Vearons are cave-dwelling reptiles that can be encountered anywhere in the Underworld. They have no eyes, are covered in milky white scales that darken with age, and can grow up to fifteen feet long from snout to tail.

**Tactics.** Vearons sneak up on their prey, preferably in a group to be able to gain flanking advantage. If any opponent carries a light source which emits heat, they will be the reptile's primary target.

### Vearon

Large beast

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 218 (19d10 + 114)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 24 (+7) | 13 (+1) | 22 (+6) | 5 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 2 (-4) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** tongue tasting the air

**Shadow** bright-green, like a swaying tree crown during high summer (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Pack Tactics.** The vearon has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the vearon's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The vearon makes two claw attacks and one bite attack.

**Claws.** Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 23 (3d10 + 7) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Tail-attack.** When a creature comes within 10 feet of the vearon, it can swipe its tail at the creature. The creature must make a DC 19 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

*Uldarg's Vearon Kebrogs*  
 25g fermentation fungi  
 5 cups of water  
 2 pinches of salt  
 3 spoons of olive oil  
 7 cups of rye flour  
 7 cups of wheat flour

### Stuffing

Vearon meat to your liking  
 A pot of fresh rosemary  
 A handful of dried cranberries  
 Kebrog spice  
 7 large mushrooms  
 A cup of broth

### Preparation:

Shape the dough, let rise, then divide into fifteen pieces and roll out. Spread the filling between the parts, fold and pinch; then bake in the oven to the desired color. Finally, glaze with sun-yellow butter and enjoy!



Whenever a vearon is sighted above ground, the news spreads quickly among the local hunters – the amount of meat and skin is considerable relative to the risk and effort required!

# Spiders

IN THE TALES of the barbarians, the spider comes off as one of Davokar's most noble and powerful beings, at least from a historical perspective. The legend of the Spider King is well-known also among Ambrians – a ruthless warlord who ruled the woods some five centuries ago; member of a monstrous clan of spider-like humanoids and with a host comprised of spiders and various forms of amphibian creatures.

Most stories suggest that it was the threat of the Spider King that motivated the barbarian clans to unite under a High Chieftain, and that their combined forces managed to crush his empire. The legend also implies that the monstrous clan still lives on in the depth of Davokar, and that there still exist giant spiders and toad-monsters descended from the monarch's hordes. Connections have also been made to the skeletal statue in Thistle Hold and to the rumored Predator Clan, but according to Ordo Magica there are no reliable accounts to support such assumptions. Instead, most believe that if there is any truth to the legend, both the clan of the Spider King and all of the larger spider races were eliminated in the campaigns of the first High Chieftains. Certainly, spiders still thrive in Davokar and

they are indeed a serious threat, but they are not especially organized or intelligent.

## Etterherd Swarm

The fist-sized Etterherd hunts in packs, poisonous enough to kill a grown man and aggressive enough to actually try. When the pack has made a kill the spiders dig into the corpse to lay their eggs. The carcass is later devoured from the inside and finally erupts when a new generation of etterherds is ready to see the light of day.

The barbarians in the northern clans of Gaoia and Enoai have struggled with these packs for a long time, but the problem is spread throughout all of Davokar. In recent years, attacks on convoys traveling along the Doudram, Eanor and Malgomor rivers have become more and more frequent – the etterherds lay in wait in tree tops that lean out over the water and attack the warm bodies onboard boats passing underneath.

**Tactics.** The spider swarm gathers around its prey, biting and biting until it is dead. Then the swarm is off to the next target to repeat the procedure.

### Etterherd Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 3 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** waiting on silver strands of web

**Shadow** greenish-purple (Corruption: 1/2)

**Equipment** —

**Extraordinary Poison.** If a creature is already poisoned by the etterherd swarm and fails its saving throw it becomes paralyzed instead. A successful saving

throw at the end of the creature's turn removes the paralyzed condition and then the creature must make another successful saving throw to remove the poisoned condition.

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

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny spider. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the swarm knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The swarm ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature, it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned.



It is said that the spider beasts of Davokar  
are descendants of the Spider King's warriors.  
Indeed, they are often seen in the company  
of arachs, but they can also be encountered  
without such cultivated companions.

## Fray Spider

Brownish-gray and covered with thick, short hairs, these large spider monsters lack the ability to spin webs. Instead, they catch their prey like most four-legged predators: with speed, strength, and cunning.

**Tactics.** Against stronger prey well-suited for melee combat, the fray spider will begin with a quick poison attack and then keep its distance while the poison weakens the victim. Against weaker enemies, and those with ranged weapons, it relies on its powerful bite and thick shell.

## Fray Spider

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Perception +3, Stealth +5, Survival +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** laying in wait

**Shadow** dark brown with streaks of gray, like a speckled mountain wall (Corruption: 1/2)

**Equipment** —

**Fleet-footed.** The fray spider can use its bonus action to take the Dash action.

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

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fray spider makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned. A poisoned creature takes 3 (1d6) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

### REACTIONS

**Pounce.** When a creature comes within 15 feet of the fray spider, it can leap forward at that creature and make a single bite attack.

## Hunting Spider

Hunting spiders are roughly the size of a large dog, with glossy, black, hairless bodies and long, thin legs.

**Tactics.** The hunting spiders use their sticky web to entangle their prey. With that done, they proceed to flank and kill one victim at a time.

## Hunting Spider

Small beast

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 27 (6d6 + 6)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 5 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** carefully waiting

**Shadow** bluish-gray, like a tree's lichen (Corruption: 2/2)

**Equipment** —

**Fleet-footed.** The hunting spider can use its bonus action to take the Dash action.

**Pack Tactics.** The hunting spider has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the spider's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

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

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, the hunting spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The hunting spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hunting spider makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes 2 (1d4) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

**Web (Recharge 5–6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one Medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 11 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect also ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 10, 5 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.



## Spider Queen

The spider queen, mothers of Davokar's spider creatures, vary in appearance, but their bodies are often the size of an ogre, with long, jointed legs. Normally their multitude of eyes are about three feet from the ground, but the long legs enable them to rise up and look down on even the tallest of sturdy adventurers.

**Tactics.** The spider queen lets her children do the fighting, while supporting them with poisonous spits.

## Spider Queen

*Huge beast*

**Armor Class** 20 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 178 (17d12 + 68)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 24 (+7) | 18 (+4) | 13 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +12, Con +9, Wis +8

**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +12

**Damage Resistances** poison; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** Spider-tongue

**Challenge** 14 (11,500 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

**Manner** calling to her broods

**Shadow** sparkling white like sunlit snow  
(Corruption: 0/8)

**Equipment** —

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

**Summon Children (1/day).** The spider queen can summon its choice of three fray spiders, six etterherd swarms, six hunting spiders, or two tricklestings. The spiders arrive at the end of the queen's next turn.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, a spider queen knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The spider queen ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The spider queen makes two bite or two poison spit attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (2d8 + 7) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed for 1 minute. A paralyzed creature takes 4 (1d8) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

**Poison Spit.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d6 + 7) poison damage. A character hit by the poison must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

**Web (Recharge 5–6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, range 40/80 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 15 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect also ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 15, 20 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

## Tricklesting

The venomous Tricklestings build their colonies underground, often on the border between the barbarian hunting territories and the forest deep. Very little is known about these net-weaving hunters – they seem to be able to grow up to three feet in diameter, they are masters at moving silently, are skilled climbers and quicker than wolves over short distances. According to the witches they also possess some kind of primitive consciousness and can communicate with each other in a fully developed language based on whispers, hisses and clicking sounds.

Tricklestings often hunt in packs of three to five spiders, either by sneaking up on solitary wanderers or by first trapping them in their sturdy nets. The nets are sometimes woven vertically between trees, difficult to detect in the dusk of the forest. At other times the vertical nets are used to lure the wanderer on a detour mined with nets spun on the ground and camouflaged with leaves and twigs. It should also be mentioned that tricklestings are sometimes

### THUS SPOKE AROALETA

*“... and there, in the clattering, hissing enemy swarm, there fought Angathal’s spawn, erect and proud. With spear and axe, with dripping jaws, arak-an and arak-zanz attacked the stronghold of Serembar...”*

accompanied by etterherds who opportunistically attack prey rejected by the larger spiders.

**Tactics.** The tricklesting uses its nets to capture prey animals, then dances around the target to flank it and kill it with bites. It always uses its sidestep to make sure it is far away from any melee fighters. As the first opponent goes down, it continues to the next, and the next...

## Tricklesting

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 123 (19d8 + 38)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 23 (+6) | 14 (+2) | 9 (-1) | 17 (+3) | 8 (-1) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Con +5, Wis +6

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +9

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Spider-tongue

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** silently making cunning plans

**Shadow** greenish-gray, like the beard lichens of the forest (Corruption: 2/5)

**Equipment** none, but their nets may contain interesting objects from earlier victims (value: 1d6 thaler per tricklesting).

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

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, a tricklesting knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** The tricklesting ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The tricklesting makes two bite attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) piercing damage and the creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature takes 4 (1d8) poison damage at the start of its turn and can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effects on a success.

**Web (Recharge 5–6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 40/80 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* The creature is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained creature can make a DC 13 Strength check, escaping from the webbing on a success. The effect also ends if the webbing is destroyed. The webbing has AC 13, 10 hit points, vulnerability to fire damage, and immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage.

### REACTIONS

**Sidestep.** The tricklesting can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.



# Undead

AMBRIANS ARE NOT unaware of the fact that what has died is not necessarily gone – The Great War meant two decades of battles against the Dark Lords' undead and fettered spirits. But the region north of the Titans has proved to exceed their previous experiences, in terms of darkness and evil as well as when it comes to fertility and vitality.

The undead are not automatically hostile towards the living, though they tend to be irritable and prone to jealous rage. Some undead are even said to be able to communicate

with the living, and the Sun Church has openly accused Ordo Magica of having a heretical branch specialized in hunting down and conversing with the dead. The members of the Order deny it emphatically but Seldonio has also publicly and humorously thanked the First Father for the tip – if it was possible to communicate with lingering spirits of those who were alive during the days of Symbaroum it could very well lead to vital insights and the revival of old truths regarding the true nature of magic.

## Crypt Lord

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 17 (ancient armor)

**Hit Points** 133 (14d8 + 70)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 24 (+7) | 19 (+4) | 20 (+5) | 24 (+7) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Con +9, Wis +7

**Skills** Arcana +11, History +15, Nature +11, Religion +15, Perception +7

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

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 12 (8,400, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** domineering and ambitious

**Shadow** Flaking black, like layer upon layer of burnt paper (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** rusted crown, black longsword

**Gravely Cold.** The crypt lord can activate this feature with a bonus action. For 1 minute, each creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of the crypt lord must pass a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 8 (1d6 + 5) cold damage and lose 10 feet of its movement speed until the end of its turn.

**Magic Resistance.** The crypt lord has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The crypt lord's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (+11 to hit, spell save DC 19).

It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *accurate strike, chill touch, dancing lights, ray of frost*

5/day each: *black bolt, expeditious retreat, sleep*

3/day each: *darkness, misty step, web*

1/day each: *counterspell, larvae boil, lightning bolt*

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The crypt lord makes either two attacks with its Dreadful Glare or one with its Black Blade and one with its Soul Touch.

**Black Blade.** **Melee Weapon Attack:** +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 11 (1d8 + 7) slashing damage or 12 (1d10 + 7) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

**Soul Touch.** **Melee Weapon Attack:** +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption and 17 (3d6 + 7) necrotic damage and the crypt lord regains hit points equal to half of the necrotic damage (rounded down).

**Dreadful Glare.** The crypt lord stares at a single creature within 60 ft., which must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails, it is frightened of the crypt lord and takes 13 (2d12) psychic damage. If it fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also paralyzed. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn to end the effect. If it fails, it takes 3 (1d6) psychic damage. A creature that succeeds or ends the effect on itself is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

### REACTIONS

**Sudden Touch.** If a creature moves within reach, the crypt lord makes a Soul Touch attack.

## Crypt Lord

They are called Crypt Lords, the mummified creatures that Ambrian explorers sometimes come across on their expeditions. Survivors from such encounters describe them as dehydrated, embalmed corpses dressed in rags or armor whose dilapidated splendor suggests that the owner once was very wealthy.

**Tactics.** Starts by trying to dominate/subjugate the most dangerous looking enemy that has not been affected by its Gravely Cold trait. Then it attacks its enemies in the order of descending size.

## The Realm of the Crypt Lord

The crypt lords who are awakened by careless treasure hunters or taboo-breaking barbarians are seldom satisfied spending their (un)life alone. Instead, they often try to rebuild their realm, but this time inhabited by dragouls and other obedient slaves, such as animated skeletons and zombies. (See the core rules for statistics on these simple undead.)

## Cryptwalker

The ruins of Symbaroum are spread far and wide and burial grounds, tombs and mausoleums can be found everywhere in Davokar. What many treasure-hunters realize all too late is that the graves are often haunted by Cryptwalkers – shades that linger in their rotting or embalmed bodies and who react with wrath to every desecrating intrusion.

There are also examples of cryptwalkers that have left their tombs and wandered straight into populated areas, either because they have gone astray or in the hunt for some treasure-hunter who has plundered their resting place. In Year 15 such a tragedy took place in Kastor – more than a hundred people died when something described as a “King Wraith” caught up to a grave robber in the marketplace, at the time of the harvest feast.

**Tactics.** The cryptwalker assumes that the enemy will have a hard time damaging it, until proven otherwise. Either way it uses its gravely cold power to slow down enemies, then finishes them off with the swords.



## Cryptwalker

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 15 (ancient armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 20 (+5) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Con +6, Wis +6

**Skills** Arcana +8, History +8, Perception +6

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

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 7 (2,900, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** waiting darkness, weaving its blades in slow circles

**Shadow** Like a clear night sky, with faint light that does nothing but make the dark seem blacker. (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** two ancient swords

**Gravely Cold.** The cryptwalker can activate this feature with a bonus action. For 1 minute, each creature that starts its turn within 60 feet of the cryptwalker must pass a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 6 (1d6 + 3) cold damage and lose 10 feet of its movement speed.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The cryptwalker's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (+8 to hit, spell save DC 16). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *chill touch, minor illusion, ray of frost*

3/day each: *black bolt, shield*

1/day each: *hold person, suggestion*

**Regeneration.** If the cryptwalker has not taken radiant damage since its last turn it regains 6 hit points at the start of its turn.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The cryptwalker makes three attacks with its Bright Swords.

**Bright Swords.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The cryptwalker can add +3 to its armor class against one attack.

## Dragoul

That the dead can be resurrected is nothing new to the Ambrians, who met such creatures by the thousands in the Great War. With dark mystical powers the Dark Lords awakened fallen warriors to life and forced them to battle their former allies.

The Ambrians still use the Dark Lords' name for these walking dead, Dragouls, despite the fact that the dead-walkers of the Promised Land differ from the former horror. During The Great War, Pansars and theurgs met the undead on the battlefield, always awakened by some malicious wielder of mystical powers. But nowadays it seems as if they can appear just about anywhere, as soon as someone has died - a sick nobleman in his bed, a victim of armed robbery in some city ally or a group of newly fallen clan warriors under the tree tops of Davokar.

Thankfully, these horrible occurrences are so far rare, but the fact that they exist at all has made some theurgs loudly herald that the end of the world is near. For the barbarians, the dragouls are a new kind of horror, and therefore in some ways more terrifying than the abominations they know and have learned to combat. And since the dragouls appeared shortly after the first Ambrian intrusions into Davokar, the southerners have been given the blame for this unwelcome challenge in an already dangerous life in the woods.

**Tactics.** The undead ventures forth according to the will of its creator or on its own, always hunting for warm flesh and fresh blood.

## Dragoul

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 15 (shield)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** shuffling forward inexorably

**Shadow** yellowish-gray like dead skin, with dark spots that grow as the undead body slowly rots (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** 1d10 ortegs

**Corruption Sense.** If a creature has one or more points of permanent Corruption, the dragoul has advantage on Perception checks to find or notice it.

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature then it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure it becomes infected, gaining the poisoned condition and losing 1 hit point at the start of its turn. At the end of its turn it can repeat the saving throw, ending both effects on a success. If the creature dies as a result of this effect, it awakens as a dragoul in 24 hours.

**Rusty Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Sudden Lunge (Recharge 5–6).** If a dragoul misses with its sword attack it can lean into the target and make a bite attack.

## Frostlight

As night falls over Davokar's border regions the frostlights come floating through the air: small shapeless fields of flickering, pale blue light hunting for the warmth of the living. At times they come drifting in great crowds that travel unhindered by walls and stockades.

The barbarians claim that the frostlights are the souls of stillborn children desperately searching for closeness, and that they do not realize that their touch is harmful. An event which supports that belief occurred in Yndaros the other year, as the previously rare frostlight victims multiplied after an outbreak of the Pale Sickness which meant that many pregnancies were terminated prematurely.

**Tactics.** The frostlights are drawn to heat and suck the strength out of anyone they touch. They do not make any tactical considerations in their hunt for bodily warmth and comfort.

### Frostlight

Tiny undead

**Armor Class** 20 (nimble)

**Hit Points** 45 (10d4 + 20)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Wis +4

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** lonely and flickering with the wind

**Shadow** ashen gray with black flakes (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Drain.** As a bonus action the frostlight can drain the life from a creature it shares a space with. The creature takes 5 (1d10) necrotic damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

**Insubstantial.** The frostlight can pass through objects and creatures without issue. It cannot wear or carry anything.

**Nimble.** The frostlight's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

### ACTIONS

**Shock.** Ranged Spell Attack: +7 to hit, range 25 ft./100 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (4d6) lightning damage.

## Lostling

It is said that these lonesome spirit creatures have drifted through the Davokar region since long before the fall of Symbaroum, like tiny wisps of mist, constantly seeking new hosts through which they can relive the warmth and intimacy they so desperately desire.

**Tactics.** Makes sweeping attacks as it passes through the target. It always chooses the biggest, strongest victim and tries to possess it as soon as an attack deals damage.

### Lostling

Small undead

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d6 + 12)

**Speed** 25 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Con +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cackling and crazed

**Shadow** liquid red with black dots, like a crushed jealous heart (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Haunting.** A lostling that is inside a creature can attempt to take control of the creature. The creature must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become possessed by the creature. At the end of its turn it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the haunting feature for 24 hours.

**Insubstantial.** The lostling can pass through objects and creatures without issue.

**Pack Tactics.** The lostling has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the lostling's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Vitality Drain.** Melee Spell Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

## Necromage

A Necromage is born when a sorcerer is killed and not buried in the proper manner, at least if you are to judge by the myths of old Symbaroum. However they arise, many a barbarian and Ambrian explorer can testify to the existence of this spectral being, often in a voice trembling with fear.

The ethereal, half transparent and shapeshifting necromages seem to have a fondness for transforming into a colorless mirror-image of the one they meet. It is said that they primarily are hunting for company; that they try to lure travelers into their lairs hoping for a brief time of companionship, until it grows tired and consumes the soul of the guest. There are other tales describing what happens when the enticement fails, that the necromage attacks, driving

the victim insane with death cries before slicing flesh and spirit alike to shreds with its claws.

**Tactics.** The necromage calls on its victims by bending their will, follows up by making them terrified and finishes them off with its claws when they are helpless.

## Snow Wraith

No one knows how many caravans lie buried beneath the snow of the Titans, swallowed by avalanches and landslides. What is known, however, is that the travelers rarely remain where they fell – a fact that often provides later caravans with unpleasant surprises.

**Tactics.** Snow wraiths attack in packs and let their icy breath sweep over their frozen victims.

### Necromage

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 144 (17d8 + 68)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) |

**Saving Throws** Con +9, Wis +6

**Skills** Arcana +12, Deception +10, History +12, Perception +6

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** those it knew in life

**Challenge** 13 (10,000 XP, proficiency bonus +5)

**Manner** lonely and reaching

**Shadow** dark gray, like thunderclouds in a cold night sky (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** rusted crown, black longsword

**Expertise.** The necromage has expertise in Arcana and History.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The necromage's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (+10 to hit, spell save DC 18). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *accurate strike, chill touch, dancing lights, ray of frost*

5/day each: *black bolt, comprehend languages, false life, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

3/day each: *hold person, invisibility, suggestion*  
2/day each: *counterspell, larvae boil, lightning bolt*  
1/day each: *black tentacles, dimension door, polymorph*

**Magic Resistance.** The necromage has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Terrifying.** Each creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of the necromage must pass a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or become frightened of it. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success. Creatures that succeed are immune to this effect for 24 hours.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The necromage makes two attacks; one with its Wraith Claws, one with its Soul Touch.

**Wraith Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn.

**Soul Touch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 temporary Corruption and 14 (3d6 + 4) necrotic damage and the necromage regains hit points equal to half of the necrotic damage (rounded down).

### REACTIONS

**Death Cry (Recharge 5–6).** The necromage wails a keening cry that transcends the borders between life and death. Each creature that hears it must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking necrotic damage equal to their current Corruption total on a failure.

**Sudden Touch.** If a creature moves within reach, the necromage makes either a Wraith Claws or Soul Touch attack.

## Snow Wraith

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 84 (13d8 + 26)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

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

**Damage Immunities** cold, fire, necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** creeping through the snow

**Shadow** Glossy black, like oil (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Arctic Camouflage.** The snow wraith has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in snowy terrain.

**Blood Frenzy.** The snow wraith has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

### ACTIONS

**Ice Breath (Recharge 5–6).** Each creature in a 15-foot cone must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (4d10 + 5) cold damage on a failure or half that on a success. Creatures that fail the saving throw have their speed reduced by 10 feet until the start of the snow wraith's next turn.

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 23 (4d8 + 5) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes an extended rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A slain creature rises as a new wraith within 24 hours.

### REACTIONS

**Swipe.** The snow wraith can strike out with its limbs when a creature comes within reach. The creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage.

## Wraith

Medium undead

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 71 (11d8 + 22)

**Speed** 0 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

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

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** the languages it knew in life

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** hovering just over the ground

**Shadow** Glossy black, like oil (thoroughly corrupt)

**Equipment** —

**Incorporeal Movement.** The wraith 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. If the object is a creature, that creature takes 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.

**Retreating.** If the wraith starts its turn with 35 or fewer hit points, it must make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or spend its turn retreating from the combat.

### ACTIONS

**Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes an extended rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A slain creature rises as a new wraith within 24 hours.

### REACTIONS

**Sidestep.** The wraith can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.

## Wraith

Black, shadow-like figures drifting around alone or in groups. They are drawn to living creatures like flies to rotting meat. They seek affection, sympathy, help, or just someone willing to listen, without realizing that their desperate touch is lethal for the living.

**Tactics.** The wraiths attack people at random. Individual wraiths may flee when they sustain too much damage.

# Winged Creatures

**THE SOUND OF flapping wings** means very different things depending on where in Davokar you are. In the outskirts the tree tops are full of beautiful and colorful songbirds, also appreciated for their eggs and tender meat. Further in you have to be very careful not to end up as a pre-chewed piece of meat in the mouth of some tiny monster hatched from the aforementioned egg.

And it is not only various monstrous bird beasts that you have to watch out for. Just as there are a number of oversized amphibians and spiders in Davokar, the forest also contains a variety of winged insects large enough to bite the head off both humans and ogres. According to some legends, nuisances like the Dragon Fly and the butterfly-like Swarmer were actually created by the magicians of Symbaroum. But the official position of both Ordo Magica and the Sun Church is instead that such creatures have developed

from ordinary insects because of long-term exposure to the corrupt nature of Davokar. Regardless of which theory is correct, there are good reasons for travelers with experience from journeys in Davokar to feel sick when hearing fluttering wings, even long after they have returned from their forest expeditions.

## Blaze Bug

The swarming, flesh-eating insects known as Blaze Bugs or Blaze Beetles can seemingly be found anywhere in Davokar, including its brighter parts. Each bug is barely the size of a human palm, with a gleaming black shell patterned in gold that matches its shimmering wings.

**Tactics.** Blaze bugs rarely attack if their enemies number more than two, but they will defend their turf against larger groups – always blazing with wrath.

### Blaze Bug Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 15 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 3 (-4) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** brightly shimmering mass

**Shadow** grainy gray-brown, like dried clay  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Blood Frenzy.** The blaze bug swarm has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

**Deadly Breath (Recharge 5–6).** The blaze bug swarm can release a lightning attack 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in the area of effect must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) lightning damage on a failure and half that on a success.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

## ACTIONS

**Bites.** **Melee Weapon Attack:** +4 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. **Hit:** 7 (2d6) slashing damage or 3 (1d6) slashing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## Crystal Fly

These silver white insects form colonies that look like masses of snow, attacking passing creatures in order to lay eggs in their warm bodies.

**Tactics.** Focuses on the closest warm-blooded creature and tries to force its way down its throat, nose and ears.

### Crystal Fly Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 27 (6d8)

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1 (-5) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** great buzzing mass

**Shadow** whirling-white, like a biting snowstorm  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Blinding.** The crystal flies reflect light from their silver-white carapaces and purposefully swarm over a creature's head, trying to enter various orifices. A creature sharing a space with the swarm is blinded.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

#### ACTIONS

**Bites.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) piercing damage or 2 (1d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

#### REACTIONS

**Shift.** If a creature comes within 5 feet of the swarm, they can abandon a current target and swarm that creature instead.

## Dragon Fly

The treacherously beautiful dragon fly is probably the most devious slayer of the woods. Fully grown it is large as a well-built human and its jaws, full of needle-sharp teeth, can be opened wide enough to devour a goblin whole. Its two wing pairs emit a soft humming sound which most often is concealed by the rustling of leaves, so the inattentive may happen to come very close to the hovering hunter before discovering it. By then it is often too late, since the lightning-fast attacks and retreats of the dragon fly can exhaust even the sturdiest of warriors.

The person who is about to venture into Davokar for the first time and who is wise enough to ask for advice always gets the same warning: what seems to be a cry for help can in fact be the alluring call of a hunter. There are numerous creatures in Davokar that make use of this technique, one of those being the dragon fly – they can alter their voice to impersonate a human child, crying and begging for help. However, they have not mastered the ability to pronounce human words, so in their case you only have to be careful of wordless moans.

**Tactics.** The dragon fly makes use of its excellent flying ability, sweeping past the target, biting it, then continuing to fly out of range of any counter-attacks. It is not very smart, but shrewd enough to attack persons with ranged weapons first.

### Dragon Fly

Large beast

**Armor Class** 18 (nimble)

**Hit Points** 82 (11d10 + 22)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (hover)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) |

**Skills** Deception +4, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** flitting back and forth

**Shadow** shimmering green (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** —

**Flyby.** The dragon fly doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Mimicry.** The dragon fly can use its bonus action to imitate the sound of a trapped animal or hurt child by making a Charisma (Deception) check.

**Nimble.** The dragon fly's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dragon fly makes two attacks with its fangs.

**Fangs.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

## Hornet Swarm

*Small swarm of Tiny beasts*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 38 (11d6)

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 50 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 1 (-5) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** fierce defenders

**Shadow** orange like the afternoon sun

(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Swarm Growth.** If the hornet swarm is within 5 feet of another hornet swarm, the two can combine together, adding their current hit points together. If the two swarms had different initiative counts, the combined swarm gains the lower initiative count.

### ACTIONS

**Stings.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage or 1 piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer. If the target is a creature it must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become stunned until the end of its next turn.

### REACTIONS

**Divide.** If the hornet swarm takes damage it can divide itself into two swarms, each with half of the original swarm's current hit points (negating the damage). These smaller swarms do 1 point of piercing damage (along with the saving throw against their stunning poison) and cannot divide.

## Hornet

No one knows how many fortune hunters have fallen victim to the hornets of Davokar, but according to tales told in the taverns of Thistle Hold, these tenacious stingers are some of the forest's most effective killers. They are found everywhere, but seem to be particularly fond of the magnificent ruins of Symbaroum.

**Tactics.** A swarm of hornets will instinctively defend their queen and nest; they have no survival instinct whatsoever and will keep attacking until their enemies run away or the swarm is destroyed.

## Raskaal

Reports from the larger cave complexes of the Underworld state that these are often inhabited by pale bats that can grow very large and are known to Odavs and Karits as Raskaals. These flying creatures are big enough to grab and carry off both ogres and trolls.

**Tactics.** Picks off one target at a time, and flies them to a secluded area to drain them of blood.

## Raskaal

*Huge beast*

**Armor Class** 22 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 133 (14d12 + 42)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 22 (+6) | 19 (+4) | 17 (+3) | 4 (-3) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +10, Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +6

**Senses** blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** silent on leathery wings

**Shadow** pale yellow, like an aged burial shroud (Corruption: 3/8)

**Equipment** —

**Blood-drain.** If the raskaal is successful with its bite attack, it can use its bonus action to do 14 (4d6) necrotic damage to the creature. It regains hit points equal to half this damage.

**Blood Frenzy.** The raskaal has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

**Echolocation.** The raskaal cannot use its blindsight while deafened.

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

**Keen Hearing.** The raskaal has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The raskaal makes two attacks with its grappling claws.

**Grappling Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it becomes grappled (escape DC 20).

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) piercing damage. The creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

### REACTIONS

**Uncanny Dodge.** When a creature that the raskaal can see hits it with an attack, the raskaal can reduce the damage by half.

## Violing

Huge flocks of the large crow-like bird known as the Violing or the Smirch roam Davokar, and can also be seen across the lowlands and the mountains. Such a flock can often be heard from a distance, where they sit in the tree-tops screeching to each other. Many fortune-hunters have testified about attacks from rage trolls preceded by shrieking violings; that the bellowing of the trolls followed as the birds went silent. It is also said that the witches can foretell where a battle or feud will take place by reading the cawing of the flocks, as if the birds had the ability to predict upcoming outbreaks of violence. Maybe it is as some have claimed: that a violing is born when a normal crow has been ignorant enough to hack meat from a corrupt abomination...

And it is not only the screeching of the flocks which should be read as a bad omen; the same goes for their silence. Sometimes the violings decide to hunt for living prey and when that happens the wanderer gets no warning except for the grave-like silence which occurs when the tree tops are filled with motionless, dark shapes that watch the victims approach with blood red eyes. Other tales tell of instances where a number of flocks have joined together and attacked larger settlements on the lowlands. Blackmoor was only a couple of years ago victimized by such an attack. Eyewitnesses maintain that the whole sky over Thistle Hold grew black with thousands of violings who for a few heartbeats danced in the air before moving to strike.

**Tactics.** The violings swarm around their target, hacking at it with their beaks until it falls or retreating if the swarm thins out. When multiple swarms gather, they usually team up to attack the same victim.

## Violing Swarm

*Huge swarm of Small beasts*

**Armor Class** 20 (nimble)

**Hit Points** 105 (14d12 + 14)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 20 (+5) | 13 (+1) | 5 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** squawking loudly

**Shadow** blackish-green, like tar bobbing on the surface of a pond (Corruption: 6/6)

**Equipment** —

**Nimble.** The violing swarm's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice their Dexterity modifier.

**Pack Tactics.** The violing swarm has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the violing swarm's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Small bird. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The violing swarm makes two attacks with their beaks.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d12) slashing damage or 6 (1d12) slashing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

## REACTIONS

**Cries of Doom.** When the swarm does damage to a creature the other members of the swarm let out a blood-curdling shriek. The injured creature must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the violing swarm.



They may be small and harmless one by one,  
but to survive an encounter with  
a swarm of violings is not easily done.

## Wraith Owl

*Medium beast*

**Armor Class** 20 (nimble)

**Hit Points** 82 (15d8 + 15)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +8, Survival +6

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 19

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** silent and watchful

**Shadow** as bright white as its plumage

(Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** —

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the wraith owl can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Ambusher.** The wraith owl has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

**Expertise.** The wraith owl has expertise in Perception.

**Flyby.** The wraith owl doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Nimble.** The wraith owl's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The wraith owl makes two attacks with its talons.

**Talons.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

## Wraith Owl

The wraith owl was named for its plumage, which remains bright white throughout the year, except for the brown or black circles around its eyes and the similarly colored tips of its feathers. They usually make their nests in the Ravens, but some have also settled in the ruins of Davokar, high up in broken towers or other places where they have a clear view of creatures moving around below.

**Tactics.** The wraith owl watches its surroundings from elevated positions. Having spotted its prey, it relies on its exceptional flying skills to launch sweeping attacks without putting itself at risk. If there is a danger of being caught in melee combat, the owl will choose another target or simply not attack until the situation has improved.

## The Wraith Owl's Treasures

Despite it being a tough opponent, there are several companies of treasure hunters who willingly seek out wraith owls and specialize in fighting them with ranged weapons and reactive counter-attacks. The reason for this is that the owls always bring their prey back to the nest, meaning that lots of precious objects from previous victims can be found both inside and on the ground below – coins, equipment and items plundered from the forest ruins.





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## SECTION 3

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# Adversaries

*Where man excels in the capacity to develop intellect, reason, and strategic thinking, the hordes of the Eternal Night are vastly inferior. Indeed, such dark beings are born utterly incapable of ever acquiring the qualities which characterize the cultivated human, bestowed upon the members of our noble breed by Prios, the One.*

*Instead, the beasts of darkness are filled with hunger, fire and an urge to do evil. They care neither about their own predicament, nor that of their surroundings; their only aim and purpose is to satiate lusts and satisfy desires. This is true regardless of size, shape or posture – three properties which may vary between creatures of an otherwise similar nature.*

*Indeed, chastisement combined with measured rewards may by the grace of Prios compel the jakaar, the goblin, and the bestiaal to temporarily resist the tyranny of their desires. But this must never be seen as anything but a passing victory over the night, just as the dangers of misinterpretation must never be underestimated. A single mistake may well cause the credulous to be devoured, crushed, corrupted, ensnared, bewitched, or burned into smoldering ashes.*

Excerpt from *Hordes of the Eternal Night*, Father Almagast

# Champions of Prios

**THE CHURCH OF PRIOS**, based on the revelations of Father Abramar as explained in the book *The Lightbringer*, was born during The Great War. Baptized in blood and matured in the midst of combat, it is no wonder that the holy institution has developed a strong capacity for violence – to be used in defense of those loyal to the Lawgiver, of course. No matter if the Sun God's champions of today are true to the Giver of Laws or are curious about the heretical teachings of the likes of Father Sarvola and Deseba the Old, they are all capable of both protecting their own and smiting the creatures of The Eternal Night.

## Black Cloak

*“Die, heretic!”*

The Black Cloaks are the Sun Church's foremost intelligence agents and witch hunters, utterly convinced of the importance of upholding Prios' laws. Each sin is a threat to the world, as well as to the soul of the individual offender.

**Tactics.** Starts by aiming a crossbow bolt at the toughest enemy, and then attacks with its sword, seeking an opening in the enemy's armor.

## Black Cloak, Experienced

*“Expect no mercy, heretic!”*

Experienced Black Cloaks have earned the trust of the Church; they have been granted heavier armor and are expected to face down stronger abominations. While they will still use their crossbows at a distance, these servants of the Sun Church soon close in and prefer to fight their enemies face to face.

## Flagellant

*“This is only what all of us deserve.”*

Some Black Cloaks are particularly affected by the suffering inflicted upon the world and the Lawgiver. These often resort to the whip in an attempt to give their spiritual agony a physical equivalent, but may of course turn the same whip and holy wrath against the enemies of Prios.

**Tactics.** The flagellant is often included when a group of Black Cloaks gets ready to attack some cult or nest of abominations. Once there, they have no other strategy than to punish the enemies of Prios.

## Black Cloak

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (blessed robes)

**Hit Points** 22 (3d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

**Skills** History +2, Deception +4, Insight +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** judgmental gaze

**Shadow** matte silver with black notches  
(Corruption: 3/6)

**Equipment** 1d10 thaler, incense, prayer book, sun symbol on a necklace, torture tools

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the Black Cloak can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Ritualist.** The Black Cloak can cast *holy smoke* and *locate object* as rituals (it gains no temporary Corruption for casting).

## ACTIONS

**Heavy Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

**Estoc.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. Deep impact: on a critical hit, this weapon does a total of 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

## REACTIONS

**Parry.** The Black Cloak adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Black Cloak must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Divisions within the Sun Church

Where the internal conflicts of Ordo Magica can be described as the struggle of all against all, the divisions inside the Sun Church have two clear factions: those loyal to the Curia who worship Prios as the Lawgiver, and the Reformists who in accordance with older interpretations of Prios' commands pray to the Lifegiver. Read more about this in upcoming episodes of the *Chronicle of the Throne of Thorns*.

## Black Cloak, Experienced

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 19 (scale mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR    | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 9 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

**Skills** History +2, Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** condemning stare

**Shadow** tarnished silver with black streaks  
(Corruption: 4/7)

**Equipment** 2d10 thaler, 1d4 herbal cures (heals 1d4 hit points, action to apply), holy symbol

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the Black Cloak can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

**Ritualist.** The Black Cloak can cast *anathema*, *holy smoke*, and *silence* as rituals (it gains no temporary Corruption for casting).

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Black Cloak makes two attacks with its estoc.

**Estoc.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. Deep impact: on a critical hit, this weapon does a total of 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage.

**Heavy Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The Black Cloak adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Black Cloak must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Flagellant

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 15 (chain shirt)

**Hit Points** 82 (11d8 + 33)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** squinting calmly or hatefully aggressive

**Shadow** dark gold with red, winding furrows

(Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** none

**Brutal Critical.** When the flagellant is raging, it rolls 3d4 + 7 for a critical hit with its whip or 3d8 + 7 for a critical hit with its longsword.

**Rage (3/day).** As a bonus action, the flagellant can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the flagellant has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds 3 bonus damage. The flagellant has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the flagellant ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Whip Fighter.** If the flagellant successfully strikes with its whip, it can use its bonus action to make an attack with its longsword if the target is in reach.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The flagellant makes three attacks with its whip.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage when wielded with two hands.

**Whip.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Stretching Whip.** If a creature enters the flagellant's reach with its whip, it can make a single attack with the whip.

## Liturg

*"Prios be with you."*

The Sun Church consists of numerous brotherhoods and orders, all with their own way of serving Prios. The brothers and sisters who are trusted to perform the rites and ceremonies of the Church but who are not blessed with mystical powers are called Liturgs.

**Tactics.** Avoids danger, but if the fight is inevitable the liturg will inspire its allies.

## Liturg

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 12 (blessed robes)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+2) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** History +5, Investigation +5, Medicine +4, Perception +4, Religion +5

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** calm and composed

**Shadow** golden yellow, like a blessed dawn  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** holy symbol, book of the Lightbringer

**Archivist.** The liturg has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks while researching in archives and libraries.

**Medicus (2/day).** If the liturg binds a creature's wounds, that creature regains one Hit Die (if possible).

### ACTIONS

**Inspire.** The liturg chooses one allied creature that shares a language with it and can hear the liturg. The liturg speaks encouraging words to it, giving it advantage on ability checks and attack rolls until the beginning of the liturg's next turn.

## Templar

*"Heretic, accept your punishment!"*

With few exceptions, all the Sun Church's Templars come from lowborn families. They know how to conduct themselves, but care little for manners or etiquette when facing the apostles of darkness.

**Tactics.** The Templars fight in a controlled rage and move together to avoid being flanked. Only if the battle is tough do they separate and go on full attack.

## Templar

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 18 (full plate, shield)

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Strength +6, Constitution +4

**Skills** Athletics +6, Insight +5, Perception +5, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** barely restrained fanaticism

**Shadow** bold-yellow with deep red stripes and roses (Corruption: 1/7)

**Equipment** component pouch, 1d10 thaler, book of the Lightbringer, sun symbol

**Action Surge (1/day).** The Templar can take an extra action.

**Holy Aura.** The Templar can choose to gain either 1, 1d4 + 1, or 1d4 + 2 temporary Corruption when it makes a successful attack roll. It can then add 3 times the Corruption gained as radiant damage to the attack.

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the Templar has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Spellcasting.** The Templar's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell attack +5, save DC 13) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: accurate strike (1), firebolt (1), sacred flame (1), spare the dying (1)

1st-level spells: bless (1d4 + 1), healing word (1d4 + 1), inflict wounds (1d4 + 1), protection from evil and good (1d4 + 1)

2nd-level spells: spiritual weapon (1d4 + 2)

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The Templar makes two attacks with its longsword.

**Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack:** +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

## Whip of Prios

Medium human (Ambrarian)

**Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 37 (5d8 + 15)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Athletics +7, Insight +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +1

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrarian, Barbarian

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** contemptuous, self-righteous

**Shadow** Glaring white like annealed steel  
(Corruption: 3/4)

**Equipment** sun symbol, copy of the Lightbringer, interrogation tools (advantage on Persuasion during interrogations), pipe and tobacco, (1d4 + 8) thaler and (2d4 + 2) shillings.

**Corruption Sense.** If a creature has one or more points of permanent Corruption, the whip of Prios has advantage on Perception checks to find or notice it.

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).**

If the whip of Prios takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

**Ritualist.** The whip of Prios can cast *holy smoke* and *judging bonds* as rituals (it gains no temporary Corruption for casting).

**Whip Fighter.** If the whip of Prios successfully strikes with its whip, it can use its bonus action to make an attack with its flail if the target is in reach.

### ACTIONS

**Flail.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. On a critical hit if the target is a creature it is knocked prone in addition to taking damage.

**Whip.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Subdue.** If the whip of Prios successfully hits a Medium or smaller creature with its flail, it can cause that creature to become prone.

## Theurg

Medium human (Ambrarian)

**Armor Class** 11 (robes)

**Hit Points** 39 (6d8 + 12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 18 (+4) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Intelligence +3, Wisdom +6

**Skills** Arcana +3, Insight +6, Perception +6, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Ambrarian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** confident and superior

**Shadow** orange as sun-touched gold  
(Corruption: 3/12)

**Equipment** component pouch, flask with 1d4 drops  
Water of the Dusk, sun symbol, the book of the Lightbringer

**Spellcasting.** The theurg's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell attack +6, save DC 14) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *firebolt* (0), *guidance* (0), *ray of frost* (0), *sacred flame* (0), *spare the dying* (0), *thaumaturgy* (0)

1st-level spells: *bless* (1d4 + 1), *command* (1), *healing word* (1d4 + 1), *inflict wounds* (1d4 + 1)

2nd-level spells: *hold person* (1d4 + 2), *spiritual weapon* (2)

3rd-level spells: *dispel magic* (1d4 + 3), *revivify* (1d4 + 3)

Rituals: *holy smoke*, *purgung fire*

### ACTIONS

**Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage

## Theurg

"Night falls, and you with it."

Theurgs can be fanatical or reflective, hateful or affectionate, evangelical or oblivious to the world. The only things they all have in common are their deep love for Prios and the will to cultivate His gifts in a way that pleases the One.

**Tactics.** When given the opportunity, the theurg never hesitates to battle the hordes of the night. The priest mage attacks the enemy with holy spells.

## Whip of Prios

"The dictate of Prios is my law; you are tried, exposed, and condemned."

The Black Cloaks who are trained to join the elite witch hunters of the Whip of Prios put a greater emphasis on combat, but must of course also master abilities that allow them to unmask the beasts of the Eternal Night. Also, note that they are often supported by templars and theurgs.

**Tactics.** Fights with a whip in one hand and a flail in the other, and will only use the subduing ability in situations where they are outnumbered.



# Elves

ACCORDING TO BARBARIAN myths the elves arrived in the region north of the Titans as late as at the time of Symbaroum's downfall; some even say that it was the elf prince Eneáno who planted the forest of Davokar, hoping to bury the blight-stricken land of the fallen empire. Whatever the truth may be,

the elves currently living in Davokar regard themselves as the guardians of the woods. And with reference to ancient treaties they demand that both barbarians and Ambrians must stay clear of Davokar's depths and all of Symbaroum's ruins. Every violation of these treaties is regarded as an act of war.

When the Ambrians first arrived in the region they had little knowledge about elves, and the common man still believes that elves in diverse life stages are widely different kinds of creatures. However, conversations with witches and the few elven emissaries that have arrived in Yndaros suggest that the elves live their life in a number of phases, separated by periods of dormancy during which the elf undergoes both physical and mental changes. It is also indicated that only some survive the dormancy, while the majority wither away and die before waking up to the next phase. In other words: even if there are a number of now living elves who were around at the time of Symbaroum's fall, they are for the aforementioned reasons few and almost impossible to communicate with.

This section introduces the first three life phases of the forest people. There also exist older elves, but they are largely unknown to the Ambrians and, additionally, highly disputed. Most authorities agree that the life span of the elves includes at least four, possibly five phases. If so, the fourth phase would consist of the allegedly reclusive Winter Elves; the fifth of a very small number who survive their fourth dormancy and awaken as extremely powerful beings, for instance the daunting Aloéna on Karvosti. But this theory is far from being regarded as fact. Instead there are those who argue that Aloéna and others like her have no relation to the elves; that they are a separate race of ancient individuals, that they are earth-bound demigods or that they are embodied forces of nature.

## Elf, Spring

During the first phase of its life the elf is characterized by a playful curiosity and a cautiousness which has made the elf experts at Ordo Magica compare them to kittens. The phase is assumed to last for about fifty years, during which the fairy grows about four feet tall. It should also be noted that, to the extent that the elf experts' metaphor is correct, it must refer to the offspring of a dreadfully cruel predatory cat - the spring elves love to subject both their elder siblings and unsuspecting humans to mean pranks; pranks which seem to cause more giggles and merriment the nastier they are.

The spring elves are called "fairies" by most humans, and they almost never leave the safety of the forest. On some singular occasions there have been reports describing encounters with elven patrols including one or two fairy scouts, but mostly they gather in large packs and avoid contact with their elders. However, one might wonder if the situation is about to change. Some malicious treasure hunters have trained to become fairy-hunters instead, seeking to collect the allegedly miraculous hair, ears and nails of the spring elves. It is difficult and dangerous work, since the fairies leave few traces of their whereabouts and often are cunning enough to transform the hunter into their prey. On the other hand, anyone who manages to capture a group of spring elves can expect to earn a small fortune when selling the harvest to alchemists in Thistle Hold.

**Tactics.** The spring elves keep their distance and attack the enemy with their bows, or else try to lure victims into varying kinds of traps or ambushes.

## Elf of Spring

Small humanoid (Elf)

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 31 (7d6 + 7)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Skills** Deception +5, Perception +3, Stealth +9, Survival +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Elvish

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** flighty, teasing yet careful

**Shadow** bright-green, like the leaves on a baby birch

(Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** nothing of value

**Hunter's Instinct.** The elf can use its bonus action to nominate a creature it can see as a chosen target.

The first time it hits its chosen target each turn, it does 2 additional damage to the creature.

**Nimble Escape.** The elf can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

**Composite Bow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does 19 (2d8 + 10) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Instinctual Shot.** If the creature that the elf has made its chosen target uses its movement, and the elf is in range of the creature, it may make a ranged weapon attack at the creature.

A lone summer elf equipped with a bow may be all it takes to stop a human expedition into the wilds, and force its surviving members to run for the forest edge.



## Elf, Early Summer

Those who awaken after their first dormancy and enter the life phase of the Summer Elf are a still curious but not nearly as cautious group. Called “Elflings”, they are known as hot-tempered, aggressive and impulsive, bordering on foolhardy. Up to five-and-a-half-feet tall, nimble as mare cats and with about 150 years to train, they develop into skilled warriors, qualified to take on any human fighter.

The Elflings make up the backbone of Davokar’s defense force, weakly armored but equipped with spears and bows. Most often they are led by an Autumn Elf or older Summer Elf, but sometimes their impatience makes them renounce the guidance of older siblings. Such war bands, consisting of between ten and thirty elven hotheads, always prefer attack over defense and may very well assault villages in the lowlands instead of their normal targets: outposts, caravans and free settlers in the woods.

**Tactics.** The elves of early summer trust in their bows and only use their spears when absolutely necessary. In close combat they use Acrobatics to withdraw from melee, in order to take advantage of the spear’s length again and again.

## Elf of Early Summer

Medium humanoid (Elf)

**Armor Class** 16 (woven silk)

**Hit Points** 91 (14d8 + 28)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 17 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, History +5, Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Barbarian, Elvish

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** capricious and cruel

**Shadow** luscious green (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** 12 arrows, 1 herbal cure

**Hunter’s Instinct.** The elf can use its bonus action to nominate a creature it can see as a chosen target. The first time it hits its chosen target each turn, it does 2 additional damage to the creature.

### ACTIONS

**Composite Bow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does 17 (2d8 + 8) piercing damage.

**Spear.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

### REACTIONS

**Acrobatic Fighter.** The elf can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with the attack roll as the DC to take half damage from an attack on a success.

**Instinctual Shot.** If the creature that the elf has made its chosen target uses its movement, and the elf is in range of the creature, it may make a ranged weapon attack at the creature.

## Elf, Late Summer

Elves of late summer are only a decade or two away from the period of dormancy that may see them survive to become Autumn Elves. In these last few years, they are less aggressive and impulsive and more apt to engage with enemies in ways both subtle and dangerous.

**Tactics.** The elves of late summer prefer to use their bows, but if it comes to close combat they do not mind standing in the front line, keeping the enemies in check with their spears while other elves fill them full of arrows.

## Elf of Late Summer

Medium humanoid (Elf)

**Armor Class** 16 (lacquered silk cuirass)

**Hit Points** 97 (13d8 + 39)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 16 (+3) | 19 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +7, Wis +5

**Skills** Arcana +10, History +10, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian, Elvish

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** stern and lordly

**Shadow** deep green (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** Two quivers with 12 arrows in each (the arrows in one of them are coated with moderate poison), 2 herbal cures, 2 spears

**Ancient Magic.** The elf can cast *accurate strike*, *eldritch blast* and *prestidigitation* without gaining Corruption.

### ACTIONS

**Composite Bow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage. The elf can use its bonus action to select a poison arrow, if so the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one minute.

**Spear.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

## Elf, Autumn

It is said that the dormancy between summer and autumn can be as long as fifty years. The elves who wake up are both taller and much more even-tempered than their younger kinsmen – as the elf expert Master Goncai in Thistle Hold has described it: “The Autumn Elf is old enough to appreciate the seriousness of the world, yet still young enough to care about the march of time”. It is elves in the autumn phase that assume the responsibility of leadership and that communicate with the outside world, as for instance the envoy Elori in Yndaros or Gealóna who has been permitted to live and work at the Ordo Magica chapter in Agrella.

According to some approximations the elven autumn lasts up to about the age of four hundred years. During that time the elf grows seven feet tall, very powerful and often equally wise. It is evident that their opinions vary with regard to the Ambrians, since some are seen leading hordes of Elflings in attacks against Ambrian settlements while others

engage in more diplomatic relations or even collaborations. But regardless of how they feel about humans, the autumn elves are formidable opponents for anyone who makes them angry, not least due to their deep understanding of how to manipulate the mystical energies of the world.

**Tactics.** Autumn elves lead their siblings from a distance, supporting allies with their mystical powers.

## Elf of Autumn

Medium humanoid (Elf)

**Armor Class** 17 (woven silk)

**Hit Points** 142 (15d8 + 75)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +8, Wis +5

**Skills** Arcana +11, History +11, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian, Elvish

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** stern and lordly

**Shadow** deep shadowy green (Corruption: 7/16)

**Equipment** Two quivers with 12 arrows in each (the arrows in one of them are coated with moderate poison), 2 herbal cures, 2 spears

**Ancient Magic.** The elf can cast *accurate strike*, *eldritch blast* and *prestidigitation* without gaining Corruption.

**Ritualist.** The elf can cast the *alarm*, *fire soul*, *tale of ashes* and *tiny hut* spells as rituals without gaining Corruption.

**Spellcasting.** The elf is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The elf knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *acid splash* (0), *light* (0), *minor illusion* (0)

1st level spells: *burning hands* (1d4 + 1), *fog cloud* (1d4 + 1), *shield* (1)

2nd level spells: *detect thoughts* (1d4 + 2), *scorching ray* (2)

3rd level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *larvae boil* (3)

4th level spells: *faithful hound* (4), *ice storm* (1d4 + 4)

5th level spells: *cloudkill* (5), *dominate person* (1d4 + 5)

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

# Lords of Ambria

**THE FEUDAL SYSTEM** has followed the Ambrians since long before they came to the promised land. Ambria is divided into duchies, which are in turn divided into counties and baronies; the leading ladies and lords of these domains have titles such as Duke/Duchess, Count/Countess and Baron/Baroness, depending on the size and importance of their respective holdings. Together they form the basis of the Queen's monetary and military power, but as history has shown, they are also a potential threat to the currently reigning monarch...

## Bailiff

*"Crush them! In the name of the Queen and almighty Prios!"* The individuals managing the lands and properties of the highborn usually come from lesser noble houses. Their competence and disposition may vary, but with a steady voice and firm hand, they can count on the obedience of their

### Bailiff

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 18 (scale mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 82 (11d8 + 33)

**Speed** 30 ft. (60 ft. when mounted)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** proud and commanding

**Shadow** dull, scratched silver (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the bailiff has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The bailiff makes two attacks with its longsword.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

#### REACTIONS

**Bid to Action.** When a creature's turn ends, the bailiff can call out a command, allowing an allied creature that can see and hear the bailiff to take their turn next. They cannot have already acted this round and this effect ends when their turn ends.

people. Bailiffs in combat situations ride a battle-trained horse (page 197).

**Tactics.** Points out targets for its men to prioritize and rides in to attack enemies bearing ranged weapons.

### Knight

*"On our lord's honor."*

Knights are the lowest form of nobles in Ambria, often allotted a patch of land by some Duke in order to support themselves and keep their horse and equipment in good shape. Sometimes they come from lowborn families, sometimes they have distinguished themselves in battle; either way, they are among the most loyal and grateful champions of Ambria. In battle, the knight rides a battle-trained horse (page 197) and is accompanied by their squire (page 177).

**Tactics.** Slays as many enemies as possible from horseback, then dismounts to grip the longsword in both hands.

### Knight

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 19 (field armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft. (60 ft. when mounted)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** convinced of its own rightfulness

**Shadow** shining sun-yellow, like polished gold (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Cumbersome.** The knight's field armor is unwieldy and the knight has disadvantage on all Dexterity checks while wearing it.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The knight makes two attacks with its lance when mounted and with its longsword while on foot.

**Lance.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage. Special: the knight has disadvantage on attack rolls against targets within 5 feet and must use both hands if it wields the lance after dismounting.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

## Lord or Lady

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 19 (field armor, shield)

**Hit Points** 85 (10d8 + 40)

**Speed** 30 ft. (60 ft. when mounted)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

**Skills** Insight +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** upright and brave

**Shadow** scratched dark yellow, as new-brushed gold (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Cumbersome.** The Lord or Lady has disadvantage on all Dexterity checks while wearing their armor.

**Shield Fighter.** If a lord or lady makes a successful attack roll, it can use its bonus action to slam the target. If the target is a Medium sized creature or smaller, it must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failure the lord or lady can choose to move it 10 feet in a line, or cause the creature to become prone.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The lord or lady makes two attacks with its lance when mounted and with its longsword while on foot.

**Lance.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 5) piercing damage. *Special:* the knight has disadvantage on attack rolls against targets within 5 feet and must use both hands if it wields the lance after dismounting.

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if wielded with two hands.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The lord or lady adds +2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the lord or lady must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Lord or Lady

*“With me, soldiers! Prios rides with us!”*

For generations, the nobles of Alberotor and Ambria have considered warfare to be one of many fields in which the nobility should distinguish itself. The Queen's lords and ladies are expected to command armies, and are trained from childhood in tactics and combat. In battle, two infantry soldiers (page 198) and an archer (page 196) accompany the mounted Lord or Lady, to serve as bodyguards or messengers as needed.

**Tactics.** Orders any companions to attack certain enemies, then coordinates the fight from horseback.

## Squire

*“Service breeds honor.”*

Youngsters of noble blood hoping to become fully fledged knights or Templars when they grow up. The fear of disappointing their master, parents and siblings is often greater than the fear of the dangers they encounter.

**Tactics.** Has no tactical training but tries to obey the commands of its master, constantly balancing between wanting to be noble and wanting to escape.

## Squire

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 17 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** anxiously composed

**Shadow** gold in lighter and darker shades, like an unprocessed nugget (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** —

**Nimble Escape.** The squire can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

### ACTIONS

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

# Ordo Magica

**SURE, THERE ARE power struggles among the nobles of Ambria, among leading families in most barbarian clans, and among strong theurges and Templars within the Church of Prios. But many would say that these rivalries over influence and dominance pale in comparison to the more or less literal backstabbing which characterizes the ranks of Ordo Magica. The masters of different disciplines gang up on each other, while simultaneously fighting ferociously amongst themselves – over positions, rich patrons and access to items or information. The same can be said about the novices and adepts fighting for the favor of the master they are lucky enough to serve. If you believe all reports and rumors on the topic, you will inevitably wonder how they ever get any actual work done.**

## Adept of the Order

*"Fascinating!"*

Advancement from novice to adept requires the recommendation of a magistrate, which in turn may require a great deal of flattery in addition to strong test scores. Furthermore, there must be a master willing to accept the aspiring adept as his/her apprentice. From there on the person is expected to work hard and make great progress in new fields of study.

**Tactics.** The adept uses its powers from a safe distance, or sneaks away using invisibility.

### Adept of the Order

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 37 (5d8 + 15)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +2

**Skills** Arcana +6, Nature +6, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** fawning, inquisitive and ambitious

**Shadow** shimmering silver red with dark spots, as a fire reflected in a tarnished silver plate (Corruption: 2/12)

**Equipment** order medallion, 1d4 herbal cures, antidote (weak), waybread

## Artifact Crafter

*"I pour my soul into my creations."*

Ordo Magica greedily guards the secret of how they learned the trolls' techniques for creating artifacts. The order's artifact crafters are highly sought after, but reclusive and difficult to engage in conversation.

**Tactics.** Tries to avoid battle by the use of invisibility or attacks from a distance with the transcendental weapon. If it gets really tough, the artifact crafter breaks the seal and hides itself in a nearby piece of stone.

## Magistrate

*"Please see chapter seven in Augio Gabbro's Elementarica."*

The Magistrates of Ordo Magica are among the realm's most prominent teachers, though not the most charming. They are mainly expected to train novices, but are also made available for independent academics and noble families, to educate the intellectuals of coming generations.

**Tactics.** It is beneath the Magistrate to fight and sweat – if surrender is out of the question and escape is not an option, the tricky choice is between fighting in self-defense or just giving up.

**Spellcasting.** The adept's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell attack +6, save DC 14) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *firebolt* (0), *light* (0), *message* (0), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (0), *ray of frost* (0)

1st-level spells: *detect magic* (1d4 + 1), *magic missile* (1d4 + 1), *shield* (1d4 + 1), *sleep* (1)

2nd-level spells: *invisibility* (1d4 + 2), *scorching ray* (2)

3rd-level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *magic circle* (1d4 + 3)

Rituals: *alarm*, *flaming servant*

## ACTIONS

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## Artifact Crafter

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 12 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 71 (11d8 + 22)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +3, Wis +7

**Skills** Arcana +3

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** wandering gaze, avoids eye contact

**Shadow** brushed steel with stains of purple rust  
(Corruption: 5/14)

**Equipment** order medallion, 1d4 herbal cures,  
antidote (weak), ritual seal (meld into stone),  
waybread

**Spell Knowledge.** The artifact crafter's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell attack +7, save DC 15) and it knows the following spells, but without the use of a talisman it can only cast cantrips and rituals.

Cantrips: *firebolt* (0), *guidance* (0), *light* (0), *sacred flame* (0), *shocking grasp* (0), *spare the dying* (0)

1st-level spells: *bane* (1d4 + 1), *command* (1d4 + 1), *guiding bolt* (1), *inflict wounds* (1d4 + 1)

2nd-level spells: *hold person* (1d4 + 2), *invisibility* (2)

3rd-level spells: *mass healing word* (1d4 + 3), *tongues* (3)

4th-level spells: *compulsion* (1d4 + 4), *dimension door* (1d4 + 4)

Rituals: *anathema*, *purify food and drink*, *silence*

**Talismans (3).** A spell invested into a talisman costs only half its normal Corruption when cast. The artifact crafter currently has *compulsion*, *hold person* and *mass healing word* invested.

### ACTIONS

Dagger +1. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) magical piercing damage. *Transcendental:* The dagger can be used to deliver a melee attack to a creature up to 60 feet away from the wielder.

## Magistrate

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 11 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 27 (5d8 + 5)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Skills** History +9, Investigation +7, Medicine +4,  
Nature +7, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** stern and condescending

**Shadow** shining gold, as a beacon of knowledge  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** order medallion, field library, 1d4 doses  
elemental essence and herbal cures

**Archivist.** The magistrate has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks while researching in archives and libraries.

### ACTIONS

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

## Ordo Magica's Internal Conflicts

Whoever thinks that Ordo Magica is a harmonious organization, with members that support each other in the fight towards a common goal is wrong. Very wrong. Not only do the Mystics quarrel with the Explorers and the Teachers over the limited assets of the order, but they are also in turn divided into sub-sections, such as Pyromancers, Artifact Crafters, Alchemists and Historians. It is also the case that within each field of interest there are two or more individuals competing with each other, more or less violently. No, it is like Grandmaster Seldonio once said: "Ordo Magica is an assembly of greedy, self-important know-it-alls who believe they are contributing to the common good and who at times happen to be right."

## Master of the Order

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 127 (15d8 + 60)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) | 20 (+5) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +8, Wis +3

**Skills** Arcana +8, Investigation +8, Nature +8, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** arrogant and patronizing

**Shadow** shimmering orange-red, as a fire reflected in a golden plate (Corruption: 5/16)

**Equipment** order medallion, ruler's ring, ritual focus, mystical focus, field library, 2d10 thaler

**Combat Magic Expert.** The master has 3 Combat dice (d6s). It can use a bonus action to add a Combat die to its spell attack roll or spell damage. It can add a Combat die to a saving throw to maintain concentration. It regains spent Combat dice when it takes a short or longer rest.

**Spellcasting.** The master's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell attack +8, save DC 16) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *dancing lights* (0), *message* (0), *minor illusion* (0), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (0), *ray of frost* (0)

1st-level spells: *detect magic* (1d4 + 1), *magic missile* (1d4 + 1), *shield* (1d4 + 1), *sleep* (1)

2nd-level spells: *invisibility* (1d4 + 2), *scorching ray* (2)

3rd-level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *magic circle* (3)

4th-level spells: *confusion* (1d4 + 4), *wall of fire* (4)

5th-level spells: *hold monster* (5), *teleportation circle* (1d4 + 5)

6th-level spells: *chain lightning* (1d4 + 6), *globe of invulnerability* (6)

Rituals: *alarm*, *flaming servant*, *tiny hut*, *fire soul*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## Master of the Order

*"The world is ours to understand and command."*

Within Ordo Magica, there are as many ways to the top as there are masters. What they all have in common are powerful minds and finely honed skills when it comes to exploiting their subordinate novices and adepts. A master of the order is always accompanied by at least a couple of novices wishing to aid their teacher in any way possible.

## Novice of the Order

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 11 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 13 (2d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +5, Wis +2

**Skills** Arcana +5, Nature +5, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** exhausted but forces a smile

**Shadow** shimmering silver red with dark spots, as a fire reflected in a tarnished silver plate (Corruption: 1/10)

**Equipment** order medallion, 1d4 shillings

**Spellcasting.** The adept's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell attack +5, save DC 13) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *firebolt* (0), *light* (0), *message* (1), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (1), *ray of frost* (1)

1st-level spells: *detect magic* (1d4 + 1), *magic missile* (1d4 + 1), *shield* (1d4 + 1), *sleep* (1)

Rituals: *alarm*

### ACTIONS

**Quarterstaff.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage

**Tactics.** Orders novices to stand as a shield against the enemy while using the considerable powers at their disposal. Should this not be enough, the master makes themself and their favorite novices invisible and attempts to escape.

## Novice of the Order

*"Yes, Magistrate. At once, Master..."*

At the very bottom of Ordo Magica's pecking order are the novices – literate Ambrians with enough motivation and concentration to learn the mysteries of wizardry, and enough patience to put up with the magistrates' and masters' arbitrary commands.

**Tactics.** The novice uses mystical powers from a safe distance.

## Panzer Alchemist

*"Fire in the hole!"*

The Order's chapter in Agrella produces battle trained siege experts and alchemists. The main responsibility of these units is inventing creative solutions to various problems on the battlefield, using siege weapons or alchemical warfare. A Panzer Alchemist is always accompanied by two Infantry Soldiers, see page 198.

## Panzer Alchemist

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 17 (scale mail)

**Hit Points** 104 (16d8 + 32)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Int +4

**Skills** Nature +4, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** excited yet focused

**Shadow** shiny gray with sooty stains, like a partially blackened silver tray (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** 1d6 + 1 burning powder, 1d4 + 1 flash powder, 1d6 + 1 bang powder, 1d4 + 1 grenades

**Alchemical Weapons.** The Panzer alchemist is trained in alchemical weapons.

**Backstab (1/turn).** The Panzer alchemist deals an extra 28 (8d6) damage when it hits a target with a melee or alchemical weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the creature that isn't incapacitated and the creature doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Enduring March.** The Panzer alchemist has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the Panzer alchemist has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Siege Expert.** The Panzer alchemist is trained in siege equipment and its attacks do double damage against structures.

### ACTIONS

**Firerube (Portable).** When the Panzer alchemist fires the tube, each creature in a 20-foot cone must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking half damage on a success. The damage is based on the powder loaded: Bang: 5 (1d10) thunder; Burning: 6 (1d12) fire; Flash: 3 (1d6) fire + the creature is blinded until the end of its next turn. If the Panzer alchemist uses the firerube as a melee weapon, it is +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

### REACTIONS

**Two-handed Force.** If the Panzer alchemist misses a melee attack, it can reroll the attack.

**Tactics.** Unlike the common sapper, Panzer alchemists are fully trained to use the firerube as a greatclub, but they naturally make sure to fire it first and throw a couple of grenades while their allies are keeping the enemy busy.

## Ritual Master

*“Everything worth doing requires time and careful thought.”*

Wizards who prefer to stay in the comfort of the chapter tower often choose careers as ritualists. Such abilities give them a chance to excel, hone their skills, and advance in status without any significant risk of having to lead expeditions or being sent to the front.

**Tactics.** If the Ritual Master ever leaves its chamber, he or she is always accompanied by battle trained companions, but will not hesitate to use mystical powers if the situation requires it.

## Ritual Master

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (order cloak)

**Hit Points** 75 (10d8 + 30)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +6, Wis +2

**Skills** Arcana +6, Nature +6, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** annoyingly patient

**Shadow** flaming dark red, like fire reflected in a copper plate (Corruption: 7/12)

**Equipment** order medallion, mystical focus, ritual focus, field library, 2d10 thaler

**Spellcasting.** The ritual master's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell attack +6, save DC 14) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *firebolt* (0), *light* (0), *message* (0), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (0), *ray of frost* (0)

1st-level spells: *detect magic* (1d4 + 1), *magic missile* (1d4 + 1), *shield* (1d4 + 1), *sleep* (1)

2nd-level spells: *invisibility* (1d4 + 2), *scorching ray* (2)

3rd-level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *magic circle* (3)

4th-level spells: *faithful hound* (1d4 + 4), *resilient sphere* (4)

5th-level spells: *dominate person* (1d4 + 5), *teleportation circle* (5)

Rituals: *alarm*, *faraway writing*, *fire soul*, *flaming servant*, *tale of ashes*, *tiny hut*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage



## Outsiders

WITH THE GREAT War in recent memory, the people of Ambria are in general inclined to stick together, to set differences aside and to forgive rather than seek vengeance. But there are lots of exceptions to be found, in towns, in the countryside as well as in the wilds: groups and individuals who for various reasons opt to live by a different code than the one established by Queen and Church. Some are at clear odds with Ambrian authorities, others seek their fortune in places where no commoner would dare venture and where the word of the Lawgiver means next to nothing – either way, they tend to see themselves as outsiders, and are often regarded as such by others as well.

## Cult Follower

Humans who chose to explore and exploit the dark forces of Davokar are here assembled under the epithet of Cultist. Among the barbarians they have always existed – individuals or groups who violate the taboos of their clan in the hope of growing in strength and influence. And among the Ambrians it appears to be more and more common that people devote themselves to the darkness in order to gain an advantage in the struggle for resources, power and glory.

According to rumor, cultists can be found within all ranks and regions in Queen Korinthia's realm, even if they are most common among fortune-hunters and free settlers close to or in the woods.

**Tactics.** The average cult follower tries to flee if the odds are not in their favor or a leader is not there to whip them into battle. If the leader falls, most followers reassess the situation and make a run for it, while a few fight to the death with the fire of the fanatic.

### Cult Follower

Medium human

**Armor Class** 13 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 13 (2d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cautious

**Shadow** braided silver or green with a few black strands (Corruption: 3/5)

**Equipment** cowl and mask, 2 spears, 1d10 thaler

### ACTIONS

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

## Cult Leader

A charismatic person who has learned a little of the mystic arts and uses this knowledge to bully others.

The typical cult is characterized by a strict hierarchy, with a strong leader on top, surrounded and backed by a crowd of loyal followers. They often convene at locations with some kind of mystical connotation and on dates corresponding with meaningful natural phenomena – as for instance the blood cult exposed in Templewall in Year 19 by the Black Cloaks, which convened inside an old burial mound and always when the moon was new.

**Tactics.** The cult leader hides behind their followers, leading them from a safe distance, but can engage the enemy if the Grand Plan hinges on it.

### Cult Leader

Medium human

**Armor Class** 14 (woven silk)

**Hit Points** 19 (3d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 17 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) |

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** imperious unless frightened, then cowering

**Shadow** brown with shades of purple, like an oily puddle (Corruption: 3/10)

**Equipment** embroidered cowl and ghastly mask, 1d10 thaler

**Spellcasting.** The cult leader is a self-taught mystic (spell attack +5, save DC 13) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *fire bolt* (1), *minor illusion* (1), *poison spray* (1)

1st-level spells: *shield* (1d4 + 1), *magic missile* (1d4 + 1)

Rituals: *spirit walk*

### ACTIONS

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

**3** ADVERSARIES



## Fortune Hunter

We make up many names for those we love; the same is true for the ones we detest. Call them treasure-hunters, fortune-hunters, explorers or grave robbers – many are the Ambrians who put their lives at risk in the hope of finding riches in the ruins of old Symbaroum. Nowadays most people have realized the foolishness in challenging Davokar single-handedly, which is why almost everyone travels with at least four companions.

**Tactics.** The fortune hunter flings their throwing knives from behind the shield, and enters into melee when the knives run out, or if the enemy forces them to do so.

## Fortune Hunter

Medium human

**Armor Class** 17 (chain shirt and shield)

**Hit Points** 45 (6d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +4

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** deadly serious

**Shadow** green or copper (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** thieves' tools

**Cunning Action.** The fortune hunter can take a bonus action to Dash, Disengage or Hide.

**Expertise.** The fortune hunter has expertise in Perception and Sleight of Hand.

**Sneak Attack (1/turn).** The fortune hunter deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the fortune hunter that isn't incapacitated and the fortune hunter doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

### ACTIONS

**Longsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

**Knives.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Uncanny Dodge.** When a creature that the fortune hunter can see hits it with an attack, the fortune hunter can reduce the damage by half.

## Pickpocket

*"Let me take the weight off your shoulders..."*

Pickpockets are such a common element on the city streets that most Ambrians keep money and securities in their boots, gloves, hats, and undergarments – but sacrificing a few coins in a belt-pouch ensures that one does not get mugged in an alley.

**Tactics.** Does all it can to avoid combat. If it attacks, it does so with advantage when possible; a pickpocket would rather flee than take any risks.

## Pickpocket

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 38 (7d8 + 7)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 11 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +6

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** scouts discreetly for targets

**Shadow** silver-blue as steel in moon light  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** 2d10 ortegs

**Backstab (1/turn).** The pickpocket deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a melee weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the pickpocket that isn't incapacitated and the pickpocket doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the pickpocket can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Evasion.** If the pickpocket is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the pickpocket instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

### ACTIONS

**Stiletto.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does a total of 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage (plus backstab damage if applicable).

### REACTIONS

**Acrobatic Fighter.** The pickpocket can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with the attack roll as the DC to take half damage from an attack on a success.

## Plunderer

These are ogres trained by humans to assist in conquering the ruins found within Davokar. They take pride in their direct and violent solutions to any problems they encounter.

The plunderers described below are of the brutish kind – groups of individuals who have managed to scrape together enough coin to buy an Explorer's License and ventured into the woods hoping to find the mother lode. As they have risked everything they own, and maybe even taken loans from some shady moneylender, they are not likely to abandon their dig-site without a fight. For that reason it is probably true that in the outskirts of Davokar treasure-hunters are killed by competitors as often as they are by beasts, elves or local barbarians.

**Tactics.** The plunderer marches straight into battle, hungry for loot and coin.

### Plunderer

Medium humanoid (Ogre)

**Armor Class** 17 (laminated armor)

**Hit Points** 51 (6d8 + 24, tough)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Perception +5, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** direct and unafraid

**Shadow** crimson red (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** rope, huge sack

**Action Surge (1/day).** The plunderer can take an extra action.

**Tough.** The plunderer has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The plunderer makes two attacks with its maul.

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

### REACTIONS

**Two-handed Force.** If the plunderer misses an attack, it can use its reaction to reroll the attack.

## Robber

Securing a job in Ambria is not easy; securing a well-paid job is even harder – these facts are the main reason why so many resort to robbery and theft. Anywhere where valuables are transported brigands may appear; they attack along the rivers, on the roads of the lowlands and not least in mountain passes or in the forests.

**Tactics.** Robbers have learned to calculate the odds and will not attack if outnumbered – not even a strong leader can force them to attack a superior enemy.

### Robber

Medium human

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) |

**Skills** Perception +6, Stealth +7

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cautious

**Shadow** various shades of green (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** thieves' tools

**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The robber deals an extra 3 (1d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the robber that isn't incapacitated and the robber doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Cunning Action.** The robber can take a bonus action to Dash, Disengage or Hide.

**Expertise.** The robber has expertise in Perception and Stealth.

### ACTIONS

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

**Horseman's Bow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

## Robber Chief

The leader of the robbers, who might have formal training in thievery or spycraft. They always claim the best spoils for themselves.

Two of the most feared bands of brigands are based in the valleys of the Titans. One is led by the notorious Ice Witch, the daughter of Old Kadizar's last Chieftain, the other by

### Robber Chief

Medium human

**Armor Class** 16 (woven silk)

**Hit Points** 26 (4d8 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 18 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) |

**Saving Throws** Dexterity +6, Charisma +4

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Deception +4, Intimidation +4, Perception +6, Stealth +8

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cautious

**Shadow** various shades of green (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** thieves' tools, two shortswords

**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The robber chief deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the robber chief that isn't incapacitated and the robber chief doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Cunning Action.** The robber chief can take a bonus action to Dash, Disengage or Hide.

**Expertise.** The robber chief has expertise in Perception and Stealth.

**Off-hand Attack.** The robber chief can use its bonus action to make another attack with its shortsword.

### ACTIONS

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

**Hand Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Acrobatic Fighter.** The robber chief can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with the attack roll as the DC to take half damage from an attack on a success.

an ogre known as Mound who commands a brutal horde of goblins and rage trolls. Other examples are the highwaymen of the free settlement Entekka, who primarily raid caravans traveling between Thistle Hold and Karvosti, and the notoriously cruel Captain Bartolo, whose pirates attack convoys on Lake Volgoma and on the rivers Eanor and Eblis.

**Tactics.** The leader of the outfit fights along with their fellow raiders; anything else would not be tolerated.

## Thug

*"These are our streets!"*

Law and order shines like the sun over the Ambrian kingdom, but where there is light, there is shadow. In the dark alleys and backstreets of the cities, the bored and ambitious scum of Ambria rules.

**Tactics.** Only attacks if they outnumber the enemy, and focuses on lightly armored targets.

### Thug

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** bold in a group, but cowardly alone

**Shadow** red-striped, like scratched brass  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** 1d4 ortegs

### ACTIONS

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

# People of Davokar

DAVOKAR IS TEEMING with life, most of which can be sorted into the categories hunter and prey. But then there are the cultural beings which tend to fit somewhere in-between, as belonging to both, depending on who or what they encounter. Goblins must often accept the role of prey, while Ambrian or barbarian monster hunters tend to view themselves as true predators. However, many of the latter will sooner or later be corrected in their faulty self-appraisal, by the apex predators of the deep, dark forest.

## Goblin

*"The Chieftain is our champion. Or so he says."*

Ordinary tribal goblins – the young, the elderly, the berry and mushroom pickers, the weaklings, the pot-stirrers, and so on – tend to do their very best to avoid violent confrontations. However, if their chieftain or warriors call for a general conscription they will likely obey, too scared to protest.

**Tactics.** The tribal goblins fight as best they can, which is not very well. If not ordered to fight they will run away, as they have always done, and try to find a safer home somewhere else.

## Goblin

*Small humanoid (Goblin)*

**Armor Class** 13 (none)

**Hit Points** 9 (2d6 + 2)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian, Goblin

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** huddles, or flees in wild panic

**Shadow** green-striped, like mossy woodlands beset with pale green weeds (Corruption: 1/2)

**Equipment** none

**Survival Instinct.** The goblin can take the Dash, Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Unarmed.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

## Goblin Chieftain

*"You welcome, to the realm!"*

Chieftains are often larger than the members of their flock, but above all, they are cunning enough to outmaneuver their competitors for power. They win their tribe's respect through a mix of lies, manipulation, and actual achievements, but may of course lose it as soon as a challenger tells better lies and performs more impressive feats.

**Tactics.** The chieftain does not partake in the tribe's fighting, but stays in the background directing his subjects so that they first keep him safe, then go after targets with ranged weapons.

## Goblin Chieftain

*Small humanoid (Goblin)*

**Armor Class** 16 (Studded Leather, Shield)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d6 + 8)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

**Skills** Deception +3, Insight +4, Stealth +4, Survival +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian, Goblin

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** unduly fatterly

**Shadow** brown as rich forest soil (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** token of leadership

**Action Surge (1/day).** The goblin chieftain can take an extra action.

**Dueling Style.** The goblin chieftain adds +2 to its damage rolls, included below.

**Survival Instinct.** The goblin chieftain can take the Dash, Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Battle Wind (2/day).** When an attack hits the goblin chieftain, it receives 2d4 + 2 temporary hit points before it takes damage.

## Goblins in Forests and Towns

Even if goblins growing up in or in the vicinity of human settlements are described as wild and unkempt, there is a great difference between them and those still dwelling in the forest. While the former are characterized by a relaxed calm, the goblins of the wilds come off as anxious and watchful prey-animals – used to being bullied, or even hunted, by the beasts, trolls and spirit beings of the forest.

## Goblin Shaman

*"I found our salvation in a dream sight."*

The shaman is often near the chieftain in status and reverence, especially when they actually possess some form of mystical power. Regarding powers, shamans are usually thought to have the gift of fortune-telling, whether they do or not.

**Tactics.** The shaman keeps its distance from the fight until someone needs help, with healing.

### Goblin Shaman

*Small humanoid Goblin*

**Armor Class** 13 (thick robes)

**Hit Points** 18 (4d6 + 4)

**Speed** 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 8 (-1) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian, Goblin

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** thoughtfully silent

**Shadow** emerald green, like moss covered in dew  
(Corruption: 3/8)

**Equipment** component pouch

**Spellcasting.** The goblin shaman is a self-taught mystic. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell attack +4, save DC 12) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *dancing lights* (1), *minor illusion* (1), *ray of frost* (1)

1st-level spells: *bane* (1d4 + 1), *cure wounds* (1d4 + 1)

Rituals: *purify food and drink*

**Survival Instinct.** The goblin shaman can take the Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

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

## Goblin Warrior

*"Die? No... What!?"*

The goblins who are chosen to serve as tribal warriors often have well-developed survival instincts. Otherwise, they are not that different from their brothers and sisters, except that they might be cockier and better fed.

**Tactics.** Goblin warriors obey orders. They will try to utilize the extra mobility and protection gained by their Survival Instinct, to make the best possible use of their weapons.

### Goblin Warrior

*Small humanoid (Goblin)*

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d6 + 6)

**Speed** 25 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

**Skills** Stealth +5, Survival +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian, Goblin

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** pretends to be ready, in reality pretty scared

**Shadow** moss-green and dark brown, like an overgrown tree stump (Corruption: 1/2)

**Equipment** none

**Archery Style.** The goblin warrior has a +2 to attack rolls with ranged weapons, included below.

**Survival Instinct.** The goblin warrior can take the Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

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

**Horseman's Bow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Battle Wind (2/day).** When an attack hits the goblin, it receives 2d4 + 2 temporary hit points before it takes damage.

## Monster Hunter

*"The vessels of darkness are my prey."*

For centuries the people of Davokar have had to share their world with the gods and abominations of the forest. To protect the clans from these dangerous creatures, witches and chieftains have called for the training of heroic monster hunters, able to go up against all sorts of monstrosities.

**Tactics.** The monster hunter prefers to set traps for its quarry, but if it comes to melee combat the hunter keeps its prey at bay with the halberd and hopes that the poison will do the trick.

### Monster Hunter

Medium human

**Armor Class** 16 (scale mail)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Athletics +5, Perception +4, Stealth +3, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** local tongue

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** focused and effective

**Shadow** vigorously blood red with coagulated spots (Corruption: 2/4)

**Equipment** marlit cape (advantage on 1 stealth check/day), mechanical traps (3), strong poison (2)

**The Bigger They Are.** The monster hunter has advantage on all attacks against creatures that are Large or bigger.

**Trapper.** The monster hunter can use its action to deploy a mechanical trap within 5 feet of its position. A creature that enters the area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 13 (2d12) piercing damage. The monster hunter is never affected by the trap, but treats the area around the trap as difficult terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The monster hunter makes two attacks with its halberd.

**Halberd.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage. If poison is applied to the blade (requires bonus action), the target also takes 14 (4d6) poison damage.

### REACTIONS

**Polearm Master.** The monster hunter can make an attack on a creature that enters its reach.

## Queen's Ranger

The one who ventures into Davokar without having the proper Explorer's License needs to be cautious. The Queen's Rangers are tasked with patrolling the forest outskirts and sometimes make detours deeper into the woods. Such detours are most often made by a squad or a platoon of Rangers who have been tasked with investigating the veracity of certain rumors or to track down a particular beast that has attacked Thistle Hold, Kastor or some other border settlement. Irrespective of the purpose of their journey, they travel with the permanent duty to check up on everyone encountered in Davokar; those who do not have their license in order will be shackled, or put to death, if they struggle.

**Special Training.** Some of the Queen's rangers have the Medicus feature instead of Lorekeeper. See page 143 in the *Player's Guide*.

### Queen's Ranger

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 15 (woven silk)

**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Investigation +3, Nature +3, Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** cautious and grim

**Shadow** silver-shimmering (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** scrolls (on area of expertise), a dozen arrows, waybread, 1 herbal cure, 1d10 shillings

**Enduring March.** The ranger has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Lorekeeper.** The ranger can make an Intelligence (Investigation) check to gain clues about some ancient secret or hidden knowledge. The DC for the check is dependent on the nature of the information and some things cannot be found in scrolls or half-remembered lectures or stories.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The ranger makes two attacks with its longbow or estoc.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Estoc.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage. Deep impact: on a critical hit, this weapon does a total of 15 (2d8 + 6) piercing damage.



## Queen's Ranger, Captain

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 18 (woven silk, parrying dagger)

**Hit Points** 90 (12d8 + 36)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Investigation +4, Nature +4, Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +6

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian, Elvish, Goblin, Troll  
**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** confident leadership

**Shadow** silver with streaks of gold (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** map of the area, waybread, 2 herbal cures, 1d10 thaler

**Enduring March.** The ranger has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The ranger makes two attacks with its longbow or fencing sword. It then can use its bonus action to attack with its parrying dagger.

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

**Fencing Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

**Parrying Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The ranger adds 3 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the ranger must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

**Tactics.** Rangers always assess their targets and attack the weakest spot. They are scouts first and foremost, not warriors, and will refrain from attacking if the odds are stacked against them. If so, they trail their target until the odds have shifted or reinforcements have arrived.

## Queen's Ranger, Captain

The Rangers are led by an experienced and scarred captain selected from within the regular army. They are resilient, experienced in combat and skilled when it comes to moving silently through the wilds. A ranger group led by a Captain is truly a force to be reckoned with – something which many unlicensed treasure-hunters have had to experience...

**Tactics.** The experienced Ranger fights in the front line, setting the standard for others to follow.

## Village Guard

For the barbarian clans of Davokar fighting is as natural as breathing. From childhood both girls and boys are trained to use the weapons of the clan, most often axe or spear in combination with a shield.

Thanks to taboos you seldom encounter village guards or warriors anywhere but in the outskirts of the forest. However, the exceptions become more frequent with time. In Thistle Hold and Blackmoor there are numerous sellswords with a barbarian heritage, and there are also defectors from the clans who ignore the truths of old and venture deeper into the woods in search of ruins to plunder.

### Village Guard

Medium human (Barbarian)

**Armor Class** 13 (wolf skin)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Skills** Athletics +4, Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** grim determination

**Shadow** blooming green (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** hunting traps and fishing gear, wooden figurine (the clan's spirit guardian), 3 throwing spears, 1d10 ortegs

**Hunter's Instinct.** The village guard can use its bonus action to mark one creature as its chosen target. The first time it does damage to the target, it does +2 bonus damage. It can use its reaction when the target moves to make a ranged weapon attack.

**Trapper.** The village guard can use its action to deploy a mechanical trap within 5 feet of its position. A creature that enters the area must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 6 (1d12) bludgeoning damage. The village guard is never affected by the trap, but treats the area around the trap as difficult terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Axe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

**Spear.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Tactics.** Village warriors are used to skirmish fighting and start by throwing their spears before gripping their axes. If the odds are declining, they withdraw from melee and back away while throwing additional spears at the enemy.

## Village Warrior

With the possible exception of the now mercantile clan of Odaiova, fighting skills are the most highly respected ability among the clanfolks – the chieftains almost always gain their position by proving themselves in combat. Every village has many capable guards and the best of them are selected to be part of the chieftain's warriors. And almost all of them nurture the dream of one day being chosen to represent the clan in the Guard of the Slumbering Wrath on Karvosti.

**Tactics.** The warriors of the clan chieftain's guard lead by example, engaging the enemy in close combat, striking them down and finishing them off with mighty blows of the axe.

### Village Warrior

Medium human (Barbarian)

**Armor Class** 17 (scale, Man-at-Arms)

**Hit Points** 37 (5d8 + 15)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

**Saving Throws** Strength +6, Constitution +5

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** challenging confidence

**Shadow** deep green (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** a wooden or metal beaker, wooden figurine (the clan's spirit guardian), stone for sharpening the axe, 1d10 shillings

**Man-at-Arms.** The village warrior's armor class is improved by +1. It can don or doff armor in half the regular required time.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The village warrior makes two attacks with its double-axe.

**Double-axe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Two-handed Force.** If the village warrior misses an attack, it can use its reaction to reroll the attack.



## Village Witch

*"Be faithful to your nature."*

Few Ambrians realize that it is largely the witches who decide where barbarian settlements are built. They know which places are taboo and which must be defended, and they are constantly watching over the festering wounds of old Symbaroum.

**Tactics.** The witches of settlements in the woods avoid combat if at all possible; if not, they assume the shape of a combative predator, often a wild boar or a jakaar.

### Village Witch

Medium human (Barbarian)

**Armor Class** 13 (witch gown)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Intelligence +3, Wisdom +5

**Skills** Arcana +3, Insight +5, Perception +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Barbarian, Goblin

**Challenge** 3 (750 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** hides face and body language behind a mask and ritualistic gestures

**Shadow** dazzling green, like sunlit foliage with a few dark spots (Corruption: 2/10)

**Equipment** component pouch, herbal cure, wild chew, bark mask

**Nature's Lullaby (2/day).** The village witch can use this feature to bypass an abomination.

**Shapeshifter (2/day).** The village witch can become a wild jakaar (see page 141) for three hours.

**Spellcasting.** The village witch's spellcasting ability score is Wisdom (+5 to hit, save DC 13) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *accurate strike* (0), *chill touch* (0), *mage hand* (0), *minor illusion* (0), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (0)

1st-level spells: *expeditious retreat* (1), *find familiar* (1d4 + 1), *hellish rebuke* (1)

2nd-level spells: *mirror image* (1d4 + 2), *ray of enfeeblement* (1d4 + 2)

3rd-level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *larvae boil* (3)  
Rituals: *blood bond*, *illusory script*

### ACTIONS

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

## Wilderness Guide

*"Do as I say if you want to live."*

Ever since the arrival of the Queen's people to the Promised Land, numerous barbarians and goblins have made a career guiding Ambrian expeditions through the forest – a very dangerous, but potentially rewarding, job!

**Tactics.** The wilderness guide tries to lead the group past any and all dangers, but if combat is unavoidable it trusts in its companions and stays in the background, shooting their bow or rushing to their aid with Herbal Cures.

### Wilderness Guide

Medium human (Barbarian) or humanoid (Goblin)

**Armor Class** 17 (scale mail)

**Hit Points** 27 (5d8 + 5) | 22 (5d6 + 5)

**Speed** 30 ft. | 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Strength +6, Dexterity +4

**Skills** History +2, Perception +4, Survival +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian, Goblin

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** gruff and impatient

**Shadow** shimmering green like jade  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d4 herbal cures, 1d4 moderate antidotes

**Hunter's Instinct.** The village guard can use its bonus action to mark one creature as its chosen target. The first time it does damage to the target, it does +2 bonus damage. It can use its reaction when the target moves to make a ranged weapon attack.

**Survival Instinct (Goblin only).** The goblin can take the Dash, Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Wilderness Explorer.** With a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check the guide can keep its party supplied in the wilderness.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The guide makes two attacks with its grappling axe or composite bow.

**Grappling Axe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) slashing damage when wielded with both hands.

**Composite Bow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. Deep impact: this weapon does 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage on a critical hit.

## Witch, Keeper

*"Nature serves those closest to her."*

The most influential and enlightened witches in Davokar are chosen to serve as Keepers to the chieftains. However, one may wonder who serves who; many Ambrians firmly believe that the true power resides with the witches.

**Tactics.** Like other witches, the Keeper primarily uses mystical powers to keep the enemy at a distance. If melee combat is inevitable, the Keeper transforms into the shape of a battle beast, or flees with expeditious retreat if the odds favor the enemy.

### Keeper Witch

Medium human (Barbarian)

**Armor Class** 13 (witch gown)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 11 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Int +4, Wis +8

**Skills** Arcana +4, Insight +8, Perception +8

**Senses** passive Perception 18

**Languages** Ambrian, Barbarian, Goblin

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** weaves wisdom and warnings in rhyming chants

**Shadow** swaying dark green, like a stormy ocean of leaves (Corruption: 3/16)

**Equipment** component pouch, elixir of life, witch braid, healing spider

**Lay on Hands (3/day).** The witch can touch a creature and restore 6 hit points to them as an action.

### Electing Keepers

Officially, it is the clan chieftains who appoints keepers, but there is hardly any doubt that the current Huldra has a say in the matter, and maybe even makes the decision. In any case, the elections usually never spark protests from a clan's members and other witches. Exceptions exist – times when ambitious, losing candidates have used their powers and allies to seek vengeance. But this is seldom heard of, and hopefully the darkening of Davokar will not change anything in this respect...

**Nature's Lullaby (3/day).** The witch can use this feature to bypass an abomination.

**Shapeshifter (3/day).** The witch can become a baigorn (see page 136) for four hours.

**Spellcasting.** The witch's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (+8 to hit, spell save DC 16) and it knows the following spells:

Cantrips: *accurate strike* (0), *chill touch* (0), *mage hand* (0), *minor illusion* (0), *poison spray* (0), *prestidigitation* (0)

1st-level spells: *comprehend languages* (1), *expeditious retreat* (1), *find familiar* (1d4 + 1)

2nd-level spells: *mirror image* (1d4 + 2), *suggestion* (1d4 + 2)

3rd-level spells: *counterspell* (1d4 + 3), *hypnotic pattern* (3)

4th-level spells: *blight* (1d4 + 4), *hallucinatory terrain* (4)

5th-level spells: *scrying* (1d4 + 5), *turn weather* (5)

Rituals: *blood bond*, *illusory script*, *unseen servant*

**Witch Braid.** The witch has advantage on death saving throws.

### ACTIONS

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

# People of the Queen

DURING THE WAR against the Dark Lords, the Ambrians developed an impressive military force, both well-trained and disciplined, which made the invasion of the Promised Land a relatively simple task. But rumor has it that the peace-time of the past decade has transformed the culture in the realm's army; that the number of convictions for disobedience, desertion and undermining of the fighting spirit has multiplied. This does not bode well in light of the growing threat from the north...

## Archer

*"Take Aim!"*

During the Great War, the regimental archers of Alberetor proved rather ineffective against the undead hordes of the Dark Lords. Many deserted, and even though much time has passed since then, rumors persist that archers in general are skittish and unreliable. These days, independent farmers often serve as archers in the local militia.

**Tactics.** Attacks from a prepared elevated position, if at all possible, raining arrows or bolts down on enemies that don't seek shelter.

## Farmhand

*"That's IT!"*

Back in Alberetor it was common for ordinary people to rebel against unjust taxes and miserable living conditions, and the same is becoming more and more true for Ambria. Sometimes the rebellion is led by a bailiff or some disillusioned knight, but usually the country-folk rise up of their own accord. They are also press-ganged into militias during times of threat.

**Tactics.** The farmhand starts by throwing an axe, and then rushes into battle with another one. If the battle is hard, they often flee or surrender.

### Archer

Medium human (Ambrian)

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

Skills Animal Handling +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Ambrian

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

Manner patiently obedient

Shadow dull gray, like brushed iron  
(Corruption: 0/4)

Equipment 24 arrows or bolts, 2d10 ortegs

**Hunter's Instinct.** The archer can use its bonus action to mark one creature as its chosen target. The first time it does damage to the target, it does +2 bonus damage. It can use its reaction when the target moves to make a ranged weapon attack.

### ACTIONS

**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.  
(or)

**Heavy Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage. Loading: fires one round per action, bonus action or reaction.

## Farmhand

Medium human (Ambrian) or humanoid (Goblin)

**Armor Class** 13 (shield)

**Hit Points** 6 (1d8 + 2) or 5 (1d6 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft. or 20 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** furious but terrified

**Shadow** pale green like dry meadow grass  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** two handaxes, 1d10 ortegs

**Survival Instinct (Goblin Only).** The goblin can take the Dash, Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Handaxes.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

## Horse

Large beast

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 22 (3d10 + 6)

**Speed** 50 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** steady and patient

**Shadow** light brown with a tinge of copper  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Enduring March.** The horse has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

### ACTIONS

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

## Horse

The horse is by far the most common mount in Ambria and Davokar alike, and it is also used to work the fields and pull wagons and carriages.

**Tactics.** Horses are easily frightened and often bolt at the first whiff of danger, no matter how much its rider screams and threatens.

### Horse, battle-trained

To use a horse in battle, one needs a well-trained steed – an animal that can actually be a challenging opponent in itself.

**Tactics.** The battle-trained horse obeys its rider's commands and defends itself with powerful kicks even if the rider is killed.

## Battle-trained Horse

Large beast

**Armor Class** 16 (barding)

**Hit Points** 30 (4d10 + 8)

**Speed** 60 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +2

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** snorting and watchful

**Shadow** light gray with a tinge of silver white steel  
(Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Trampling Charge.** If the horse moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a hooves attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the horse can make another attack with its hooves against it as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Iron-shod Hooves.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

## Infantry Soldier

*"For Ambria!"*

For the current generation of Ambrian soldiers, the war against the Dark Lords is nothing more than a story from the past. Instead, they are trained to do battle with barbarians, beasts and each other.

**Tactics.** The foot-soldiers of Ambria form shield walls and other strict formations to protect their allies and officers.

### Infantry

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 16 (chain shirt, shield)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** stoically prepared

**Shadow** shining gray, like brushed steel  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d4 + 2 shillings

**Enduring March.** Soldiers have advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Shield Fighter.** If a soldier makes a successful attack roll, it can use its bonus action to slam the target. If the target is a Medium sized creature or smaller, it must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure the soldier can choose to move it 10 feet in a line, or cause the creature to become prone.

### ACTIONS

**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage or 7 (1d10 + 2) if wielded with two hands.

## Officer

*"Company! March!"*

Most of Ambria's military officers are veterans from the war in Alberetor, burdened by memories of lost friends and crushing defeats. The barbarians and the forest of Davokar are child's play in comparison – nothing that will get in the way of the Queen's army.

**Tactics.** Directs their troops into battle, pointing out the enemies to focus on and tries to subjugate their leaders.

### Officer

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 18 (scale mail, shield)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

**Skills** History +2, Intimidation +4, Perception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** grimly dutiful

**Shadow** shining gray, like brushed steel  
(Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d4 thaler

**Enduring March.** Ambrian officers have advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Shield Fighter.** If an officer makes a successful attack roll, it can use its bonus action to slam the target. If the target is a Medium sized creature or smaller, it must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure the officer can choose to move it 10 feet in a line, or cause the creature to become prone.

### ACTIONS

**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) if wielded with two hands.

### REACTIONS

**Issue Command.** The officer can direct an Ambrian soldier that it can see within 60 feet to focus its efforts on a single target, adding +2 damage on a single damage roll after a successful attack roll.



## Never Quite the Same

To achieve a variation between the soldiers and guards that the player characters meet, small adjustments can go far. You can add or swap out features (see the master list starting on page 215) in order to make a memorable NPC.

## Pansar

*"For the Queen! To glory!"*

The Queen's guard is also the kingdom's elite unit of armored warriors. Exclusive to nobles and war heroes, this troop is a glorious and renowned military force.

**Tactics.** Challenges the strongest enemies on the battlefield, to keep them busy and earn the honor of battle.

## Pansar

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 18 (Pansar field armor)

**Hit Points** 58 (9d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft. (60 ft. when mounted)

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** disciplined and loyal

**Shadow** scratched and dented silver, like a battered steel shield (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** —

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the Pansar has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The Pansar makes two attacks with its greatsword.

**Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage. The Pansar scores a critical hit on a natural 19 or 20 on the attack roll.

### REACTIONS

**Bid to Action.** When a creature's turn ends, the Pansar can call out a command, allowing an allied creature that can see and hear the Pansar to take their turn next. They cannot have already acted this round and this effect ends when their turn ends.

**Two-handed Force.** If the Pansar misses an attack roll, it can use its reaction to reroll the attack.

## Pike Soldier

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 14 (chain shirt, buckler)

**Hit Points** 26 (4d8 + 8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** bored but loyal

**Shadow** furrowed bright gray, like a well-used spearhead (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d6 + 2 shillings

**Orderly Withdrawal.** The soldier can move up to half its speed away from an enemy without provoking an opportunity attack.

### ACTIONS

**Pike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

## Pike Soldier

*"Pikes at the ready!"*

As it was in Alberetor, soldiers equipped with a combination of bucklers (small shields) and pikes or halberds make up most of the duchies' regiments and garrisons.

**Tactics.** Raise their pikes against the enemy and make their attacks; then retreat and await a new opening (unless commanded differently).

## Queen's Spy

*"The end justifies the means."*

The agents of the Royal Sekretorium are recruited from House Kohinoor's most loyal allies. These spies are usually nobles with silver tongues and nimble fingers who can come and go as they please through every door and window in Ambria.

**Tactics.** Starts off by throwing a Thunder Ball, Smoke Bomb or Spore Bomb to take down some of the enemies, then attacks with poisoned weapons.

## Agents of the Realm

The Queen's Spy presented here is of the type that acts in cities and larger settlements, within the borders of Ambria or infiltrating some foreign power. However, the Royal Sekretorium also has field agents, specialized in exploring and acting in less civilized territories. These often have a different profile when it comes to traits and features, similar to those of the Queen's Rangers and the explorers of Ordo Magica.

## Queen's Spy

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 16 (concealed armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Deception +6, Perception +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +9

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** arrogantly elegant

**Shadow** dark glossy gray, like a silver mirror in the shadows (Corruption: 0/6)

**Equipment** 1d10 + 10 thaler, 1d6 doses Strong poison, 1d4 each of Spore Bombs, Smoke Bombs and Thunderballs

**Backstab (1/turn).** The spy deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a melee weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Evasion.** If the spy is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the spy instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

### ACTIONS

**Assassin's Blade.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage. Concealable: the spy can make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to hide this weapon on its person.

**Stiletto.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage. Deep impact: a critical hit with this weapon does a total of 20 (2d4 + 10) piercing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Acrobatic Fighter.** The spy can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with the attack roll as the DC to take half damage from an attack on a success.

## Colonists and Free Settlers

Of all Ambrians it is the colonists who have most contact with barbarians and the Elder Folks. Today all land between the Titans in the south and Davokar in the north, between the Ravens to the east and the river Eblis to the west is considered to be colonized by Ambria. But Korinthia's ambitions are greater than that. Indeed, a dozen new settlements have been established in places still ruled by other powers. A majority of these can be found up to a day's travel past the tree-line of Davokar, for instance on the southern shore of Lake Volgoma or on the route between Thistle Hold and Karvosti. Others are located in the mountains and at the forest's edge west of River Doudram.

Another group of southern origin that lives near the elves and barbarians are the Free Settlers: refugees from

Alberotor who have taken the opportunity to break free and form societies of their own. These settlements are typically made up of ten to thirty families that for some reason have chosen to stick together – in most cases because they profess their loyalty to some other deity than Prios.

In the early days of Ambria the Free Settlers had no trouble finding some corner of the Promised Land they could claim as their own. But with time many have found themselves repressed by the expanding kingdom and some have even been forced to move deeper into Davokar. Freedom from oppression comes at a considerable cost, a cost that gets higher and higher the further Korinthia's domain extends. Even so, there are still about twenty free settlements in forests and mountains that refuse to submit.

## Sapper

*"Three degrees to the left..."*

It is often said that if you want to burn down a fort, you summon the Panzer Alchemists of Agrella, but if you want to move mountains you turn to Her Majesty's Sappers Corps, 7th army, Yndarien. This is not far from the truth.

### Sapper

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 16 (double chain mail)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 11 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** excited yet focused

**Shadow** shiny gray with sooty stains, like a partially blackened silver tray (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d4 + 1 burning powder, 1d4 + 1 bang powder, 1d4 grenades, 1d10 thaler

**Alchemical Weapons.** The sapper is trained in alchemical weapons.

**Backstab (1/turn).** The sapper deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a melee or

**Tactics.** The sapper often keeps at a distance, fires the firetube and throws grenades. Only when in a tight spot is the firetube used as a greatclub.

alchemical weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the sapper that isn't incapacitated and the sapper doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Enduring March.** The sapper has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the sapper has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Siege Expert.** The sapper is trained in siege equipment and its attacks do double damage against structures.

### ACTIONS

**Firetube (Portable).** When the sapper fires the tube, each creature in a 20-foot cone must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking half damage on a success. The damage is based on the powder loaded: Bang: 5 (1d10) thunder; Burning: 6 (1d12) fire; Flash: 3 (1d6) fire + the creature is blinded until the end of its next turn. If the sapper uses the firetube as a melee weapon, it is +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

# Townsfolk

**ALBERETOR WAS A SOCIETY OF GREAT DIVERSITY, but this has been accentuated even more in The Promised Land as the Ambrians now mingle with clanfolk, goblins, changelings and even the odd ogre, elf and dwarf. The diversity is most evident in Ambria's cities and towns, where nobles blend with priests, scholars, visiting merchants, soldiers and self-proclaimed outsiders. Adding to these are the inhabitants who make the settlement into what it is: the local artisans, peddlers, business owners and oddballs. Often called and thought of as "commoners", these characters are actually imperative to the Queen's and Firstfather's ambition to cultivate the Davokar region!**

## Artisan

*"My hammer can hit you, or the anvil. You choose!"*

Each new settlement in Ambria's border regions relies on competent artisans. Hardened by the destruction of

### Artisan

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13 (Studded Leather)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Athletics +6

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** confident and steady

**Shadow** hammered and dented bronze  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** field smithy, 1d10 shillings

**Crushing Hammer.** On a critical hit, the artisan can choose to destroy the opponent's shield (if it has one) instead of doing extra damage. Magical shields are not destroyed but are damaged and cannot be used until repaired outside of combat.

### ACTIONS

**Long Hammer.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage or 9 (1d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage if wielded with two hands.

Alberetor and woven together in the newly formed guilds, these settlers are determined not to let the problems of the new world get in the way of their work.

**Tactics.** The muscular Artisan focuses on enemies with shields, to make use of their Crushing Hammer technique.

## Drug Peddler

*"The first dose is free."*

Despite attempts to organize Ambria's craftsmen into guilds, the alchemical practices have proven particularly difficult to control. Unscrupulous drug peddlers are purchasing elixirs from witches, sorcerers, and greedy Adepts of the Order, to be sold on the black market.

**Tactics.** Throws Spore Bombs at armored enemies and uses its poisoned dagger against those with less armor.

### Drug Peddler

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 13 (3d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 12 (+1) |

**Skills** Alchemist's supplies +5, Deception +3

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** timid and sly

**Shadow** stained steel with black scratches  
(Corruption: 2/5)

**Equipment** 1d4 doses each: concentrated magic, drone dew, herbal cure, Spore Bombs, waybread, weak poison

**Distract (1/day).** The drug peddler can use its bonus action to cause a distraction, gaining advantage on its stiletto attack this turn.

### ACTIONS

**Stiletto.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, plus 3 (1d6) poison damage. Deep impact: on a critical hit, this weapon does a total of 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

## Drunkard

*"You... Come 'ere, I'll bust ya nose!"*

Many older Ambrians are haunted by traumatic memories from the war and/or terrible failures in the new country; they often lose themselves in the bottle and use their fists to seek vengeance on the world that caused their pain.

**Tactics.** Roars as a maniac and flails its fists wildly, without any regard for the safety of itself (or any bystanders).

### Drunkard

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 11 (+0) | 11 (+0) |

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** wobbles unsteadily and attacks without thought

**Shadow** greenish bronze (Corruption: 0/4)

**Equipment** 1d8 ortegs

**Cheap Shots.** The drunkard's unarmed strikes do 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

#### ACTIONS

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

#### REACTIONS

**Wild Swing.** If a creature comes into the drunkard's reach it can try to make an unarmed strike with disadvantage.

## Guard Dog

Unlike the increasingly common battle-trained jakaars, the regular guard dog is more focused on detecting and warning of threats than attacking the intruders. Practically every Ambrian who has something of value (a business, plantation, antiques, or a sum of thaler) keeps a trained guard dog, whether they are based in the countryside or in a larger settlement.

**Tactics.** Guard dogs often work in pairs, helping each other to keep an eye on the area they are supposed to guard. When intruders show up, they initially bark, then try to keep the enemy busy until reinforcements arrive.

### Guard Dog

Medium beast

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 6 (1d8 + 2)

**Speed** 40 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 4 (-3) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

**Skills** Perception +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** protective and waiting

**Shadow** grainy light brown, like dry soil or road dust (Corruption: 0/2)

**Equipment** —

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The guard dog has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Raise Alarm.** The guard dog can spend a bonus action to bark loudly, summoning someone within 1d4 + 1 rounds. Depending on the situation, this might be an artisan, farmhand, or other townsfolk.

#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature it must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## Innkeeper

*"Easy now, before someone gets hurt."*

The innkeepers of Ambria are used to anything. Throwing out drunks and troublemakers is part of the job, as is creating antidotes or herbal cures for battered travelers.

They also make sure that at least one or two of their employees can back them up if necessary – waiters, dishwashers or stablehands. If statistics are needed for these, use Squire (page 177).

**Tactics.** Cracks down on anyone who pulls a weapon; then starts the process of throwing the dregs out.

## Innkeeper

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 12 (leather apron)

**Hit Points** 78 (12d8 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Insight +4, Perception +4, Performance +1

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** welcoming

**Shadow** glistening silver and copper  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** 1d10 shillings

**Cheap Shots.** The innkeeper is well versed in back-alley fighting. Its unarmed strikes do 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

### ACTIONS

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

**Stunning Strike.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target is stunned until the end of the innkeeper's next turn.

## Medicus

*"Lie still, and bite down hard."*

Ambrian medical expertise is not yet controlled by a certain guild. The knowledge comes from various sources, with scholars, priests, alchemists, and barbers making up the nation's motley medical community.

**Tactics.** Protects any patients without regard for their own safety, no matter if they are drunks or nobles.

## Medicus

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 54 (12d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 8 (-1) |

**Skills** Medicine +5, Perception +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** strict and determined

**Shadow** rosy-gold, as a blazing sunset  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** 1d6 + 1 herbal cures, 1d4 doses of weak antidote, 1d4 pieces of waybread

**Medical Knowledge.** The medicus has advantage on checks made to heal or stabilize a creature.

**Medicus (4/day).** If the medicus binds a creature's wounds, that creature regains one Hit Die (if possible).

### ACTIONS

**Scalpel.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage. Deep impact: on a critical hit, the scalpel does 2 slashing damage.

## Noble Brat

*"Don't you know who my mother is!?"*

Whether in the streets of Yndaros, an army camp, or in some countryside village, it is said that a swanky young noble is never more than a stone's throw away.

**Tactics.** Orders its companions to teach the adversary a lesson; then tries to flank an enemy, or retreat with head held high.

### Noble Brat

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 16 (skald's cuirass, buckler)

**Hit Points** 45 (7d8 + 14)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 13 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) |

**Skills** History +3, Performance +3

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** haughty, stubborn and puffed-up

**Shadow** shimmering silver or gold (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** 1d10 + 10 thaler, smelling salts

#### ACTIONS

**Fencing Sword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

#### REACTIONS

**Parry.** The noble brat adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the noble brat must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Slumming Nobles

In cities like Yndaros and Agrella, it is not unusual for highborn youngsters to mingle with the less fortunate – for the thrill of it, or simply because they want to get away from the etiquette and ceremonies required at gatherings of the nobles. Whatever the reason, these kinds of social excursions tend to end in brawls or tears, as someone in the company inevitably refuses to pretend they are equal to the uncultivated rabble.

## Witch-hunter

The witch-hunter is specialized in fighting abominations, cultists and other evils which draw their strength from the dark of Davokar. Some are nothing but charlatans – brutal, unscrupulous thugs who roam from village to village and collect pay to expose “the evil” behind everything from bad harvests to dried out wells and violent outbreaks of the flu; often some poor eccentric or outsider who is totally without blame. Others know what they are doing...

### Self-taught Witch-hunter

Medium human (Ambrian)

**Armor Class** 17 (scale mail)

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Deception +6, Insight +4, Intimidation +6, Perception +4, Persuasion +6

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Ambrian

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** convincing, blustering sermons

**Shadow** shiny copper with spots of corrosion (Corruption: 3/8)

**Equipment** book with prayers, tools for interrogations, 1d10 shillings

**Ritualist.** The witch-hunter can cast *detect magic*, *holy smoke*, and *locate object* as rituals (it gains no temporary Corruption for casting, spell attack +4, saving throw 12).

#### ACTIONS

**Grappling Axe.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if wielded with both hands.

**Heavy Crossbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.



The barbarian legends about Troll-Mother Ognyx are very popular. They are thrilling, frightening and always end with the vicious and violent death of the taboo-breaking human.

# Trolls

**AMONG AMBRIANS THE** troll is the epitome of Davokar's many horrors. If you are to believe the stories told at taverns and inns, the trolls are numerous but also a varied bunch of creatures, from human-sized brutes to virtual behemoths. That they are driven by hunger is evident, also that they seem to lack the fears and wariness of humans – two facts which make them prone to attack travelers and caravans in the wilds even if they are outnumbered.

In sharp contrast to the Ambrian experience, barbarian legends speak of civilized trolls; trolls living in organized, underground villages; trolls that tunnel through the ground in search of jewels and metals, that weave magical fabrics and brew healing juices. But the special expert on the topic at Ordo Magica, Chapter Master Argoi in Kurun, maintains that even if that may have been true one or two centuries ago, a majority of today's trolls are too aggressive to obey, compromise and reason – abilities that are a must in all civilized communities.

## Arch Troll

The roaming titans commonly called Arch Trolls do not have much more than some facial features in common with smaller trolls. Furthermore, the scarce observations which have been written down disagree regarding everything except when describing them as having the height of between two and three men. Aside from that the arch trolls have been portrayed as being skinny or fat, crooked or stately, stupid or wise; some describe them as having horns, others as having long and greasy hair.

The Ambrians and barbarians who claim to have encountered an arch troll and survived to tell about it all say that they have done so in one of two ways – either they have spun around and fled for their lives, or they have been let loose after having performed some kind of service. Regarding the latter, Grand Master Seldonio has transcribed an interview with a nameless fortune-hunter who claimed to have survived two arch troll encounters. The first time he did so by answering a series of challenging riddles; the second time by actually singing an exhausted yet irritably spirited arch troll to sleep.

**Tactics.** The arch troll prefers to enthrall the target, hoping to learn more about it. If that is not possible it unleashes its destructive powers and claws its way through one opponent at a time.

## Arch Troll

Huge humanoid (Troll)

**Armor Class** 14 (skins)

**Hit Points** 229 (17d12 + 119, tough)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 25 (+7) | 15 (+2) | 23 (+6) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) |

**Skills** Athletics +13, Intimidation +8, Perception +7

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** Troll languages

**Challenge** 17 (18,000 XP, proficiency bonus +6)

**Manner** clever, demanding

**Shadow** bluish-red, like the anoxic blood of the deepest veins  
(Corruption: 0/14)

**Equipment** crude alchemical equipment, weak poison, weak antidote, jewelry and trinkets (1d10 thaler)

**Legendary Resistance (2/day).** If the troll fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Enthrall.** When a creature first tries to act against the troll they must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure the creature becomes charmed by the troll until the end of its turn. A creature that succeeds at the saving throw becomes immune to the effect for 24 hours.

**Rage (6/day).** As a bonus action, the troll can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the troll has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds +6 to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Regeneration.** The arch troll recovers 12 hit points at the start of its turn, unless it has taken acid or fire damage since its last turn.

**Tough.** The arch troll has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

## ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The troll makes two claw attacks. Each grappled creature (see below) prevents the troll from making a claw attack.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d12 + 7) slashing damage.

**Grab and Squeeze.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 23). The troll can have a maximum of two creatures grappled. On subsequent rounds, it can use its action to do 20 (2d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage to a target.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d12 + 7) piercing damage.

**Kick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage.

## LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The arch troll 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 arch troll regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Biting.** The arch troll makes a bite attack.

**Stomping.** The arch troll makes a kick attack.

**Squeezing (Costs 2 Actions).** The arch troll squeezes all opponents it has grappled.

## Liege Troll

Far more uncommon than the rage trolls are the terrors that the Ambrians call Liege Trolls. And that is a good thing! By all accounts these giants are about ten feet tall, shrewdly calculating and purposely brutal – towards humans and beasts as well as their own followers. Aside from a few questionable reports the liege trolls are never seen alone; they have gotten their name because they always surround themselves with a court of about five to twenty devoted rage trolls, prepared to do anything for their master.

In barbarian legends the liege trolls often come across as tribal leaders, indeed crude and domineering but with the ability to plan, organize and order the rage trolls about. Even if there may be some truth to that, there is nothing to indicate that they have any higher concerns than to fill their own bellies. Liege trolls do not build communities; they exploit their lesser siblings for personal comfort and in defense against other dangers in the forest – at least if one is to judge from the observations gathered by Master Argoi in Kurun.

**Tactics.** The liege troll sends Rage Trolls forth to assess the strength of the opponent, then attacks the physically weakest target – preferably a mystic since they are both weak and dangerous.



Many troll-crafted artifacts have been stolen or lost throughout the centuries; taking them back is considered an almost holy endeavor.

## Liege Troll

*Large humanoid (Troll)*

**Armor Class** 14 (skins)

**Hit Points** 149 (13d10 + 78, tough)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 20 (+5) | 13 (+1) | 12 (+1) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Athletics +9, Intimidation +3, Perception +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Barbarian, Troll languages

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP, proficiency bonus +4)

**Manner** bossy, fearless

**Shadow** deep red, with streaks of rust

(Corruption: 2/7)

**Equipment** crude alchemical equipment, weak poison, weak antidote, jewelry and trinkets (1d10 thaler)

**Rage (3/day).** As a bonus action, the troll can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the troll has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds +4 to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Regeneration.** The liege troll recovers 9 hit points at the start of its turn, unless it has taken acid or fire damage since its last turn.

**Tough.** The liege troll has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The troll makes two claw attacks. Each grappled creature (see below) prevents the troll from making a claw attack.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage.

**Grab and Squeeze.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 19). The troll can have a maximum of two creatures grappled. On subsequent rounds, it can use its action to do 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage to a target.

## Mountain Troll

The relatively small, yet very resilient trolls inhabiting the Titans and the Ravens are thought to belong to a different breed than those roaming the lowlands. When the Ambrians first came to the Promised Land, they caused a lot of grief, and after a number of caravan attacks Queen Korinthia offered a standing reward of 15 shillings for each mountain troll's head.

**Tactics.** Rushes into battle and strikes down as many enemies as possible.

### Mountain Troll

Medium humanoid (Troll)

**Armor Class** 20

**Hit Points** 157 (15d8 + 90, tough)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 20 (+5) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 9 (-1) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP, proficiency bonus +3)

**Manner** bold and direct

**Shadow** blueish white, like the water from a melting glacier (Corruption: 0/5)

**Equipment** —

**Hard Skin.** The mountain troll's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice the troll's Constitution modifier.

**Rage (2/day).** As a bonus action, the troll can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the troll has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds +3 to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Regeneration.** The mountain troll recovers 8 hit points at the start of its turn, unless it has taken acid or fire damage since its last turn.

**Tough.** The rage troll has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The mountain troll makes two claws attack.

**Claws.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Retaliate.** When another creature within its reach does damage to the creature, it can make a single claws attack in response.

## Pale Crawler

When a wild and confused ogre cannot find its way to civilization, it sometimes ends up in the Underworld. Among the excrement of trolls and goblins, in corrupting environments that distort their bodies beyond recognition, these desperate creatures climb and crawl on their long, spider-like limbs.

**Tactics.** The Pale Crawlers are known to surround their prey in the darkness and attack in a group from all directions at once. If the battle proves tough, they retreat after trying to steal as many items as possible.

### Pale Crawler

Large humanoid (Troll)

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 85 (10d10 + 30, tough)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 11 (+0) | 20 (+5) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7, Perception +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** secretive

**Shadow** grayish lilac, like a dried violet (Corruption: 2/3)

**Equipment** —

**Magic Resistance.** The pale crawler has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

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

**Tough.** The pale crawler has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Death Blow.** When the pale crawler is reduced to 0 hit points it splays out its claws in a death seizure. If the attacker is within 5 feet of the creature, make a melee attack roll against the attacker with disadvantage.

**3** ADVERSARIES



## Rage Troll, Famished

Rage troll is the Ambrian name for the most commonly encountered type of this beastly race. In height they are comparable with Ambrians and barbarians, but their bodily constitution is more similar to a bear's, or perhaps even more to the type of grotesque bull that was seen pulling the enemy's wagons during The Great War. These trolls are often described as extremely ravenous and aggressive, to the extent that they very well may attack fortified villages singlehanded.

**Tactics.** The famished rage troll attacks one target at a time, until all of them are dead.

### Famished Rage Troll

Medium humanoid (Troll)

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 85 (10d8 + 40, tough)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 17 (+3) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 9 (-1) |

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** hungry

**Shadow** bright-red, like arterial blood full of life  
(Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** —

**Rage (1/day).** As a bonus action, the troll can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the troll has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds +2 to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Tough.** The rage troll has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

## Rage Troll, Group Living

Rage trolls living in groups are probably just as hungry and combative as their lone-wandering relatives, but they are not as reckless – maybe because they are wiser, maybe because they have allowed themselves to be disciplined by the group's leader. Irrespective of the reason, there is no doubt that many a colony, outpost and caravan have been massacred by a posse of rage trolls led by some bellowing Liege Troll.

**Tactics.** The group-living Rage Trolls attack in packs, trying to encircle the target. Then their berserker-like rage usually does the trick.

### Group Living Rage Troll

Medium humanoid (Troll)

**Armor Class** 13 (skins)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d8 + 64, tough)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT     | WIS     | CHA    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) | 11 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 9 (-1) |

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +3, Survival +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Troll languages

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP, proficiency bonus +2)

**Manner** still hungry but listening for orders

**Shadow** blood red (Corruption: 0/3)

**Equipment** lucky charm in the form of a human cranium

**Rage (2/day).** As a bonus action, the troll can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the troll has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds +2 to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Tough.** The rage troll has 1 extra hit point for each Hit Die it has.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaattack.** The troll makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

### REACTIONS

**Retaliate.** When a creature within its reach does damage to the troll it can make a single claws attack in response.



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## SECTION 4

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# Adaption & Expansion

*“Many are the forms of nature, and many the shapes that swirled in the darkness that came before – and will come after.”*

These words are perhaps known to you, attributed to the living lightbringer Deseba the Old, and much quoted by lesser minds trying to sound clever. What you may not realize, is that they echo a heretical idea inspired by the elves, a worldview which is as corrupting to the mind that harbors it, as it is distasteful to the tongue which gives it voice. It implies that water should be thanked for the wheel turning at the water mill; that the trees are to be given credit for the spokes of the wheel; that the weeds should be worshiped for the grain we turn into flour. Absurd! We did this, not nature! We did this to strengthen Prios.

We must understand that nature has no inherent shape or form, that there are no structures in the wilds, only chance and chaos. Also, the beastly creatures have but random and primitive forms, awaiting human discipline, refinement, and education. We give the world structure, we give nature purpose, and we give Creation value in the eyes of Prios. How could it be otherwise?”

Excerpt from *Hordes of the Eternal Night*, Father Almagast

# Monster Categories

**THE MONSTERS IN** *Ruins of Symbaroum* use a slightly different system of categorization from the core system:

## ABOMINATIONS

The Abomination category covers all the thoroughly corrupted blight beasts, daemons, and creatures terrorizing the Davokar region. Particularly sensitive creatures – such as children and animals – react with instinctive dislike towards abominations, even if they appear mundane. Others can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check to notice the reaction of said children or animals.

Also, note that blight-stricken and thoroughly corrupted creatures recognize each other's darkness and will normally not attack one another. A blight-marked person can make a Charisma (Persuasion) check to affect an abomination's behavior, for instance making it leave the individual and their fellow travelers alone.

## BEASTS

Beasts are non-humanoid creatures that are a natural part of the ecology. Some have magical powers, most are unintelligent and lack any society or language. Includes ordinary and giant versions of animals. They are closely connected to the wild and untamed nature, be it in the form of the forest of Davokar, the valleys of the Ravens, or the courses of the rivers. The category covers wild animals (both predators and herbivores) as well as tamed and human-trained ones. Cunning creatures like the spider monsters are also included in the Beast category – while they have an intellect close to that of cultural beings, they are still fundamentally driven by instinct.

## CONSTRUCT

Constructs are made, not born. Some are programmed by their creators to follow a simple set of instructions, while others are imbued with sentience and capable of independent thought.

## DRAGON

Dragons are large reptilian creatures of ancient origin and tremendous power.

## ELEMENTAL

Some creatures of this type are little more than animate masses of their respective elements, including the creatures simply called elementals. Others have biological forms infused with elemental energy.

## HUMANOIDS

This category includes the world's more or less intelligent, community-building creatures – such as humans, elves, bestiaals, changelings, ogres, goblins, darklings, and trolls. They have few features in common, other than that they organize themselves socially and develop different cultures depending on where they are located. Humanoids can have monstrous features, but if so they are linked to their origin rather than the category. Normally, members of this category have features, traits and feats, just like player characters.

## PLANT

Plants in this context are vegetable creatures, not ordinary flora. Most of them are ambulatory, and some are carnivorous. Deadly flora is mentioned in many expedition chronicles. Barbarians and witches are well aware of the threats which grow and blossom, and as more and more treasure hunters venture deeper into Davokar, these horrors are becoming increasingly evident to Ambrians as well.

## PHENOMENON

The term Phenomena is used to describe a large number of beings which scholars find hard to classify in any other way. In many cases it can actually be difficult to determine whether they are beings at all, and not a hateful place or a climate condition; indeed, the strangest of these occurrences are best described as poisonous and contagious states of mind, rather than physical phenomena.

## UNDEAD

Undead are once-living creatures brought to a horrifying state of undeath through the practice of necromantic magic or some unholy curse. The Undead category covers both spirits and walking corpses. Spirits are creatures without physical bodies, while walking corpses are dead bodies possessed by a living spirit.

## TAGS

A monster might have one or more tags appended to its type, in parentheses. For example, an elf has the humanoid (elf) type. The tags have no rules of their own, but something in the game, such as a magic item, might refer to them. For instance, a spear that is especially effective at fighting trolls would work against any monster that has the Troll tag.

# Monster Features

THE FOLLOWING PROVIDES a list of monster features, traits, lair actions, legendary actions, reactions and features. You can use this list to help customize an OGL creature, create a new one, or modify an existing threat to make a new challenge for your players.

## Features and Traits

- Acidic Blood.** Another creature that attacks this creature with a melee weapon takes 4 (1d8) acid damage and 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption from its blood spattering onto their body.
- Archery Style.** This creature has a +2 to attack rolls with ranged weapons.
- Acrobatic Dodge.** The creature can make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check with the attack roll as the DC to take half damage from an attack on a success.
- Action Surge (X/day).** The creature can take an extra action.
- Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the creature can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.
- Air Form.** This creature can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.
- Alchemical Weapons.** This creature is trained in alchemical weapons.
- Ambusher.** This creature has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.
- Amphibian.** The creature can breathe in water and air.
- Ancient Magic.** This creature can cast [three cantrips] without gaining Corruption.
- Aquatic.** The creature breathes water.
- Archivist.** The creature has advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks while researching in archives and libraries.
- Armored.** The creature's AC is calculated using normal armor. Use 10 + Dexterity modifier + proficiency bonus as a minimum.
- Armored Carapace.** Most of this creature's body is protected by a carapace made of minerals extracted from the rock. Another creature can aim for a patch of exposed flesh by taking disadvantage on the attack roll - the creature's AC becomes [AC - 5] instead.
- Artifact Sense.** This creature can sense the presence of magical objects, up to half-a-mile (1 kilometer) away.
- Backstab (1/turn).** The creature deals an extra [its Hit Dice  $\div 2$  (rounded up)] d6 damage when it hits a target with a melee weapon attack and has advantage on the attack

roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the creature that isn't incapacitated and the creature doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Bestial.** This creature has disadvantage on Deception, Performance and Persuasion checks. It has advantage on Intimidation checks.

**Blood-drain.** If this creature is successful with its bite attack, it can use its bonus action to do [proficiency bonus] d6 necrotic damage to the creature. It regains hit points equal to half this damage.

**Blood Frenzy.** The creature has advantage on melee attack rolls against any other creature that currently has less than its maximum hit points.

**Captivate.** The creature uses its bonus action and stares at a single creature with its wide yellow eyes. The creature must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier] Wisdom saving throw or become stunned for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success.

**Carapace.** This creature can close itself up in its shell and roll towards its enemies. When rolled up, enemies have disadvantage on attack rolls and this creature cannot attack. Rolling itself up or unrolling requires a bonus action.

**Charge.** If the creature moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with an [appropriate] attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra [proficiency bonus] d6 slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier] Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Cheap Shots.** This creature is well versed in back-alley fighting. Its unarmed strikes do 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

**Chitin Armor.** The creature's armor class is equal to 10 plus its Dexterity modifier and its Constitution modifier.

**Combat Magic Expert.** This creature has [proficiency bonus] Combat dice. It can use a bonus action to add a Combat die to its spell attack roll or spell damage. It can add a Combat die to a saving throw to maintain concentration. It regains spent Combat dice when it takes a short or longer rest.

**Congealed Blood.** The creature is resistant to bludgeoning damage.

**Corruption Filter.** At the beginning of its turn, if this creature's Corruption is below its Threshold, it loses 1 temporary Corruption.

**Corruption Sense.** If another creature has one or more points of permanent Corruption, the creature has advantage on Perception checks to find or notice it.

**Corruption Siphon.** With a successful bite attack and a bonus action, the creature drains 1d6 temporary Corruption from another creature. If the other creature still has temporary Corruption remaining, it gains 1 point of permanent Corruption.

**Corruptive Blood.** Another creature that attacks this creature with a melee weapon takes 3 (1d6) acid damage and 1 temporary Corruption from its blood spattering onto their body.

**Crush.** If this creature begins its turn grappling another creature, it can use its bonus action to cause [ $\{\text{proficiency bonus} + 1\}\{\text{Hit Die}\} + \text{Strength modifier}$ ] bludgeoning damage to that creature.

**Crushing Hammer.** On a critical hit, this creature can choose to destroy the opponent's shield (if it has one) instead of doing extra damage. Magical shields are not destroyed but are damaged and cannot be used until repaired outside of combat.

**Cumbersome.** This armor is unwieldy and the creature has disadvantage on all Dexterity checks while wearing it.

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the creature can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Damage Transfer.** While it is grappling another creature, the creature takes only half the damage dealt to it, and the other creature grappled by this creature takes the other half.

**Dark Destiny.** If this creature reaches or exceeds its Corruption Threshold, as its next action it [chosen destiny] and its temporary Corruption becomes 0.

**Deadly Breath** (Recharge 5–6). This creature can release a lightning attack [ $\{\text{proficiency bonus} + 1\} \times 10$ ] feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in the area of effect must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Dexterity modifier] Dexterity saving throw, taking [ $2 \times \text{proficiency bonus}\}$  d6 lightning damage on a failure and half that on a success.

**Death Cry** (Recharge 5–6). This creature wails a keening cry that transcends the borders between life and death. Each other creature that hears it must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Charisma modifier] Constitution saving throw, taking necrotic damage equal to their current Corruption total.

**Distract (X/day).** The creature can use its bonus action to cause a distraction, gaining it advantage on its stiletto attack this turn.

**Draconic Feature.** If this creature takes a short or longer rest, it can select [one or more] draconic features to gain.

**Drain.** As a bonus action this creature can drain the life from another creature it shares a space with. The other creature takes 5 (1d10) necrotic damage and 1 temporary Corruption.

**Dueling Style.** This creature adds +2 to its damage rolls with a melee weapon.

**Earth Glide.** This creature can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone. While doing so, this creature doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

**Earthbound.** This creature's Corruption total reduces its current and maximum hit points. If its Corruption total is above 0 and this creature reaches 0 hit points then it becomes unconscious, waking up after a short rest. This creature does not gain Marks of Corruption when it exceeds its Corruption Threshold. Another creature can slay this creature by doing a total of damage equal to or above its original, unmodified maximum hit points.

**Echolocation.** This creature cannot use its blindsight while deafened.

**Enduring March.** The creature has advantage on saving throws against exhaustion.

**Enlarged.** The creature is increased in size one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. It gains temporary hit points equal to its number of Hit Dice. It does an additional 1d4 damage on melee attacks while enlarged.

**Enthrall.** When another creature tries to act against this creature they must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Charisma modifier] Wisdom saving throw. On a failure the other creature becomes charmed by this creature until the end of its next turn. A creature that succeeds at the saving throw becomes immune to the effect for 24 hours.

**Entice.** Another creature that has not already been attacked by this creature and is within 120 feet of it must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier] Wisdom saving throw or approach closer. A creature that fails three Wisdom saving throws in a row decides to rest within 30 feet of the creature.

**[Environment] Camouflage.** This creature has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in [environment] terrain.

**Evasion.** If the creature is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the creature instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

**Expertise.** This creature has expertise in [skill/tool] and [skill/tool].

**Extendable Eyestalks.** This creature can extend its eyestalks above the waterline. While submerged, other creatures have disadvantage on their Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect this creature.

**False Appearance.** While this creature remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal plant.

**Fire Form.** This creature can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. Another creature that touches this creature or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it takes 5 (1d10) fire damage. In addition, this creature can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. The first time it enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage and

catches fire; until someone takes an action to douse the fire, the affected creature takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

**Fleet-footed.** This creature can use its bonus action to take the Dash action.

**Flyby.** This creature doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

**Gravely Cold.** Each other creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of this creature must pass a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Constitution modifier] Constitution saving throw or take [1d6 + Constitution modifier] cold damage and lose 10 feet of its movement speed until the end of its turn.

**Hard Skin.** This creature's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice the creature's Constitution modifier.

**Harmful Aura.** If another creature is within 60 feet of this creature when it must roll for a Mark of Corruption (*Player's Guide*, page 38), it has disadvantage on that roll.

**Haunting.** When this creature is inside another creature, it can attempt to take control of the other creature. The other creature must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Wisdom modifier] saving throw or become possessed by the creature. At the end of its turn it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on a success. A creature that succeeds on the saving throw is immune to the haunting feature for 24 hours.

**Holy Aura.** The creature can choose to gain either 1, 1d4 + 1, or 1d4 + 2 temporary Corruption when it makes a successful attack roll. It can then add 3 times the Corruption gained as radiant damage to the attack.

**Hunter's Instinct.** This creature can use its bonus action to mark one creature as its chosen target. The first time it does damage to the target, it does +2 bonus damage. It can use its reaction when the target moves to make a ranged weapon attack.

**Illumination.** This creature sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light an additional 30 feet beyond that.

**Incorporeal Movement.** This creature 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. If the object is a creature, that creature takes 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.

**Infectious** (Recharge 5–6). If this creature bites another creature, it can use its bonus action to force that creature to make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature gains [an infection/disease].

**Innate Spellcasting.** The creature's innate spellcasting ability is [Ability Score] ([spell save, to hit calculated as normal]). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components. [pick spells as appropriate].

**Inspire.** The creature chooses one allied creature that shares a language with it and can hear the creature. The creature speaks encouraging words to it, giving it advantage on

ability checks and attack rolls until the beginning of the creature's next turn.

**Insubstantial.** This creature can pass through objects and creatures without issue. It cannot wear or carry anything.

**Invisibility.** This creature is invisible.

**Keen Hearing.** This creature has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

**Keen Smell.** The creature has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Lay on Hands** ([proficiency bonus]/day). This creature can touch a creature and restore Wisdom modifier + 1 hit points to them as an action.

**Leathery Skin.** This creature's armor class is equal to 12 plus its dexterity modifier if it is not wearing armor.

**Legendary Resistance (X/day).** If the creature fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead. [Note that this implies the presence of legendary actions and possibly lair actions as well.]

**Life Sense.** This creature has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to detect living creatures.

**Lorekeeper.** The creature can make an Intelligence (Investigation) check to gain clues about some ancient secret or hidden knowledge. The DC for the check is dependent on the nature of the information and some things cannot be found in scrolls or half-remembered lectures or stories.

**Man-at-Arms.** This creature's armor class is improved by +1. It can don or doff armor in half the regular required time.

**Magic Resistance.** The creature has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Maul.** If this creature has another creature grappled at the beginning of its turn, it can use its bonus action to do [2d10 + Strength modifier] slashing damage.

**Medical Knowledge.** The creature has advantage on checks made to heal or stabilize a creature.

**Medicus (X/day).** If the creature binds a creature's wounds, that creature regains one Hit Die (if possible).

**Metamorphosis.** This creature can use a bonus action to change its body, changing its features out for others.

**Mimicry.** This creature can use its bonus action to imitate the sound of a trapped animal or hurt child by making a Charisma (Deception) check.

**Mirage.** This creature can produce an illusion to attract prey. A creature can detect the illusion by making a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Intelligence or Charisma modifier] Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Mirrors.** This creature can use its bonus action to create up to three duplicates of itself. When attacked, the GM rolls 1d12. Only on a 10–12 does the attack hit the actual glimmer. If the attack hits a duplicate, it is destroyed. When only two duplicates remain, an attack is successful on a 9–12. When only one duplicate remains, an attack is successful on a 7–12. This feature is only available for thoroughly corrupt creatures.

**Multiattack.** This creature can make more than one attack when it takes an action, choosing between attack features it already has. It can also repeat the same attack feature more than once.

**Natural Weapon.** The creature has an inherent melee weapon, like a claw, beak, talon or other dangerous appendage. The creature is proficient with the weapon, using either Strength or Dexterity. The weapon does damage equal to the creature's Hit Die size (so a Medium creature does 1d8 damage) of a type appropriate to the appendage (e.g. piercing for a beak, slashing for a claw, bludgeoning for a slam attack, etc.).

Nature's Lullaby ([proficiency bonus]/day). The creature can use this feature to bypass an abomination.

**Nimble.** The creature's armor class is equal to 10 plus twice its Dexterity modifier.

**Nimble Escape.** The creature can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Noisy.** While wearing its armor the creature has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. [This feature is required by armors with the noisy property.]

**Off-hand Attack.** This creature can use its bonus action to make another attack with a light melee or ranged weapon held in its off hand.

**Orderly Withdrawal.** This creature can move up to half its speed away from an enemy without provoking an opportunity attack.

**Pack Tactics.** The creature has advantage on an attack roll against another creature if at least one of the creature's allies is within 5 feet of the other creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Poisonous.** If this creature is held with bare hands, it causes 3 (1d6) poison damage to the holder. If it bites another creature it can use its bonus action to flood its mouth with poison, causing target creatures to take 7 (2d6) poison damage in addition to other damage.

**Possession.** One humanoid that this creature can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a Charisma saving throw (the DC is 10 plus the target's total Corruption) or be possessed by this creature; the creature then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The creature can now take control of the body – when the creature is in control, the victim retains no memories of its actions or events during that time. The creature can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies. Its armor class is 10 + the target's Dexterity modifier and its to-hit value is its proficiency bonus + 10 or the higher of the target's Strength or Dexterity modifiers if better.

The possession lasts until the humanoid is slain, the creature ends it as a bonus action, or the creature is turned or forced out by an effect like the exorcism spell. When the possession ends, the creature reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this creature's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

**Pounce.** If the creature ends its movement within 10 feet of another creature, it may use its bonus action to leap onto the creature. If the other creature is [Same] size or smaller, it must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier] Strength saving throw or become prone.

**Rage (X/day).** As a bonus action, the creature can enter a rage that lasts for 1 minute. While in the rage, the creature has advantage on Strength checks and saving throws. When it makes a melee weapon attack it adds its proficiency bonus to its damage. The creature has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage while in the rage. The rage ends early if the creature ends its turn without having attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. It can also use a bonus action to end the rage.

**Raise Alarm.** This creature can spend a bonus action to make a loud noise, summoning a creature within 1d4 + 1 rounds. The creature summoned depends on the situation.

**Reckless Intensity.** When you begin combat, the creature must succeed at a [appropriate DC] Wisdom saving throw or become reckless – they have advantage on attack rolls against enemies, and enemies have advantage on attack rolls against them.

**Reduced.** The creature is reduced in size by one step, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. Its current and maximum hit points are reduced by its number of Hit Dice (to a minimum of 1 hit point). Its melee attack does the minimum possible damage (as if the creature rolled a 1 on all damage dice).

**Regeneration.** The creature recovers [Constitution modifier + proficiency bonus] hit points at the start of its turn, unless it has taken [one or two damage types] damage since its last turn.

**Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** If the creature takes damage that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

**Retract Tongue.** If this creature starts its turn with a Large or smaller creature grappled by its tongue, it can use its bonus action to retract its tongue and bring the other creature to within 5 feet of its body.

**Retreating.** If this creature starts its turn with [half its maximum hit points, rounded down] or fewer hit points, it must make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw or spend its turn retreating from the combat.



## THUS SPOKE AROALETA

*... and it happens, has happened,  
will happen again, that Wratha grows boundless,  
furious, blind in her hunger.*

*It happens that the blackness grows flesh  
and spirit and the sharpest of claws,  
that the fruit sheds seeds that poison the first,  
in the aim to suppress the second.*

*Then dies All ...*

**Revenant Strike.** A creature that dies because of damage from this creature's melee weapon returns as a dragoul (see page 156) under its control at the start of its next turn. This feature is only available to thoroughly corrupt creatures.

**Ritualist.** The creature can cast the specified spells with the ritual tag as rituals (it gains no temporary Corruption for casting).

**Robust.** This creature has a +2 to its Constitution score and has two more Hit Dice than other creatures of its type.

**Root Walls (X/day).** This creature can use a bonus action to erect a root wall. Each root wall is 10 feet high, 10 feet thick and consists of 1 to 4 10-foot wide sections. Each section is AC 18, has 50 hit points and is resistant to bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical weapons. No root wall section can be further than 60 feet from the main body of the original creature.

**Shapeshifter ([proficiency bonus]/day).** This creature can become [another creature] for [Hit Dice ÷ 2] hours.

**Shield Fighter.** If this creature makes a successful attack roll, it can use its bonus action to slam the target. If the target is a Medium sized creature or smaller, it must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure this creature can choose to move it 10 feet in a line, or cause the other creature to become prone.

**Siege Monster.** The creature deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Siege Expert.** The creature is trained in siege equipment and its attacks do double damage against structures.

**Sinkhole (Recharge 5–6).** The creature burrows directly at the feet of another creature, creating a 10-foot diameter hole. Each creature in the area must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier] Dexterity saving throw or fall into the hole, taking 7 (2d6)

bludgeoning damage and becoming prone 20 feet beneath the ground's surface.

**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** This creature deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of this creature that isn't incapacitated and this creature doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

**Spellcasting.** This creature is trained in one of the types of spellcasting. Include the creature's spell attack modifier, its spell save DC and choose spells from the appropriate list (including cantrips and ritual spells).

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

**Standing Leap:** The creature's long jump is up to [10 + Strength score] ft. and its high jump is up to [half previous amount] ft., with or without a running start.

**Stench.** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of this creature must succeed on a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Constitution modifier] Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to this creature's stench for 24 hours.

**Strangle.** If this creature has another creature grappled, it can use its bonus action to cause [proficiency bonus][Hit Die] bludgeoning damage to the creature.

**Stretching Whip.** If another creature enters the creature's reach with its whip, it can make a single attack with the whip.

**Summon Children (X/day).** This creature can summon its choice of [other creatures]. The other creatures arrive at the end of this creature's next turn.

**Survival Instinct (Goblin Only).** The goblin can take the Dodge or Disengage action as a bonus action.

**Swallow.** If the creature begins its turn with a Medium or smaller creature grappled it can use its bonus action to swallow the other creature. The swallowed target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the creature, and it takes 5 (2d4) acid damage at the start of each of its turns. The creature can have only one target swallowed at a time. If the creature dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 5 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Swipe.** This creature can strike out with its limbs when a creature comes within reach. The creature must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Dexterity modifier] Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage.

**Talismans ([proficiency bonus]).** A spell invested into a talisman costs only half its normal Corruption when cast. The artifact crafter currently has [number of chosen spells equal to proficiency bonus] invested.

**Terrifying.** Each other creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of this creature must pass a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Charisma modifier] Charisma saving throw or become frightened of it. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on a success. Creatures that succeed are immune to this effect for 24 hours.

**The Bigger They Are.** This creature has advantage on all attacks against creatures that are Large or bigger.

**Thirsty.** If this creature has no temporary Corruption it has advantage on its attacks.

**Tough.** The creature has 1 extra hit point for each hit die it has.

**Trampling Charge.** If this creature moves at least 20 feet straight toward another creature and then hits it with a hooves attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC [10 + Strength modifier] Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, this creature can make another melee attack against it as a bonus action.

**Trapper.** This creature can use its action to deploy a mechanical trap within 5 feet of its position. Another creature that enters the area must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d12 bludgeoning damage. This creature is never affected by the trap, but treats the area around the trap as difficult terrain.

**Tunneler.** If this creature leaves another creature's reach by burrowing it does not provoke an opportunity attack.

**Water Form.** This creature can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Water Susceptibility.** For every 5 feet this creature moves in water, or for every gallon of water splashed on it, it takes 1 cold damage.

**Wave of Corruption** (Recharge 5–6). This creature causes each other creature within 60 feet of it to make a DC [8 + Constitution modifier + proficiency bonus] Wisdom saving throw or gain 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption. This feature can only be used by thoroughly corrupt creatures.

**Web Sense.** While in contact with a web, this creature knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

**Web Walker.** This creature ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

**Whip Fighter.** If the creature successfully strikes with its whip, it can use its bonus action to make an attack with its other melee weapon if the target is in reach.

**Wilderness Explorer.** With a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check this creature can keep its party supplied in the wilderness.

**Wings.** This creature has wings and a flight speed of at least 30 feet.

**Witch Braid.** This creature has advantage on death saving throws.

## Lair Actions

CREATURES THAT HAVE legendary actions might also have lair actions, if the group is able to find their home. The following are examples and can be modified for other creatures.

**Cold Air:** If this creature is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause the air to become deadly chill, doubling the damage of gravely cold and giving non-undead creatures disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws. This creature cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

**Collapse!:** If this creature is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause an area of tunnel or ground to collapse. The area is a cube 20 feet on a side and must be within 120 feet of this creature. If in a tunnel, then each other creature within the area takes 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage and is restrained (escape DC 10). On the ground, each other creature takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from falling and is prone, 20 feet below the surface. This creature cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

**Irritation:** If this creature is within its territory, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) release an irritant into the air affecting creatures within 60 feet. Certain creatures may be immune to the irritant (GM's discretion). Other creatures must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the start of their turn. On a failure, the irritation is equivalent to the character being poisoned until the beginning of its next turn. This creature cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

**Strange Vapors:** The area where this creature lairs is surrounded by thick fog and strange echoes. On initiative count 20 (losing all ties) each other creature within 90 feet of this creature must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks. This creature cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

**Unstable Ground:** If this creature is in its lair, it can, on initiative count 20 (losing all ties) cause the ground to become unstable, and the area within 60 feet of this creature becomes difficult terrain. This creature cannot use this lair action if it is incapacitated or otherwise can't take actions. If surprised, it can't use it until after its first turn in the combat.

## Legendary Actions

- Attack.** The creature can make a melee attack.
- Cluster (requires 2 actions).** The swarm surrounds the head of a creature, causing that creature to be blinded until the swarm moves away or is destroyed.
- Command.** This creature can select another allied creature which takes its turn next, instead of at its normal initiative count. This effect lasts for only one round.
- Defend (requires 2 actions).** Attacks against this creature have disadvantage until the beginning of the creature's next turn.
- Detect.** This creature makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.
- Earthquake (Costs 2 Actions).** This creature shivers its body, sending quakes for [proficiency bonus × 10] feet. Each affected creature must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier] Strength saving throw, taking [Hit Die] bludgeoning damage and becoming prone on a failure. On a success, the creature takes half damage. Each structure in the area takes double damage automatically.
- Move.** The creature can move up to its speed.
- Recharge (Costs 2 Actions).** This creature automatically recharges another feature that requires a recharge.
- Shoot.** This creature can make a ranged weapon attack.
- Spellcast (costs 2 Actions).** This creature can cast one of its spells innately.
- Swallow.** This creature can make a swallow attack.

## Reactions

- A New Mirror.** When one of its mirror images is destroyed, the creature can restore it.
- Acrobatic Fighter.** When an attack roll is successful, this creature makes a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check using the attack roll result as the DC. On a success, it takes half damage from that attack.
- Battle Wind (X/day).** When an attack hits this creature, it receives 2d4 + [Constitution modifier] temporary hit points before it takes damage.
- Bid to Action.** When a creature's turn ends, this creature can call out a command, allowing an allied creature that can see and hear this creature to take their turn next. They cannot have already acted this round and this effect ends when their turn ends.
- Bleak Scream.** When this creature takes damage, it lets loose a scream that darkens every other creature's heart. Each other creature within 60 ft. of the creature that is not deafened must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, taking psychic damage equal to their total Corruption on a failure or half that amount on a success.
- Blighted Horns.** When another creature comes into reach, the creature can rake it with its slime-covered horns. The other creature must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or gain 2 (1d4) temporary Corruption.
- Body Check.** When another creature comes within reach, this creature can slam into the other creature with its body. The other creature must make a DC [10 + Athletics skill] Strength saving throw or become prone.
- Broad Antlers.** The wild tangle of the creature's antlers provides natural cover against ranged weapons. When attacked, it twists unnaturally, placing the thorny antlers in the path of the missile. Add [proficiency bonus] to the creature's AC.
- Crushing Embrace.** When a grappled creature attempts to escape and fails, this creature can squeeze it to do 2[Hit Die] bludgeoning damage.
- Death Blow.** When this creature is reduced to 0 hit points it splays out its claws in a death seizure. If the attacker is within 5 feet of the creature, make a melee attack roll against the attacker with disadvantage.
- Disappear.** When a creature makes an attack against this creature it can briefly become invisible, providing disadvantage on the attack roll if the creature uses sight to target its attacks.
- Dodge.** When attacked, this creature adds its Dexterity modifier to its armor class for this attack only. That attack misses if the attack roll is not equal to or higher than this creature's new armor class.
- Fade.** When attacked, the creature shifts itself towards the Spirit World, taking only half damage from an attack.
- Flare.** When another creature makes an attack against this creature it can briefly become much brighter, providing disadvantage on the attack roll if the other creature uses sight to target its attacks.
- Flowing Body.** When attacked, the damage for the attack is reduced by half.
- Harden Body.** When attacked, this creature gains [proficiency bonus] to its armor class against one attack.
- Instinctual Shot.** If another creature that this creature has made its chosen target uses its movement, and this creature is in range of the other creature, it may make a ranged weapon attack at the other creature.
- Intimidate.** When it detects the presence of another creature, this creature can stand on its hind legs and attempt to intimidate any creatures that can see and hear it. Such creatures must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Constitution or Charisma modifier] Wisdom saving throw or become frightened. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn and is immune to the effect for 24 hours once it is successful.
- Issue Command.** This creature can direct an allied creature that it can see within 60 feet to focus its efforts on a single target, adding +2 damage on a single damage roll after a successful attack roll.
- Nibble.** If this creature has a target grappled, it can make a melee attack against that target.

**Parry.** The creature adds its proficiency bonus to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the creature must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

**Polearm Master.** This creature can make an attack on another creature that enters its reach.

**Pounce.** When another creature comes within [10 + Acrobatics] feet of this creature, it can leap forward at the other creature and make a single melee attack.

**Preemptive Attack.** When a creature comes within reach, this creature can make a melee attack.

**Retaliate.** When another creature within its reach does damage to the creature, it can make a single melee attack in response.

**Roll Over.** When another smaller creature comes within reach, this creature can rotate its body to crush the other creature between itself and the ground. The creature takes [Hit Die + Strength modifier] bludgeoning damage.

**Root Trap.** If another creature comes within 10 feet of this creature, it can grapple the other creature (escape DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier]).

**Sidestep.** This creature can move up to half its speed when another creature comes within its reach without provoking an opportunity attack.

**Stretching Whip.** If another creature enters this creature's reach with its whip, it can make a single attack with the whip.

**Stomp.** If the creature passes within 5 feet of another creature, it can make a melee attack.

**Subdue.** If this creature successfully hits a Medium or smaller creature with its weapon, it can cause that creature to become prone.

**Sudden Lunge** (Recharge 5–6). If another creature misses with its melee attack this creature can lean into the target and make a melee attack.

**Sudden Strike.** When another creature comes within reach of the creature, it can make a melee attack as long as it is not grappling a creature with that attack method.

**Sudden Touch.** If another creature moves within reach, this creature makes a melee attack.

**Tail-attack.** When another creature comes within reach of this creature, it can swipe its tail at that creature. That creature must make a DC [8 + proficiency bonus + Strength modifier] Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

**Two-handed Force.** If this creature misses an attack, it can use its reaction to reroll the attack.

**Uncanny Dodge.** When another creature that this creature can see hits it with an attack, the creature can reduce the damage by half.

**Wild Swing.** If another creature comes into this creature's reach it can try to make an unarmed strike with disadvantage.

## **Swarms**

THE FOLLOWING FEATURES and traits are specifically for swarm creatures.

**Blinding.** This swarm reflects light from [some method] and purposefully swarms over a creature's head, trying to enter various orifices. A creature sharing a space with the swarm is blinded.

**Cries of Doom.** When the swarm does damage to a creature the other members of the swarm can let out a blood-curdling shriek. The injured creature must make a DC [10 + proficiency bonus] Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the swarm.

**Extraordinary Poison.** If another creature is already poisoned by this creature and fails its saving throw it becomes paralyzed instead. A successful saving throw at the end of the affected creature's turn removes the paralyzed condition and then the affected creature must make another successful saving throw to remove the poisoned condition.

**Scatter.** The swarm may separate after a successful attack to cause the damage to be halved, as few of the individual creatures are struck.

**Shift.** If a creature comes within 5 feet of the swarm, they can abandon a current target and swarm that creature instead.

**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a [size of a single creature]. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Swarm Growth.** If this swarm is within 5 feet of another friendly swarm, the two can combine together, adding their current hit points together. If the two swarms had different initiative counts, the combined swarm gains the lower initiative count.

**Swift.** The swarm can use its bonus action to fly its movement speed again.



# Terrain Features

**IT IS AN UNUSUAL** fight that takes place on a flat, featureless piece of ground with nothing to get in the way or provide cover for the combatants.

## TERRAIN FEATURES USING MAPS

If it's your convention to play with battlemaps then adding terrain features is fairly easy. Just add the appropriate sort of indicators (e.g. miniatures, flat-printed cards, or using dry-erase or wet-erase markers on a map). Try to arrange the position of features so that either side might be able to make use of them. If instead, the monsters (or the party) have an advantageous position with the terrain then that can also factor into the difficulty. If the group faces monsters that are entrenched in a defensive environment you might want to encourage them to think outside of just combat options.

In fact, many players might have an unconscious tendency to assume that 'map equals combat', in the theory that if you spent time preparing the map then it must be used, otherwise they're wasting your time preparing the map. In order to alleviate this, you might wish to start with just a verbal description of the environment, revealing the map only when combat is certain.

## TERRAIN FEATURES FOR THEATER OF THE MIND

If you play with theater of the mind (just describing the environment and perhaps using a rough map to indicate the location of features) then you can still use terrain. However, you will likely be more successful if you have several larger terrain features, rather than a greater number of small features. Otherwise, if the battle area is too complex, the players might not be able to use the environment to their advantage because they're having trouble envisioning the area.

## Cities and Towns

**COMBAT WITHIN TOWNS** can be exceptionally dangerous, especially if you're trying to avoid drawing attention to yourself.

### CARTS, BARRELS, BOXES, ETC.

Many businesses will either receive regular shipments of supplies or store long-lasting materials in warehouses. Most of these will offer half cover (+2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws) to creatures. A creature can use an action to overturn a cart or stack other items to provide three-quarters cover (+5 to AC and Dexterity saving throws).

## DITCHES AND DRAINS

Many urban areas have culverts, drainage channels or simple ditches to direct the flow of stormwater and waste. If a creature crosses one of these structures moving faster than their regular speed then they need to succeed at a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone.

## DOORS AND SHUTTERS

An open door can provide a character with three-quarters cover and a closed door provides total cover. An open shutter can provide none, half, or three-quarters cover depending on the size of the shutter and the size of the creature.

## ROOFS

Sloped roofs count as difficult terrain and a creature that ends its movement on a rain-slick or snow covered roof must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone on the roof. A creature that starts its turn prone on such a roof must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall off the roof. Creatures can use a sloped roof to provide half cover, depending on the position of their attackers.

## TUNNELS

Larger and older cities might have tunnels for sewage, stormwater, safe-rooms and escape tunnels for notables. Creatures using two weapons or a single weapon with reach make their attacks with disadvantage. In certain areas, creatures may need to squeeze through smaller passages (see the core rules).

## WALLS AND CORNERS

A wall between one creature and another provides total cover. A creature can use a corner where two walls meet to provide half cover.

## Farmlands

**THESE AREAS TEND** to have a collection of buildings, containers and vehicles that a combatant might use in a fight.

## BARNs AND OUTBUILDINGS

These structures usually provide total cover for a creature inside them (or if their opponent is inside the structure and they are outside and there are no open doors or windows). A creature can also use open doors or windows, or the corners of buildings as specified above. Note that often farm outbuildings are made of wood and are flammable.

**BARRELS AND BUSHELS**

These objects can provide half-cover or three-quarters cover, depending on their size and a creature's size. For barrels especially, a creature might be able to use an action to roll it at another creature, which must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone.

**CROPS**

Creatures that decide to hide in growing fields might be able to get half or three-quarters cover, depending on their size and the height of the crops.

**WAGONS AND CARTS**

A creature can hide behind these to get half or three-quarters cover, depending on sizes. A character can use an action to tip the vehicle over, in order to increase their cover. Turning a wagon over might require a Strength check, the DC should be between 10 and 20, depending on the size of the wagon and how much cargo (if any) it is carrying.

## Forest

MANY AREAS OF Davokar and other smaller forests are tightly packed with vegetation, making most of a particular combat area difficult terrain.

**ANIMAL PATH**

This narrow path allows quick movement. It does not count as difficult terrain – however, it probably winds back and forth, may lead to a water source, or a favorite grazing area. Characters might find both prey animals and predators alongside it if they are not cautious.

**BOUGHS**

There are many low-hanging boughs here, ensuring that the area counts as difficult terrain. Creatures can make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb up on the boughs, providing advantage on attack rolls against opponents on the ground.

**FALLEN TREES**

These trees have fallen, felled by old age or a woodcutter's keen axe. A creature that tries to scramble over them at full speed (or faster) must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone. A creature can mount the tree with a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check and then enjoy advantage on melee attack rolls while attackers have disadvantage on melee attack rolls to hit it.

**THICKETS**

A tight collection of trees and foliage that is impassable. A creature can gain half cover against creatures on the other side of the thicket just by staying within 5 feet of the terrain feature.

**SLOPES**

A gentle slope is difficult terrain for creatures climbing up it and counts as normal terrain for creatures going down it. If you are prone on a gentle slope you gain half cover against ranged attacks. Steep slopes are difficult terrain for both going down and climbing up, but offer three-quarters cover against ranged attacks for creatures that are prone.

**ROOTS**

Especially in Dark Davokar, tree roots can be massive, allowing appropriately sized creatures to gain either half or three-quarters cover. Creatures crossing an area with smaller tree roots at faster than their normal speed must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone.

**ROTTEN TREES**

Some rotten trees will obviously be dangerously unstable but others might at first appear to be solid. Each time you interact with the rotten tree element (by using it as cover, climbing it, walking on it as a bridge over a stream or other uses), roll a d20. On a natural 1, the rotten tree fails in some spectacular manner.

## Mountains

THESE HIGH PLACES have some special challenges of their own. Beneath the timberline you can use features from other appropriate categories.

**BOULDERS**

These large rocks can provide anywhere from half to total cover against enemies. Some of them are unstable – choose a size category from 0 to 10. It takes a Strength (Athletics) check with a DC of 15 + the size category to dislodge an unstable boulder and send it tumbling towards enemies. A creature can dodge the boulder with a Dexterity saving throw of 10 + the size category. On a hit, the boulder does 1d10 + the size category in bludgeoning damage.

**CLIFFS**

These are vertical (or near vertical) faces of exposed rock. They can be climbed by anyone with sufficient skill and equipment, but not in combat situations. Cliffs can extend ranges (due to the vertical distance a projectile or spell effect must travel) or provide cover depending on positioning. A creature forced off the top edge of a cliff will take falling damage, as specified in the core rules.

## CREVASSES AND RAVINES

These are great rifts in the ground, formed by shifting rock or running water. Smaller chasms can be jumped, larger well-known ones might have a bridge that crosses over, forming a choke-point for the environment. A creature can spend an action to damage the bridge – depending on the structure it takes from two to four damage actions to destroy one side of the bridge, causing the other side to collapse or swing to the other side. If the bridge is flexible, a Dexterity saving throw could allow creatures on the bridge a chance to hang on (the GM sets the DC based on the exact situation). Snow sometimes covers crevasses, requiring a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice it (or a passive Perception of 10 or better). Creatures that fall into a crevasse or ravine take fall damage as normal and might take cold damage as well from ice or nearly-freezing water if there is any at the bottom.

## SLOPES

Almost any area on a mountain will have some sort of slope to it. Very steep slopes are not vertical, but approach it – creatures ascending such a slope are effectively prone and use their climbing speed (half their regular speed if they don't have a separate climb speed). Steep and gentle slopes work the same as previously described, see previous page.

## Ruins

THESE AREAS CAN contain anything from the barest traces of walls and foundations to entire structures.

## FOUNDATIONS

What was once the flat base of a building is now a broken field of rubble, with slabs pushed up by tree roots or collapsed down into the ground by their weight. This area counts as difficult terrain.

## OLD, UNSTABLE WALLS

Walls, depending on size, can provide anything from half to total cover. However these walls are dangerously unstable. When you interact with the wall (e.g. taking cover behind it, leaning against it, or peering around it to make a ranged attack) roll a d20. On a 1, the wall collapses, doing 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage to anyone within 5 feet of the falling structure.

## PILLARS AND STATUES

If the pillar or statue is still standing then it can offer half or three-quarters cover depending on size. If it is fallen then a creature can take an action to climb on it, gaining advantage on melee attacks. Creatures making melee attacks against the creature have disadvantage, while ranged attacks have advantage, since the extra height makes the climber easier

to see. A creature can push down a statue or pillar with a Strength (Athletics) check (DC 15–25, GM's judgment).

## PITS

These are collapsed areas where underground areas of the ruins have become directly exposed to the surface. Open pits are easily detected and no one will accidentally fall in (however, a shove or other forced movement can cause them to fall, determine the depth of the pit and assign falling damage accordingly). Pits that have been covered (either as part of a natural debris cycle or intentionally) must be located – a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or a 15 or higher passive Perception allows the creatures to identify all the pits within 60 feet of them.

## RUBBLE

This area represents a collapsed wall or ceiling and is more uneven than an area of foundations. It counts as difficult terrain. You can spend an action in the area to collect 1d6 stones suitable as sling bullets.

## Swamps

THESE ARE AREAS of water-soaked ground, slow-moving rivers, and very shallow ponds or lakes.

## BOGS AND QUICKSAND

These are areas where the ground is fully saturated with water. It is difficult terrain and you must succeed at a DC 13 Strength saving throw when you begin to move or you become stuck for the round. A creature cannot drown in quicksand, but if it continues to struggle (a minute or more of failed Strength saving throws) then it gains a level of exhaustion. If a creature is knocked prone in the bog or quicksand then it must make a DC 13 Strength or Dexterity check to regain its footing (as well as spend half its movement).

## BRIARS AND NETTLES

This is an area of thorny undergrowth. A character can spend an action to clear an area 10 feet long in any dimension, with the other dimensions about the size of their body (i.e. creatures up to one size larger can squeeze through the path the character has made). Otherwise, creatures can force their way through, taking 1d6 piercing damage for each ten feet (or part thereof) that they travel through the area.

## MUDGY AREAS

This patch of ground is not as saturated with water as the bogs or quicksand above, but still counts as difficult terrain. If a creature is knocked prone in the mud then it must make a DC 10 Strength or Dexterity check to regain its footing (as well as spend half its movement).

**STREAMS AND FLOODWATERS**

While much of the water in swamps is standing or slow-moving, heavy storms or other dangerous weather can create fast moving streams or floodwaters. A creature that ends its movement in this area must make a DC 10 Strength saving throw or become prone. A prone creature is in the water and must either choose to swim (if it can) or make another DC 10 Strength saving throw to stand up (as well as spend half its movement).

**Underworld**

**THESE ARE UNDERGROUND** areas, anywhere from the basement areas of ruins, to mine tunnels or holding cells underneath a castle to the vast reaches of the Underworld, an entire realm supposedly beneath Davokar.

**FREEZING WATERS**

This represents anything from a small puddle of cold water to a vast underground sea. Small areas of water are nothing more than a nuisance, counting as difficult terrain. However, if the water is deep enough to cover half or more of the creature's body then each time it ends its turn in the water it must succeed at a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. This can, of course, eventually lead to death. A creature immune to cold damage automatically succeeds at their saving throw.

**LOW CEILINGS**

In many underground areas the ceiling heights might not be ideal, especially for taller elves, humans, ogres and trolls. In here a Medium or larger creature must crouch awkwardly, causing them to move at half speed and giving them disadvantage on ranged weapon attacks.

**NARROW PASSAGES**

The walls of an underground area are close together, allowing the passage of a single Medium creature at a time (Large creatures can fit if they squeeze). Creatures using two weapons or a single weapon with reach make their attacks with disadvantage.

**SLIMY OR SLIPPERY PATCHES**

You count these areas as difficult terrain. When a creature enters the area, it must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone.

**STALACTITES, STALAGMITES, COLUMNS**

These features (stalactites hang from the ceiling; stalagmites grow from the floor; columns have met together in the middle) can provide either half cover or three-quarters cover, depending on a creature's position or size.

**Waters**

**THESE ARE SIGNIFICANT** water features. You could also include Freezing Waters, Streams and Floodwaters, Muddy Areas and even Bogs and Quicksand if appropriate for the area.

**DEEPS**

These are areas of deep water, well past the ability of a creature to stand upright in the water or even easily see the bottom at all. Unarmored creatures that must tread water or are actively swimming must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour, gaining a level of exhaustion on a failure. Creatures wearing armor have disadvantage on this check. Creatures with heavy armor cannot swim, only tread water. Creatures able to breathe water automatically pass these saving throws.

**REEDS AND GRASSES**

These plants grow at the edge of many ponds and lakes. If a creature is at the edge of the water feature (either in the water or on the bank), the plants can provide half cover for the creature.

**RILLS AND GULLIES**

These ridgelines in a field or slope were formed by running water. If you move across them at faster than your normal speed, you must succeed at a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or become prone.

**SHORELINES**

At the edge of a sea, ocean, or large lake is often a shoreline that has withstood the waves and tides of innumerable years. Many of these areas have soft sand (see Muddy Areas, above). Others have jagged rocks or steep cliffs. For these, a creature must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw when entering the area, taking 3 (1d6) slashing damage on a failure.

# Using Other Resources

**WHILE WE ARE** understandably proud of the monsters and adversaries we have created for *Ruins of Symbaroum*, we also recognize that no one set of stat blocks can cover all possible

situations. You may find yourself looking to surprise your players and want to turn to other resources. This section will help you do that.

## Differences between 5e Stat Blocks and *Ruins of Symbaroum*

**YOU'LL NOTICE THAT** a *Ruins of Symbaroum* stat block has several entries that regular 5e stat blocks don't have (manner, shadow, equipment and tactics), different monster types and challenge ratings, and at least one item they're missing (alignment). We'll take a look at these differences in detail:

### ALIGNMENT

The traditional alignment system is not used in *Ruins of Symbaroum*. Instead, each creature or NPC has certain goals that they work to accomplish. Some of these goals might be aligned to the goals of the player characters, many are not. You can use a creature's alignment to help inform its manner (see below) as well as its general description and tactics.

### CHALLENGE RATING

Many of the monsters in the Hordes of the Eternal Night and the Beasts & Monsters chapters exist at the very edge of their challenge rating. They have features and traits that cause them to be about as dangerous as possible for their numerical values and we have not been shy about including additional effects and conditions over and above simple hit point damage.

Depending on the source used, other monsters may be similar in approach or might be defined for a much more 'middle of the road' expectation. If you're trying to have a 'fair fight' this might throw your expectations off a little bit, but remember - the creatures should occupy their appropriate place in the setting and the characters should choose to engage with them, with no expectation of that 'fair fight'. Sometimes an easy win can be as exciting as a brutal challenge, but if every win is easy the game quickly becomes boring.

### EQUIPMENT

Many adversaries and some monsters are listed with sample gear that they might carry. Sometimes this is important because they might carry special ammunition, alchemical elixirs, lesser artifacts, traps or other tools or supplies. Other times it might just be an amount of money and one or two small items for color.

### MANNER

This is a small descriptive phrase to aid Gamemasters in describing the attitude of a monster or adversary. Oftentimes a creature's entry will have some descriptive text that you can use in an essential form to describe their manner.

### MONSTER TYPES

*Ruins of Symbaroum* introduces the abomination monster type for creatures that are consumed by Corruption. You should use this for aberrations or any other creatures that are unique, and have been twisted by Corruption.

### SHADOW AND CALCULATING CORRUPTION

This is a description of the shadow visible to those folks who can see it, for example humans with Shadow-sight. It also provides a set of Corruption values, the creature's starting Corruption (usually representing permanent Corruption) and its Corruption Threshold. If a creature's permanent Corruption (starting plus newly earned permanent Corruption) ever exceeds its Corruption Threshold then it becomes a Blight-born creature (see page 120).

To calculate a creature's Corruption Threshold, multiply its proficiency bonus by 2 and add its Charisma modifier (minimum possible Threshold: 2). If it is a spellcaster then multiply the total of its proficiency bonus plus its spellcasting modifier by 2 (again, minimum possible Threshold: 2). If it has permanent Corruption for any reason, assign that as starting Corruption or if it is a creature likely to acquire Corruption by its actions then assign a starting value by your best judgment.

### TACTICS

This is a small section of the description that gives Game-masters some basic suggestions on what monsters or adversaries are likely to do in combat. Carefully consider the monster and its features then choose some basic tactics that will make effective use of its capabilities.

## Recommended OGL Monsters

SOME OF THE easiest creatures to add are the ones in the core rules. The following provides a list of the ones we recommend as fitting well into *Ruins of Symbaroum*. When you introduce an OGL monster, it is often best to present it as a unique abomination, singular example of undead or lesser known beast or monstrosity. Constructs can be presented as one-off greater artifacts, either from the days of Symbaroum or the misguided efforts of Ordo Magica in some secret laboratory.

### OTHER FIRST PARTY SOURCES

Of course the core rules provide a much larger variety of monsters than we can list here. You might look at adventures or setting information for horror, wilderness exploration or strange experimentation and find a creature that you want to bring into *Ruins of Symbaroum*. Just use the notes above and it should work out.

## Original Symbaroum

OF COURSE THE most substantial source of creatures that fit within the *Ruins of Symbaroum* setting are those creatures appearing in materials for the original *Symbaroum* game. While we've provided a collection of monsters from the core rulebook and original monster codex; beasts, monsters and NPCs appear in various adventures and expansion material. Here's a simple conversion process (a dedicated conversion document provided separately goes into more detail on these instructions).

### CONVERSION PROCESS

As a first note, this is not precisely the way the monsters appearing in the earlier sections were converted – the general idea was to create monsters that had the same feel despite the mechanical changes, along with providing a suitable range of challenge ratings and capabilities to engage 5e characters in interesting ways. Following these steps will get you close, but we always recommend using your best judgment if you think something should be adjusted.

#### Steps:

- Determine a challenge rating range (Weak = CR < 1; Ordinary CR = 1-4, Challenging = CR 5-8, Strong CR = 9-12, Mighty CR = 13-16, Legendary CR = 17+). Note that this is a general suggestion and individual creature might be one or more steps up or down on this scale as appropriate.
- Consider the creature's attributes and assign similar ability scores (Accurate/Quick = Dexterity, Cunning = Intelligence, Discreet/Persuasive = Charisma, Resolute/Vigilant = Wisdom, Strong = Strength, Constitution as appropriate)

| RECOMMENDED OGL MONSTERS |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| A-Gi                     | Go-R                     | Q-Z             |
| Aboleth                  | Golems                   | Shadow          |
| Animated Armor           | Grick                    | Shambling Mound |
| Ankheg                   | Griffon                  | Shield Guardian |
| Basilisk                 | Homunculus               | Skeletons       |
| Behir                    | Invisible Stalker        | Stirge          |
| Bulette                  | Manticore                | Tarrasque       |
| Chuul                    | Nightmare (Horror Horse) | Treant          |
| Demons and Devils        | Oozes                    | Wight           |
| Ettercap                 | Otyugh                   | Will-o'-Wisp    |
| Fungi                    | Owlbear                  | Wraith          |
| Gargoyle                 | Purple Worm              | Wyvern          |
| Ghouls                   | Remorhaz                 | Xorn            |
| Gibbering Mouther        | Roc                      | Zombies         |
| —                        | Roper                    | —               |

- Import everything you can directly (Manner, Race = Monster Type, Equipment, Shadow, Tactics if possible).
- Use Abilities to guide your selection of monster features, reactions, and, possibly, lair and legendary actions.
- Use Weapons, Armor and Defense to guide selection of unarmed, melee, and ranged attacks, plus armor class and Hit Dice.
- If the creature has magical or ritual powers, select one or more spellcasting features.

### DECISIONS ALONG THE WAY

During the course of this effort you might need to make many decisions along the way that are perhaps counterintuitive to the conversion steps. For example, due to the nature of the different systems, a large group of low-threat creatures can threaten *Symbaroum* characters more than they can threaten *Ruins of Symbaroum* characters. Both character groups are under threat (in 5e, the side with the greater number of actions/creatures usually wins), but if the threat must be overwhelming you might convert the creatures at a higher CR than their Resistance might indicate. Or you might just declare that, instead of double the PC count, there are triple their number instead.

The same sort of choice might present itself with monster features. Most of the features scale (usually according to the monster's proficiency bonus or ability modifiers) but a few might overwhelm (or underwhelm). Feel free to tweak those features as needed to make sure the creatures present the same level of challenge as they do in the original game.



# Andriks

OF ALL THE world's creatures, the andrik is probably the most peculiar. These descendants of ordinary ducks were deformed by dark powers into a caricature of other cultural beings – a fact that has not escaped other folks, nor the andriks themselves. Whoever created these creatures did so against the will of the world, and through their sorcery they expressed an abnormal disdain for higher laws, physical boundaries, and good taste. Andriks are generally well aware of how their kind is regarded by others, and respond to the jeers – whether real or imaginary – with a bitter mix of arrogant pride, obstinate defiance, and a tearful victim mentality.

The andriks first appeared in Freetown, west of Alberotor. Whether they arrived by boat or were in fact created in the practically lawless city remains unclear. What is evident, however, is that they soon blended with the city's underclass and that they came to stay. From Freetown, the andriks spread along the coast, to the east as well as the west, in search of a more dignified life. And when Alberotor was evacuated, the andriks followed the humans to Ambria.

Most of Ambria's andriks spend their entire lives on the move, as solitary peddler families or several families working together as river merchants. The most famous are the Andrik Buccaneers who plague the waters of Ambria with their fast vessels. These web-footed raiders harbor ideas of andrik superiority, as they are the most recently evolved of all cultural beings and therefore – according to their pirate logic – the greatest. They have even assumed a new name for their kind: andrake. The andrake pirates are few, but extremely active, and feathered corsairs are priority targets for the Ambrian galleys hunting pirates on the kingdom's rivers. This has driven the andrakes to the outskirts of the realm. They have often sought refuge in remote harbors in the no-man's-land of southern Davokar, where dense vegetation and numerous tributaries provide excellent conditions for piracy.

## ANDRIKS AS ADVENTURERS

An andrik who leaves its family usually has compelling reasons for doing so. In many cases, the family is dead or the andrik was banished from the community for having committed some serious offense.

Andriks with a background in trade are often scoundrels, while those who grew up with pirates are usually warriors. There are no known examples of andrik mystics, nor any indications that they can learn to perform magic. However, rumors speak of an andrik oracle in Freetown – a tale which has given its name to an inn in the town of Kastor: *The Duck and Crystal*.

## New Origin Feat: Provocative

The following feat is only available to Andriks:

### Provocative

At the start of its turn, the Andrik can choose a number of creatures equal to half its proficiency bonus, rounded up, within 30 feet. Each creature must share at least one language with the Andrik. By words and gestures, the Andrik offends and upsets the creatures. The creatures make social checks involving the Andrik at disadvantage and the Andrik has advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws prompted by those creatures. When the Andrik is about to make an attack roll, it can use its reaction to be particularly offensive and reduce one of the creature's armor class by its proficiency bonus for one attack only.

## ANDRIK TRAITS

All andriks encountered share a set of inborn tendencies and features.

- ◆ **Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 2. Increase any other ability score by 1.
- ◆ **Age.** Andriks are adults at 15 and few remain active past their 50th year.
- ◆ **Languages.** Andriks usually speak the local Human language, either Ambrian or Barbarian. Some near Davokar speak the language of Trolls or Elves as well.
- ◆ **Pariahs.** Andriks are poorly treated in society and have disadvantage on Charisma checks with other peoples. However, the insular tendency of andrik society provides advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with another andrik.
- ◆ **Paws.** Andriks have poorly developed hands. When performing Sleight of Hand, lockpicking, or other checks involving manual dexterity, you have disadvantage on the check.
- ◆ **Size.** All andriks are under four feet in height and average around 40 pounds. Your size is Small and you have a d6 Hit Die. At first level you have 6 hit points plus your Constitution modifier. When you gain a level in any class, you gain an additional Hit Die and 5 (see below) (1d6) plus your Constitution modifier hit points.
- ◆ **Speed.** Andriks' short legs allow a waddling walk. You have a base speed of 25 feet.
- ◆ **Tough.** Andriks are incredibly stubborn and resistant to injury. When rolling a Hit Die to additional hit points for a new level, roll it twice and choose the better result. If using an average value, use 5 instead of 4.

## ANDRIK NAMES

Andriks have a lax attitude toward personal names, and usually give each other nicknames based on appearance, such as Big-mitts, One-eye, Grayfeather, Bareback, Shaggy, Shade, and Highplume. At least a few larger andrik families have completely abandoned the use of names in favor of a simpler numeral system, where numbers indicate the order of birth.

*April Fools!* The Andrik was initially an April Fools' joke and the creature doesn't play any role in other official products from Free League. Whether or not to use it in your particular game world is entirely up to you!



## STAT BLOCKS ALPHABETICALLY

|          |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                   |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>A</b> | Darkling Leader 27<br>Death Prince 31<br>Dragon Fly 161<br>Dragoul 156<br>Drakworm 36<br>Drilling Leech 127<br>Drug Peddler 202<br>Drunkard 203 | Battle-trained Horse 197<br>Hunger Fury 113<br>Hunger Wolf 140<br>Hunting Spider 150 | Moose 135<br>Mosey Munk 144<br>Mountain Troll 209                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>S</b>                                                                                                          |
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|          |                                                                                                                                                 | J                                                                                    | Battle-trained Jakaar 141<br>Wild Jakaar 141                                                                                                                                                                                | Spider Queen 151<br>Spite 105<br>Squire 177<br>Stone Boar 145                                                     |
|          |                                                                                                                                                 | K                                                                                    | Kanaran 142<br>Keeper Witch 195<br>Kelder 132<br>Killer Shrub 132<br>King Toad (Older) 60                                                                                                                                   | <b>T</b>                                                                                                          |
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|          |                                                                                                                                                 | L                                                                                    | Lady 177<br>Liege Troll 208<br>Lindworm 35<br>Liturg 170<br>Living Thorns (Familiar) 65                                                                                                                                     | <b>V</b>                                                                                                          |
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|          |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                   |

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|               |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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|                              |                                |                                   |                                         |                                     |
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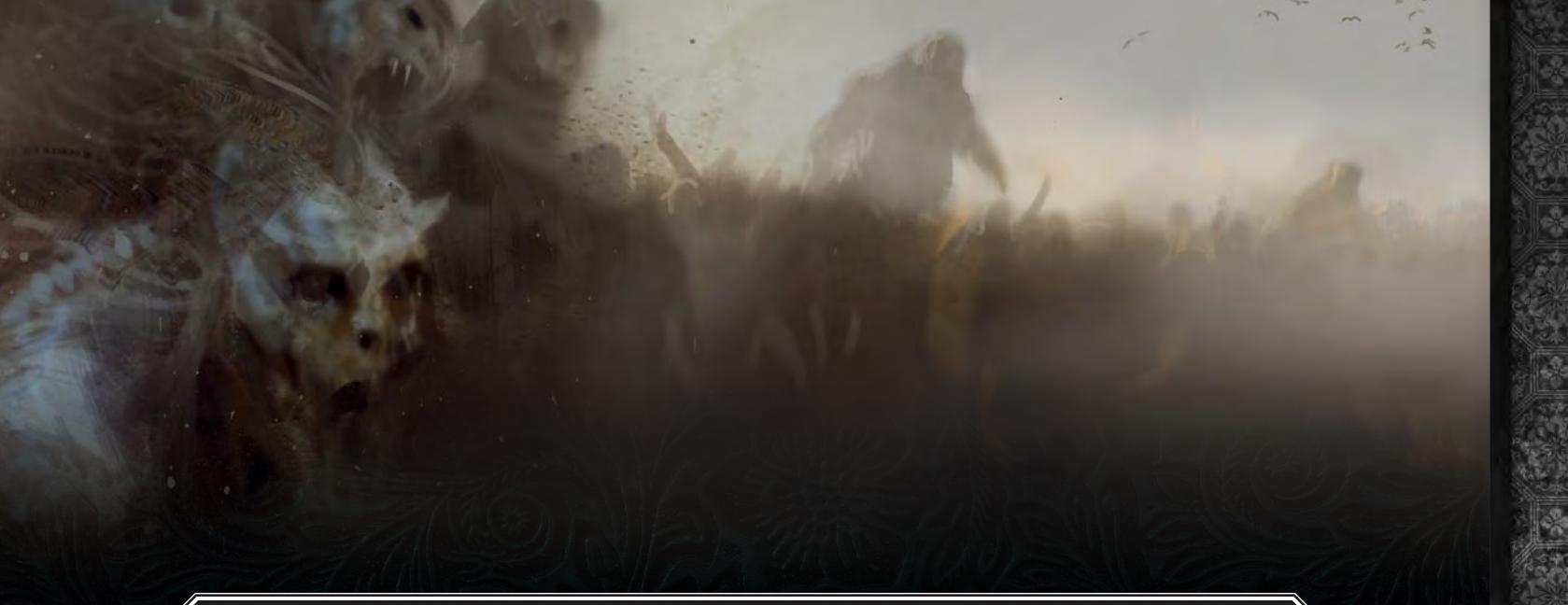
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