



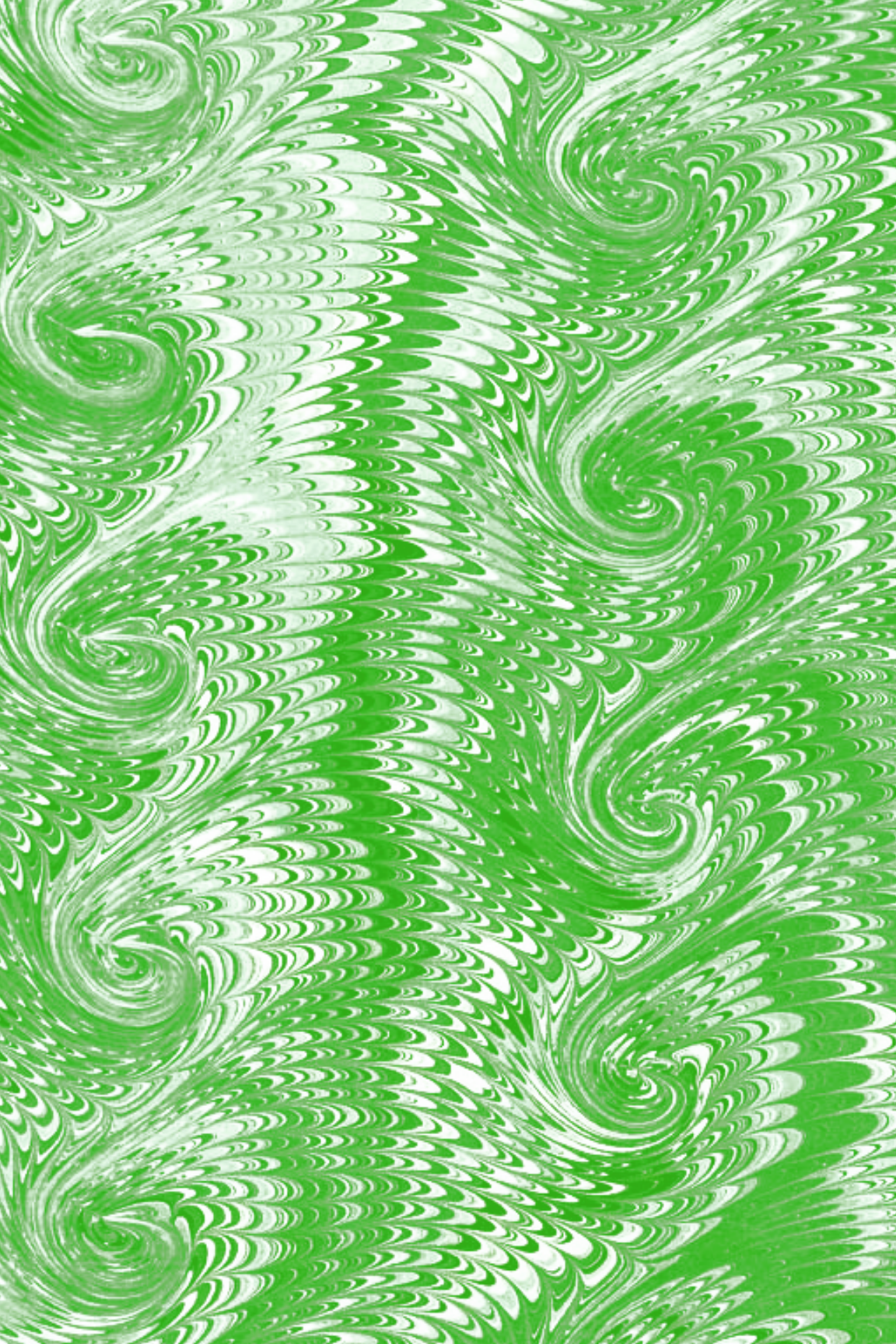
DRAMATIC SUPPLEMENT

An illustration of a griffon with large, feathered wings in shades of blue and green, perched on a rocky outcrop. Below it is a close-up of a dragon's head, colored in shades of teal and green, with its mouth slightly open.

the
Bestiary

By:
Steven "Stan!" Brown

SAGA[®]
GAME RULES





THE BESTIARY

*Being a treatise on the subject of
Ansalonian animals and monsters*



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Larry Elmore, Jeff Grubb, Harold Johnson, Douglas Niles, Carl Smith, Michael Williams—and, of course, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman.

Dedications

Harold: To Allison, Caitlin, and Michael, my three favorite kender.

slade: To ian slade wolfgang, 08/09/96. Keep gigglin', pal!

Stan!: To Linda Kehoss, who saw me through the "Time of Troubles."
May I be there for you if you ever need me.

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Author's Foreword



I have a confession to make . . . I didn't want to write this book.

I know that may sound strange, but I really didn't. You see, first and foremost, I consider myself a storyteller. Before I took to writing roleplaying games for a living, I did my time as a journalist, a cartoonist, and even as a lyricist (not to mention a teacher). And no matter what job I was doing, I always used it to tell stories. Landing a job on the DRAGONLANCE® team is probably the luckiest thing that ever happened to me. Not only do I get to work in the roleplaying industry (where *everything* is about telling stories), but I write for the game world that most completely intermingles stories, novels, and games.

So imagine my shock when I saw "The *Bestiary*" pop up on my schedule.

"The *Bestiary*?!?" I said. "That's a monster catalog! I don't want to write a monster catalog; I want to tell tales and write adventures!" Luckily for me, my friends and coworkers talked me into quietly taking the assignment.

You see, this being a DRAGONLANCE book, the *Bestiary* was always intended to be more than a monster catalog. We already have several of those and, truth be told, it is pretty darned easy just to translate the AD&D® statistics from the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ into a SAGA® format. What we didn't have was a book telling how a Kryninish giant is different from one found on Toril or Athas or Oerth. *That* is what the *Bestiary* was always intended to be: a book to tell the story of every creature on Krynn in a way that interests every DRAGONLANCE fan, gamer, or novel reader.

Let me tell you, finding or creating a story behind each and every monster, beast, and magical creation in the DRAGONLANCE saga was a bigger job than I ever imagined. Hopefully, the stories in this book do more than just describe a whole bunch of beasts—they add to the world of Krynn and the DRAGONLANCE saga.

In the end, I'm glad I got to write this book . . . I hope you are too.

Special Thanks To:

- ✦ Sue Cook, Miranda Horner, Harold Johnson, and Steve Miller, all of whom provided inestimable help in guiding me through the hills and dales of Krynn, and pointed out the animals along the way.
- ✦ slade, who started this journey with me but, through no fault of his own, could not finish it.
- ✦ The members of the DRAGONLANCE Mailing List, who have more stories about Krynn than I could ever dream of.
- ✦ Anthony Stewart Head, who unknowingly provided Bertrem with a voice.




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For one instant, as Goldmoon had looked into the cart, she had wondered what terrible disease could turn a man's flesh into scales. She had moved forward to touch the pitiful cleric with her staff, but at that

moment the creature sprang out at her, grasping for the staff with a clawed hand. Goldmoon stumbled backward, but the creature was swift and its clawed hand closed around the staff. There was a blinding flash of blue light. The creature shrieked in pain and fell back, wringing its blackened hand. Riverwind, sword drawn, had leaped in front of his Chieftain's Daughter.

—The Heroes of the Lance meet draconians for the first time, Dragons of Autumn Twilight

In a few pages, you will begin reading Caramon Majere's colorful descriptions of the various creatures of Krynn. For the casual or literary DRAGONLANCE fan, this "book within a book" should provide all the information you would ever need on Ansalonian fauna. For those who prefer to experience Krynn through roleplaying games, though, another dimension is necessary.

Roleplaying

For the uninitiated, roleplaying games are a form of interactive storytelling—structured versions of the children's game "let's pretend." The DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE® game is the roleplaying game of the

DRAGONLANCE Saga, with players taking the parts of Ansalonian heroes fighting for the cause of Good against the Great Dragons, Dark Knights, and other Evils that afflict the land.

In order to make this volume useful for roleplayers, each entry must contain numeric and technical information describing the creatures in terms of the SAGA rules (the mechanics that drive the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game). This information appears at the end of each entry in a boxed sidebar.

Roleplayers can refer to this box immediately, skipping over the more descriptive text, while casual readers can bypass the game data entirely. However, the *Bestiary* is the most useful when both types of information are used in conjunction.

Special Abilities

In the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE game, the diverse natural and learned talents that creatures possess are called special abilities. This section provides a comprehensive list defining the special abilities used in the *Bestiary*.

Many of the special ability descriptions in this section mention one of the eight character abilities. For clarity, the descriptions refer to the specific ability (such as Presence) instead of a related ability (like Essence) even though the sidebars and charts list merely the four related pairs. The distinction becomes important only if the Narrator chooses to use the expanded creature ratings. Otherwise, the appropriate related ability applies.

Special abilities describe general effects. As such, not all instances of a certain ability, whether mundane or fantastical, work exactly the same way.

A leonine's spotted fur and a giant mantis's use of foliage both achieve the same effect of hiding the creature from view. These vastly different activities are referred to by the name of the effect they provide; in other words, they both fall under the special ability "camouflage." However, the Narrator should consider how a particular special ability affects the tale being told so that it reflects the correct mood or feeling.

The term “attack,” used to describe many special abilities, is merely a term of convenience. Not all offensive special abilities are simply attacks. Often the Narrator can employ these abilities in other manners. A creature can use the pounce ability, for example, to leap away from a foe.

Many creatures possess special abilities that seem to be magical. Dragons alter their shapes, behir breathe lightning, and elementals have near-complete mastery of their elements, but none of these creatures truly use sorcery or mysticism.

Rather than fill this volume with innumerable special abilities that mimic aspects of magic, though, the *Bestiary* defines these abilities as using the related schools of sorcery or spheres of mysticism (such as pyromancy for a burning touch attack).

However, using these terms has the disadvantage of suggesting a creature possesses abilities it has never exhibited (such as using pyromancy to create a ball of fire).

Unless the description says a creature can cast spells, any magical abilities it exhibits are natural traits, not sorcery or mysticism. As always, interpretation of these descriptions and statistics is in the hands of the Narrator.

Acid

With the special ability of *acid*, the creature uses acid as an attack or defense. The acid might digest the animal’s food, help it burrow, or work toward some other purpose. The creature can squirt the acid, or a victim may need to make physical contact with the creature to be burned. Some creatures can actually secrete an alkali (or base) which burns like acid. These are all called *acids*.

The damage rating of an acid burn equals the creature’s Strength rating.

Acute Sense

Creatures that possess an *acute sense* have a sense that exceeds normal ranges—extraordinary hearing, vision, and so on.

Acute senses normally alert a creature to the approach of prey and help it discern hidden, invisible, or disguised objects. Acute senses may also make a creature vul-

About Sidebars

Sidebars like this one always present a beast’s rules and statistics for use in the *DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE* roleplaying game.

While the sidebar presents all the game information, the main body of the entry contains anecdotal information that may prove equally useful. Often it includes examples of combat with the creature as well as common beliefs (and sometimes myths) about it.

Statistics use the following format:

♣ **Creature name:** Ability scores and codes, damage rating, defense rating, and special abilities.

Below the creature’s game description, a paragraph or two portrays the creature’s habitat, its general demeanor, some combat strategies, and other details useful in a roleplaying session. In most cases, a Narrator can find an adventure hook (marked with a ♣) to use in his or her campaign.

nerable to a special attack. A kobold has excellent night vision, but is nearly blinded by sunlight. Some creatures possess an acute awareness that acts almost like a sixth sense or intuition, telling them where danger lurks.


A creature with an acute sense or two raises the difficulty of any action that the heroes make to avoid its attention (and occasionally its attacks and defenses) by one degree. For example, an *average* action becomes *challenging*. This penalty can be negated if the hero somehow counteracts the acute sense.

Aeromancy

A creature with the skill of *aeromancy* can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, or manipulate the element of air in some way. This includes the ability to resist damage from air, levitate, fly, create various gases, make fog, cause wind, and solidify, purify, or destroy air.

In many instances, creatures have one or





two aeromantic abilities, but they cannot use the entire school. See the creature description for details on specific talents.

For further information on the school of aeromancy, see Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Alteration

With the skill of *alteration*, the creature can magically alter its own or another's body. This may merely alter body parts—wings, scales, tail—or may change the recipient into any living creature of approximately the same size. More powerful creatures, such as dragons, can alter their size as well. Any limitations to a creature's ability are listed in parentheses. For example, a creature with “alteration (avian)” can assume only bird forms.

For more information about the school of alteration, refer to Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Amphibious

Creatures that can breathe both air and water possess the *amphibious* special ability. Amphibians can move from land to water and back without hindrance.

Unfortunately, if an amphibious creature's flesh is not kept damp, it grows weak. Should an amphibian be exposed to heat or prolonged drying, all physical actions performed against it by heroes decrease one degree in difficulty. Should the hero be amphibious, then all actions involving physical activity become more difficult by one degree.

Animism

The special ability of *animism* allows a creature to use mysticism to summon, disperse, communicate with, detect, or control common beasts and plants. The animist can affect only natural creatures, not those with magical natures. Any limitations to the type of beast or plant affected are listed in parentheses. A creature with “animism (lizards)” could affect only lizards.

For more information, see animism in Chapter Five the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Aura

An *aura* is a type of emanation that usually surrounds a creature or is caused by the creature. Being within melee range of the monster exposes a victim to the effect. Auras may cause distress, fear, injury, sleep, confusion, nausea, or other effects.

Auras either act identically to another special ability (for example, *fear aura* acts exactly like the *fear* special ability) or are defined in the creature description.

Bestow

With the *bestow* special ability, the creature can transfer a special power to another creature or hero. An example would be a bronze dragon's ability to allow a mortal to breathe water.

Blind

The ability to *blind* allows animals and monsters to blind their foes in some way: a light, poison, spray, or blinding material like webbing.

Heroes blinded by a special ability like this find all physical actions to be modified one degree higher. At the Narrator's discretion, special training may allow a hero to ignore this effect.

Breath Attack

Creatures who possess a *breath attack* have some form of attack or defense that it can spray from its mouth. Dragons are the classic example, breathing frost or fire, expelling acid or lightning.

Breath attacks differ considerably in effect and range. Details are given in the creature descriptions.

Camouflage

A creature with the *camouflage* ability can blend with and hide in its habitat. This may be through coloration, use of natural materials to create a disguise, alteration of color or texture of flesh, or through a magical ability.

When a creature uses camouflage, the hero finds that avoiding or surprising the creature becomes one degree more difficult than it normally would be. It also allows the creature to encounter the hero at one

range closer than the terrain usually calls for (with the exception that the creature can never approach closer than melee range).

Charge

By using a *charge* the creature delivers a powerful melee attack (using only natural weapons like horns, claws, or body mass) by building speed running, leaping, flying, swimming, or undulating at the target from near missile range.

A charge doubles damage inflicted by a normal attack. Victims not surprised by the charging creature may attack for double the normal damage. However, the Narrator should increase the difficulty of such attacks by one degree.

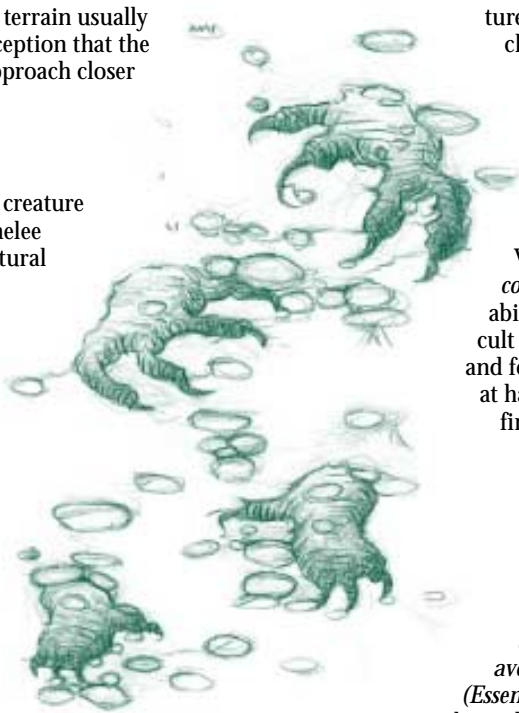
Charm

With the *charm* special ability, the creature gains influence over other living beings using a hypnotic power—mental influence, dance, gaze, perfume, song, or some other soothing medium. Only those with strong wills can resist the allure of a charm attack. The creature's nature often restricts the type of victim affected and is listed in parentheses—"charm (intelligent males)."

To avoid being charmed, the victim must make a successful *average Spirit (Presence)* action. A charmed creature is friendly and obeys the charmer until the control is lifted—either voluntarily or with the death of the charmer. A creature can at one time control a number of individuals equal to its Spirit score.

Climb

Those creatures with the ability to *climb* can move across some vertical terrain fea-



ture—buildings, cliffs, trees, webs—unhindered and at normal speed.

Confuse

Victims of the *confuse* special ability find it difficult to concentrate and focus on the task at hand. Victims find that actions are one degree more difficult than normal if they do not successfully resist. To resist, the hero must succeed at an *average Perception (Essence)* action, unless otherwise noted under the creature's description.

Crush

The *crush* special ability allows a creature to enfold, encircle, engulf, or hug its prey to inflict extra damage. At the Narrator's option, crushing may instead snare the victim, making it impossible for that individual to defend against attack.


A crush attack succeeds when a hero suffers a mishap in battle. The victim sustains extra damage equal to the creature's Strength score. Shields cannot protect a hero from this additional damage.

If a creature snares someone in a crush attack, the victim can break free by performing a successful *average Strength (Endurance)* action.

Cryomancy

The creature can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, and manipulate the elements of cold and ice. This may include the ability to resist damage from cold; to chill or freeze materials; to sear something with frost; to make things slippery; and to create ice storms and walls.





See the school of cryomancy in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Death

Some attacks can instantly strike a living creature dead. Any such attack is known as the *death* special ability. An example would be the keening wail of a banshee.

The victim of a death attack must perform a successful *average Endurance (Spirit)* action or be instantly slain. Only the most powerful mystic spells can revive those slain by this attack.

Death Throe

When a creature with the special ability of *death throe* is slain, some remaining life force, stubbornness, or magical energy causes it to lash out with a final attack. Some unnatural creatures may have a death throe of a magical nature, such as draconians who turn to stone or acid or explode at death.

The effects of this final attack can be found in the creature description.

Delude

By using the *delude* special ability, the creature can generate false images and appearances to lure a victim to danger. These delusions can either distort the location of the beast or nearby objects, alter its appearance, or create false images through a variety of means—telepathy, dust, light, shadow, and so on.

A successful *average Perception (Spirit)* action must be performed to see through the delusion.

Despair

Some creatures possess the ability to fill a living creature with *despair*. The victim cannot take any action, even to defend against attacks, without a mighty effort of will. The despair attack is generally a focused gaze, touch, or voice. Despair can affect only one victim at a time.

To avoid or free oneself from despair requires a successful *average Presence (Spirit)* action. While gripped by despair, the victim acts as if under the effects of the *paralyze* ability (see later in this section).

Disintegrate

Creatures with the *disintegrate* special ability possess an attack that decays, dissolves, fragments, or reduces a target to dust. Victims of disintegration suffer a horrifying death, but due to the nature of the ability, creatures can attack only one target at a time with it.

If the victim is hit by a disintegrating attack, she must attempt an *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Success reduces a hero's hand by half (characters have their Endurance scores reduced by half), rounding down. Failure means that she must reduce her hand to one card (characters are reduced to an Endurance score of 1). A mishap causes her to fall instantly unconscious and lose a limb or other body part.

Dive

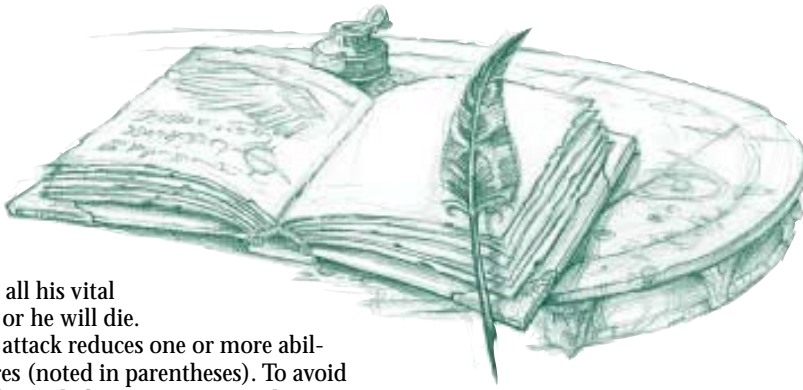
When a flying creature *dives* from great heights to physically attack its prey, it may surprise its victims, preventing them from attacking the creature or properly defending themselves. A dive attack begins from beyond near missile range and suddenly closes the distance to melee range. During the dive, the creature may make one ranged attack.

At the end of the dive, the flier gains one free melee attack—the target can defend himself, but cannot attack the creature. A victim who is aware of the diving creature may replace his free defense versus the creature's melee attack with a missile or thrown weapons attack during the dive, but the action becomes one degree more difficult. After the creature's dive attack, normal melee combat begins.

Narrators and players should note that this ability is similar, but not identical, to the dive attack of dragons. (See the section on dragons in this tome.)

Drain

Creatures can use their ability to *drain* a victim to weaken or slay living prey by depleting it of vital fluids or energy. This attack usually takes the form of a bite, claw, or touch, but, in rare cases, may result from an aura, gaze, or magic. The victim of a draining assault must break contact with the attacking creature before



it takes all his vital energy or he will die.

This attack reduces one or more ability scores (noted in parentheses). To avoid being drained, the victim must make a successful *average* action using the ability being drained, opposed by the same trait of the attacker. Thus, avoiding a Strength drain requires that the victim succeed at an *average Strength (Strength)* action. Failure results in the loss of 1 point from the specified ability. This loss is permanent.

If a creature can drain multiple abilities, the victim should attempt separate actions for each ability affected.

Entangle

When using the *entangle* ability (and after a successful melee counterattack), a creature snares and binds its prey. By using a long or malleable appendage, it renders the prey immobile, making the victim more vulnerable to other attacks.

A successful entangle causes the victim's Agility score to be reduced to 1 until he is freed. To escape, he must perform a successful *average Strength (Endurance)* action. If the hero or his allies attack the entangling appendage, the creature may choose or be forced to let go (Narrator's call).

Fear

With the special ability of *fear*, the creature possesses an awesome presence, hideous appearance, or terrifying nature that overwhelms a victim with fright.

To avoid the fear effect, a victim must succeed at an *average Presence (Spirit)* action. Failure means the victim is filled with fear and must flee the encounter at once. She may attempt no other action until the fear lifts from her.

If flight is impossible, the victim may attempt to conquer her fear, a *daunting*

Spirit (Presence) action. If this action succeeds, the hero may continue as normal, but all actions she performs are one degree more difficult until the fear is lifted. If she fails, she cowers in a nearby corner, unable to defend herself from attacks.

Magical fear lasts for one hour after the hero has lost sight of the creature that frightened her.

Fly

Unless otherwise noted, all creatures with wings can fly. As a result, the special ability called *fly* is listed for creatures that through some magical gift or natural means other than wings (for example, gasbags) can transport themselves through the air. Not all fliers can reach high altitude or maneuver swiftly, though.

Geomancy

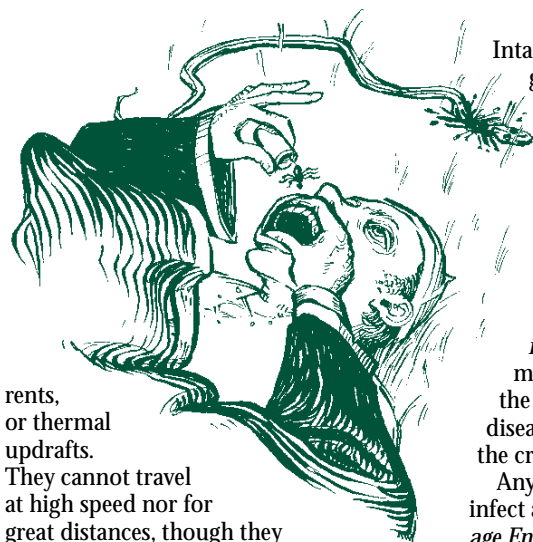
By using *geomancy*, a creature can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, or manipulate the elements of earth, metal, and stone. This may include the ability to resist attacks by this element; reshape, harden, soften, or shatter earth; turn the element to quicksand; or cause the earth to move.

For further information, see geomancy in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Glide

Although a creature with the ability to *glide* does not possess the muscles or body parts needed for true flight, it can use some natural (for example, glider membranes) or magical means to soar on winds, air cur-





rents, or thermal updrafts. They cannot travel at high speed nor for great distances, though they may be quite maneuverable.

Hydromancy

By using hydromancy, the creature can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, or manipulate the element of liquid water. This may include the ability to raise or lower water levels, purify or create water, create dew or rain, or control water flow and erosion.

For more information about the school of hydromancy, see Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Immune to . . .

Some creatures remain unaffected by a type of hazard that would normally cause damage to others. For example, an ice bear is *immune to* any attack that depends upon cold or ice to inflict damage. Thus, heroes and characters find it almost impossible to harm an ice bear with magic from the school of cryomancy. Other creatures might be immune to metal weapons, fire or heat-based attacks, and so on.

An immunity may, at the Narrator's discretion, create a vulnerability that matches the immunity. Creatures immune to cold, for example, may be affected by heat more than normal.

Incorporeal

With the *incorporeal* ability, the creature can become immaterial, allowing all physical objects to pass harmlessly through it.

Intangibility comes in many forms; a gaseous body and ghostly form are but two examples. Nothing normal can touch the creature when it is intangible, though spells and weapons usually have their intended effects.

Infect

Some creatures have the ability to *infect* a victim with diseases. This may result from the unclean nature of the beast, or it may result from some disease or disease-carrying insect which the creature hosts.

Any victim struck by a creature with the infect ability must make a successful *average Endurance (Strength)* action or become stricken with a disease. Unless the creature description dictates otherwise, an infected hero loses one card from his hand every day (beginning the day after the infection). This continues until he collapses (when the player discards his last card) and dies (one day later). Usually, only mysticism can cure an infection of this type.

Invisible

Many creatures have the ability to make themselves *invisible*. They become completely impossible to detect by sight, though they still leave tracks. Furthermore, an invisible creature may be detected using any of the four remaining senses, but because heroes usually rely on their vision to tell them about the world around them, spotting an invisible creature using these senses is one degree more difficult than usual.

Kick

When using the *kick* ability, the creature can lash out with its rear legs to deliver a powerful smashing blow to the side or rear of itself. Kicking may be a second attack that the creature can perform in addition to a main melee attack. A kick inflicts the same number of damage points as a creature's other melee attacks.

However, a kick used as a second attack cannot be directed against the same person targeted by the creature's normal melee attack. Kicks, as second attacks, are used

only when more than one individual attacks the creature.

Lightning

With the *lightning* ability, the creature can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, or manipulate electricity. This may include the ability to resist damage from electrical attacks, or generate static, shocks, lights, or lightning in various forms.

For further hints about how the lightning ability can work, see the school of electromancy in Chapter Five in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Some creatures do not have the ability to make ranged electrical attacks. Rather, their bodies carry natural electrical charges that automatically attack anything with which they come in contact. These attacks do damage equal to the creature's Strength score.

A target trying to avoid physical contact must attempt an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action to see if she succeeds.

Meditation

Creatures skilled in the mystic sphere of *meditation* can increase or decrease Mental ability scores. Restrictions on this ability can be found in the creature description.

For examples of how the meditation sphere works, see Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Melee Weapons

Some creatures can use common *melee weapons*—such as swords, maces, and clubs. Often, this indicates that the creature has the ability to make such weapons from basic materials, causing damage equal to the weapon's normal damage rating.

Mentalism

Creatures that possess skills in the mystic sphere of mentalism can communicate telepathically, read thoughts, and influence or control another's mind.

For further information on the sphere of

mentalism, see Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Missile Weapons

Creatures with the ability to use *missile weapons* can use common missile hurling devices such as bows, slings, and spears. In most instances, the creature has the ability to make such weapons from basic materials.

Missile weapons can also indicate the creature's ability to shoot a natural missile—such as spines. Damage for natural missiles equals that of the creature's damage rating.

Musk

By spraying *musk*, animals in the wild mark their territory. In some creatures, this ability has evolved into a powerful weapon.

Heroes with a normal sense of smell must succeed in an *average Endurance (Strength)* action to avoid becoming ill when a creature uses a musk attack.

(The action is *easy* for those with a diminished sense of smell.) Failure means the hero becomes nauseated; no card played by a nauseated hero is ever trump.

Unfortunately for a hero with an acute sense of smell, not only does he lose his trump bonus, but until he gets rid of the odor, he must also attempt all his actions as if they were one degree more difficult than normal.

Washing off musk takes ten minutes per Strength point of the attacking creature. While this eliminates the musk's negative effects, it takes a number of hours equal to the creature's Strength to be fully rid of the smell.

Necromancy

Creatures skilled in the mystic sphere of *necromancy* have abilities that include wounding prey; draining vital energies; or creating, animating, detecting, controlling, and destroying corporeal undead.



More information about the sphere of necromancy can be found in Chapter Five of in the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Nullify

The most unusual ability possessed by any creature is the *nullify* power. It not only causes the victim to disappear, but it alters the memories of all sentient creatures to make it seem as if the victim had never lived. No one remembers the victim's name, all her possessions go unclaimed, and her past deeds remain forgotten. Written accounts by the victim or about the victim still exist, but most survivors almost certainly consider them fictional in the wake of her nullification.

Only shadow- and frost-wights wield this incredible power. After the wight succeeds with a melee attack, the nullify attack automatically occurs. To avoid being swept out of existence by the touch of such a creature, a hero under attack must make a successful *average Presence (Spirit)* action. Because of the impact that this power can have on the game and the players, Narrators should use creatures with this ability sparingly.

Overturn

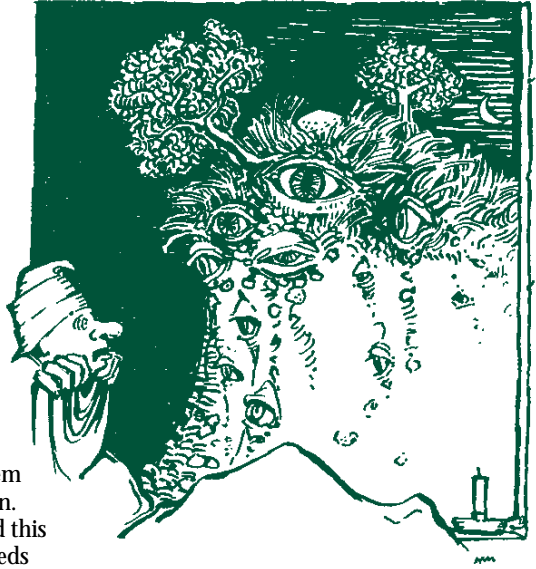
Certain large creatures possess the ability to *overturn* objects smaller than themselves. For example, a creature with this ability can capsize ships, overturn land vehicles, or flip aerial conveyances. The vehicle *must* be smaller than the creature.

The navigator must perform a successful *average Agility (Dexterity)* action to avoid the creature's attack.

Paralyze

Some creatures can *paralyze* victims with a gaze, via poison, by shock, through spray, or by touch. Avoiding a paralyzation attack requires a successful *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Failure paralyzes the victim for a number of minutes equal to the creature's *Endurance* score. While paralyzed, a victim cannot attempt to defend herself from any assault.

The effects of paralysis can be negated using mysticism. Extremely strong-willed heroes have the chance to shrug off the



attack by making a successful *daunting Spirit (Presence)* action.

Petrify

Creatures with the power to transform the flesh of victims into an immobile stony substance possess the *petrify* special ability. A victim of a petrify attack must succeed with an *average Endurance (Strength)* action or be changed to stone. This transformation may result from dehydration, baking, quick freezing, calcification, or hardening the flesh into a carapace, thus causing a permanent paralysis. Petrification usually results in death, though in some cases it has been reported that one skilled in both sorcery and mysticism can change the stone back to flesh and revive the victim. Petrifying attacks may be delivered by gaze, song, touch or venom.

Poison

By secreting venom, which may be delivered as a bite, sting, spray or touch, a creature can use its *poison* ability. Avoiding the effects of a poison requires a successful *average Endurance (Strength)* action. While symptoms may vary from poison to poison, the game result is the same. The minute after something poisons a hero, the player gives up a card from her hand. This continues, one card per minute the hero has been poisoned, until the hand has no

cards. (If the victim is a character, she loses 3 Endurance points per minute until she has none left.) At this point, the victim is unconscious and will die in one minute. Prompt first aid can prolong life, but only neutralizing the poison with mystic healing or antitoxins can save her.

Not all poisons need be deadly ones, however. The effects of a nonlethal poison can mimic the effects of *infect*, *delude*, *paralyze*, or any other special ability the Narrator deems appropriate.

Pounce

Using its special ability to *pounce*, a creature can leap upon its foes from hiding. Any attempt to avoid surprise by a creature who can pounce becomes one degree more difficult than normal. If the creature gains surprise, two things happen. First, the encounter begins at melee range, regardless of terrain type or other factors. Second, the creature instantly springs on its victim, closing to personal range and making a free melee counterattack. The victim of a pounce cannot attempt to defend himself from this attack.

Pounce can also be used by the creature to leap to escape. In most cases, creatures with this ability can leap over objects significantly taller than they are.

Prehensile Limb

A *prehensile limb* gives a creature the ability to use a tail, tongue, or snout as if it was a hand to manipulate tools and weapons. When using the limb, a creature's Dexterity actions suffer a -3 penalty.

Pyromancy

By using *pyromancy* in some version, the creature can magically summon, dispatch, animate, shape, or manipulate the element of fire. This may include the ability to resist damage from fire and heat, and create, extinguish, or control fire, explosions, fireballs, shields, and fiery walls.

See the school of pyromancy in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Rake

With the *rake* ability, a creature gains an extra attack by grappling its prey and claw-

ing with its rear legs. If the creature closes to personal range with its foe, it can attack twice with this ability in each combat exchange. The creature can rake as long as it remains in personal range.

Regenerate

By *regenerating*, a creature has the uncanny ability to heal most wounds caused by natural weapons almost instantly. A creature who can regenerate often possesses a vulnerability to certain attacks which it cannot heal, such as acid, fire, or magical weapons.

A creature regenerates three damage points per minute. However, regeneration does not occur after death.

Resistant to . . .

The *resistant to . . .* ability resembles the immune to . . . ability in that the creature incurs less damage than normal from a specific hazard, such as acid, cold, and fire. It suffers only half damage when exposed to these types of hazards.

The nature of some creatures is so bizarre that they resist magic. Such creatures suffer only half damage from any magical attack. Alternatively, the Narrator may significantly increase the difficulty of any spell when a magic-resistant creature is the target or negate it entirely if the magical effect would benefit it.

Sensitivity

The special ability called *sensitivity* mirrors the mystic sphere of the same name. Aspects of the ability include the capacity to detect, locate, or define a living creature's nature or emotions, and discern whether the subject is under some magical or other influence.

For more information on the sphere of sensitivity, see Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Silence

Silence allows a creature to create an area within which no sound exists. The size of this area differs from creature to creature, but it may be anywhere from personal to near missile range. Anything in the area bears the burden of complete silence.



Creatures can use this ability in a variety of ways. Examples include aid in gaining surprise on prey and preventing victims from calling for help or warning off further targets.

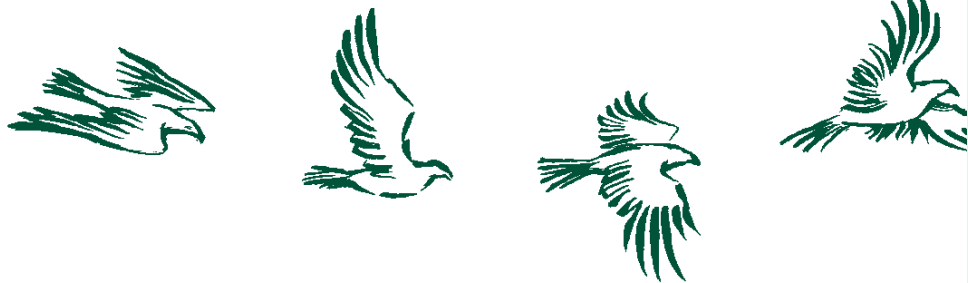
Slow

Through some ability, presumably magical, the creature *slows* down a target's reflexes and reaction speed. Victims of a nonmagical slow attack must attempt an *average Agility (Strength)* action. Failure means

that for the duration of the combat, the creature gets two counterattacks per exchange of blows. For magical slow attacks, the hero must succeed at an *average Presence (Spirit)* action or suffer the results above.

In point of fact, the creature is not moving any faster than normal; instead, the hero simply cannot make his body perform quickly enough to match it blow for blow.





Spit

Some creatures can *spit* some vile substance at foes. However, it can spit at only a single individual at a time and must be at melee range to do so. To dodge this assault, a hero must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action. The creature can make a normal melee attack against one target and spit at another during the same exchange.

The special abilities acid, infect, and poison offer good guidelines for types of damage a spitting attack might inflict.

Sprint

With the ability to *sprint*, a creature can move with incredible bursts of speed for brief periods of time, generally only once per encounter. When the creature wishes to close or open range, those resisting find their action one degree more difficult than normal. If no one opposes the range change, the sprinter may alter the distance of the encounter by two ranges.

Stun

The *stun* attack dazes or renders a foe senseless. Creatures can deliver it in any number of ways (aura, gas, gaze, and so on). The target of a stun must attempt an *average Endurance (Strength)* action. If she fails, she may not perform any action for a number of minutes equal to the creature's Strength score.

Suffocate

By using the *suffocate* ability, the creature makes it impossible for its victims to breathe in some manner. This attack is most often used by creatures that choke their prey or live in water or other unbreathable conditions.

A victim of a suffocate attack must attempt an *average Endurance (Strength)* action. Success means that he may continue acting normally for a number of minutes equal to half his Endurance score. After that, or if he failed the action, he must attempt an unopposed Endurance action at the start of every exchange that the suffocate attack is in effect. This begins at *average* difficulty, but it becomes one degree more difficult each time. When an attempt fails, the hero falls unconscious and will die in one minute unless the attack ceases.

Summoning

By using *summoning*, the creature can magically distort time and space to move instantly from one place to another. This may include transporting itself, other beings, or objects instantly across great distances. When a summoning ends, the summoned object or creature does not automatically return to whence it came. To return a summoned object or creature requires another spell.

For more information, see the school of summoning in Chapter Five of the *Book of the Fifth Age*.

Swallow Whole

Many large creatures, including whales and dragons, have maws so massive that they can *swallow* a man-sized creature in a single gulp. Anyone wounded by such a creature must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action or be consumed by it.

While consumed, a victim cannot attempt any action and dies after a number of minutes equal to her Endurance score. Only by slaying the creature that swallowed her and cutting her free can the victim's companions rescue their friend.



Once a creature has consumed victims whose total Endurance scores equal its own, it can no longer use its swallowing attack. It digests the creatures it has consumed at a rate of 1 Endurance point per half hour. Once digested, a hero cannot be returned to life.

Thus, a creature with an Endurance score of 30 that swallowed six normal humans (5 Endurance points each) would find itself sated and unable to use its swallowing attack. After five hours, it would have digested two of these humans (10 total Endurance points) and could swallow two more.

Swoop

Some flying creatures can scoop victims up into the air. The victim is then either dropped from a height or attacked while the creature holds onto it. A creature can only *swoop* attack targets whose Endurance scores are lower than its own.

To avoid a swoop attack, the hero needs to make a successful *average Agility (Agility)* action. Failure means that all physical actions the victim attempts are two degrees more difficult while he is held aloft.

Thrown Weapons

The ability to use *thrown weapons* is similar to that of wielding missile weapons. This ability, however, reflects the fact that the creature may use only spears, thrown rocks, and similar arms. It has no skill with bows or slings. Creatures can throw weapons at melee or near missile range.

Trample

Many very massive creatures grind their enemies beneath their feet. Usually, a *trample* follows a successful attempt to close range. Whenever an animal with this ability closes from melee to personal range, it can make an immediate attack by trampling an enemy,

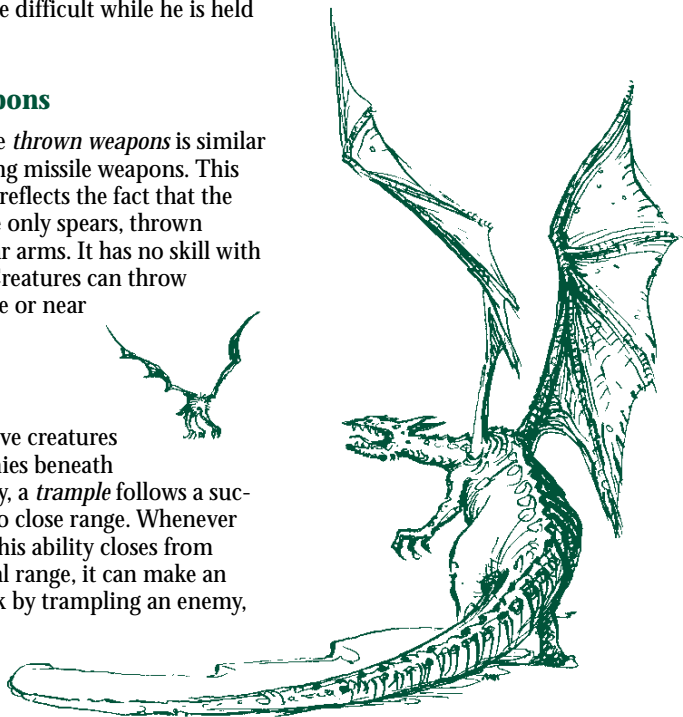
in addition to its normal assault. To escape a trample, a hero must make a successful *average Agility (Dexterity)* action or suffer normal melee damage from the attack. If the victim of a trample cannot open range before the next exchange of blows, he is trampled again.

Web

All spiders and some other creatures can spin *webs* to build snares, decoys, or lairs, or they can use the ability to help climb or wind sail (see glide).

Instead of making a normal melee attack, a web-spinning creature may attempt to ensnare its prey. Anyone subjected to such an attack must succeed in an *average Agility (Dexterity)* action or find herself bound up tightly in sticky strands.

An entangled character finds her *Agility* score reduced to 1 until she manages to escape. To free a trapped person (or to pull oneself free) from a web, a hero must succeed in an *average Strength (Endurance)* action.



Found in the Great Library of Palanthas as

*An
Ansalonian
Bestiary:*

subtitled

*Caramon Majere's Guide to Meeting
Fantastic Creatures of Myth and Legend,
and Surviving the Experience*

AS TOLD BY
Caramon Majere

ELABORATED BY
Bertrem the Aesthetic

ILLUMINATED BY
Usha Majere

DRAFT POLISHING BY Teana Silvermere, pupil of Vlorsmille
IMPRESSION PLATES MANUFACTURED BY Erlan Fieldfall
PRINTING MACHINE DESIGNED AND OPERATED BY Spinner
MANUSCRIPT DISTRIBUTION BY Validius Grier

Author's Foreword

My name is Caramon Majere. That doesn't mean as much these days, but once—long, long ago—that name would bring a spark of recognition and a strange sort of breathless awe to everyone that heard it. Now when I am introduced, I occasionally receive blank looks, sometimes cause disbelief [as if the person is thinking “You're still alive?”], and often must tell a story or two about my adventures. Should someone mention my brother, though, many folks pale in immediate recognition; his is a story for another day, however.

I've led a fairly interesting life, or so I'm told. I've traveled the width and breadth of Ansalon and seen places and things I never dreamed existed. I'm always willing [more than willing, my wife says] to spin a tale or two about my wild youth for the folks who come into the Inn of the Last Home, which is home to me and my family and the best bed and board in Solace. Still, I was more than a bit surprised when in through my door walked the head of the Great Library, Bertrem the Aesthetic.

Now, if Bertrem isn't really a close friend, he's certainly an old acquaintance [he wrote a bit for a small collection of articles Tika and I collected a few years back in *Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home*], and I was quite glad to see him. Still and all, I was surprised by the reason for his visit. He wanted me to write another book! This time, it would cover the various beasts, mon-

sters, and creatures I'd met in my journeys.

Now, I can't understand why someone would want to sit and read about adventure instead of experiencing one themselves, but then I don't understand this younger generation. They aren't cut from the same gristle as Tanis, and Laurana, and Flint, and me. Lazy, I think.

All the same, Bertrem pointed out how a book with useful information and practical advice about the beasts we met could have been helpful during our many adventures. I had to agree that life would have been much simpler if we could have flipped through some pages to discover the secret to defeating a skeletal warrior.

However, I did not feel that I was up to writing such an academic volume. My skills included telling bawdy barroom tales, not writing a field-guide to anything. Bertrem, though, assured me that he would lend his considerable experience to my task and keep me from sounding too much like a bumpkin with more brawn than brains.

So I've been talked into writing a book about my adventures—at least the tales that relate to the more fantastic creations of the gods. If my descriptions seem simple-minded, it is because this book is written from the point of view of a warrior and adventurer, not as a scholar. Hopefully, I'll provide enough information to help you survive in the wilds of the world!

I dedicate this book to the most important woman in the world, Tika Maryann Majere—my wife. Storm and Jas and Colomoon and all the others may have ridden beside me into battle, but you have walked beside me through my whole life, and I would have it no other way.

Caramon Majere

Editor's Foreword

Caramon Majere is no different than any other adventurer. The histories written about him, his brother Raistlin, and their various companions tend to make me believe they all suffered from an intolerable bout of being at the wrong place at the wrong time [or the right place at the right time, depending on your perspective].

Whether a victim of the cruel absurdity of fate or manipulation of events by the gods themselves, Caramon will forever remain a part of the history and legends of Ansalon. His travels, I have learned, led him to every corner of Ansalon as well as back along the churning waters of the River of Time. I find it difficult to conceive that anyone could be more widely traveled than this innkeeper.

This makes him uniquely qualified to pen a tome about fauna found in Ansalon's wilderness, which is something the Great Library of Palanthas painfully lacks.

I sought out Caramon, whom I had worked with on his and his wife's first manuscript [found in the Library as Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home], to commission him to pen such a book and found him very amenable to the idea. However, while he knew the subject better than any man alive, he felt uncertain of his suitability to author such a scholarly text. At his insistence, I agreed to act as editor and annotator—a decision I have not for a moment regretted.

As is often the case, we found that deciding what beasts to include in the tome to be the most trying part of the project. After all, literally thousands of different species of creatures live in Ansalon—millions if you wish to split hairs—or split bares

[I restrained myself from commenting like this in the text itself].

However, we found facing the weight of existing information a more perplexing task. In more than one instance, Caramon's personal experience differs greatly from the preponderance of scholarly reference material. In these cases, I have supplemented the text with additional italicized references rather than contradicting it.

A more difficult problem existed when referencing magical creatures, or more properly, the magical effects of some creatures. In the past, scholars defined these abilities in terms of High Sorcery [the only form of magic known to exist at the time]. However, with the withdrawal of the gods and the loss of High Sorcery, these magical effects remained unchanged. [E.g., most texts intimate that Bozak draconians create webs using a wizard's spell. This clearly is not correct, since the spell no longer functions, yet Bozaks continue to create webs.]

With the aid of Palin Majere, head of the Academy of Sorcery, and Goldmoon, First Mystic of the Citadel of Light, we attempt herein to provide as accurate an accounting of the true nature of these powers as possible. Time and further research, however, may prove us wrong.

In the interest of making the information contained within as accurate, complete, and helpful as possible, we excluded a number of creatures and races. Should readers receive the project as well as I believe it deserves, I shall do all within my power to convince the author to take up his pen for a second volume.

My contribution to this project is done to honor Astinus Lorekeeper, admired head of the Order of Aesthetics. Though you have gone, you are remembered.

Bertrem

Chapter One:

When thinking of a starting point for this project, I decided to begin with the simpler beasts. Even people who don't go out on adventures deal with creatures such as dogs, birds, flies, and snakes on a daily basis, so they are the logical place to start. However, even these creatures have unique cousins, some of which are included in this section.

Mammals

Bertrem insisted that I call this section “Mammals” so that we can differentiate between these animals, the birds, and the insects. When I asked why we couldn't use the word “beasts” instead, he said it wasn't precise enough.

Caramon's earlier use of the word “beasts” includes birds and insects. I did not wish to confuse the reader, so I asked him to use “Mammals” to head this category.

Apes and Monkeys

I like apes and monkeys. It may be because my brother called me an ape a lot, but I have fun watching them. If I can be that entertaining, then go ahead and call me an ape! However, the jungles of Nordmaar and the isle of Karthay contain monkeys and apes that you should be wary of.

The first is the **GIANT BABOON**. These beasts look similar to their cousins, the monkeys, but they stand five or six feet tall, and have a doglike face and long, thin arms and legs. Though they have sharp fangs, giant baboons eat plants [usually the large palm leaves], so you don't have to worry about them making a dinner of you. In fact, they are as playful as any monkey that you'll meet—and *that* is the trouble.

Giant baboons have no idea how much strength they have. If a group of them decides to “play” with you, you will find yourself surrounded by up to four

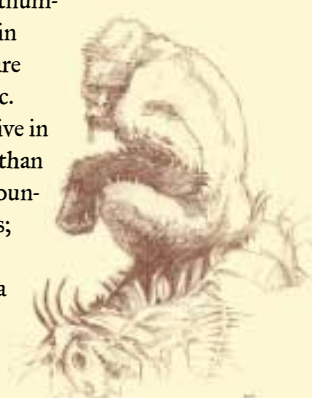
dozen screeching creatures who could accidentally tear you into tiny pieces.

The other beast to watch out for is a meat-eating ape. These **CARNIVOROUS APES** not only eat meat, they like the taste of men, elves, and the other mortal races. Though they have no fear of us, they will not attack a group that outnumber them. Also, keep in mind that these apes are deathly afraid of magic.

Carnivorous apes live in small clans, no larger than ten apes, on jungle mountains. They're nomads; they never stay in one place for longer than a week, and they leave a trail of skeletons hidden in the undergrowth behind them.

They stand about ten or twelve feet tall, have large broad faces, and are covered from head to toe in thick black fur. Their legs are short and stocky while their arms are long and muscular.

A scholar of my acquaintance recently left for the jungles of Karthay to study the carnivorous apes. He believes people can communicate with them. While I believe this is utter nonsense, I wish him well and hope that the beasts do not turn on him.



CARNIVOROUS APE: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 12, In 3, Es 3, Dmg +5, Def -2.

GIANT BABOON: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 3, Es 3, Dmg +2, Def -2, also crush.

If the apes see heroes make obvious use of sorcery or mysticism, flip the top card of the Fate Deck and check its aura. If it is white, the apes flee from them.

- While traveling through the jungle, the heroes confront a clan of apes. However, instead of attacking with tooth and claw, these beasts skillfully wield finely-crafted steel swords. Where did the apes get these weapons, and who taught them to fight?

Ansalonian Beasts

Badgers

I think a badger has more meanness packed into its little body than any ten draconians. I've never seen an animal that fights as viciously as the badger. It throws itself at its foe, going straight for its throat, biting, snatching, and tearing anything its teeth sink into. I'm pretty sure that once they find their target, they just close their eyes and feel their way along with their teeth, shifting positions only when they hit bone or run out of soft flesh to bite.

A badger is a reasonably small animal, about the size of a very large cat, that is covered in thick, gray and black fur. It has a mouthful of dagger-sharp teeth and claws that can tear through most types of leather armor.

You can find badgers just about everywhere in Ansalon, except in the northernmost reaches [I think it's just too hot there for a creature as furry as this]. They live in burrows that they dig with their powerful front claws and hunt small rodents and birds for their food. Usually, they live alone or with a mate and their current brood [badgers usually have three or four young that stay with the parents for about four years].

I know of one hermit who, after months of trying to shoo a badger out of the burrow it dug under his shack, struck up a friendly relation with the creature. It now acts very much like a pet, curling up like a cat to sleep in his lap, following him around like a puppy, and guarding the shack from approaching strangers more viciously than any hound.



Giant Badgers

Considering some of the other creatures I've met in my travels, I'm not sure the giant badger really earns its name. Sure, it's about twice as big as a normal badger, but is it really giant? Well, it's not my job to rename every animal on Krynn, just to tell you what I know about them.

Other than size, the only real difference between giant badgers and their smaller cousins is that these creatures are much more territorial, especially when they have a litter of pups. They ferociously attack anyone who comes within fifteen or twenty feet of the burrow, which can be a real problem when they decide to dig in near a roadway. Luckily, though, giant badgers don't persist in their attacks nearly as much as smaller ones—they're usually happy with simply frightening away trespassers.

I've heard that some gnomes train giant badgers as guards for their homes and workshops. This gives anyone with any brains another reason to stay as far away from Mt. Nevermind as possible.

Most scholars disagree with the author's assessment of the badger's character. Treatises on the animal claim that it will run from danger whenever possible. However, when something traps it or threatens its young, it fights with a ferocity born of desperation. As the author notes, this makes them incredibly dangerous foes.

BADGER: *Animal.* Co 3, Ph 5, In 1, Es 3, Dmg +4, Def -3.

GIANT BADGER: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 11, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +7, Def -4.

- In the midst of a fight, a hero drops a very important item and it falls down a giant badger burrow. As the hero approaches the burrow, he can hear the mewling of young badgers. In fact, this mound serves as the entrance to five separate burrows, each containing a litter of newborn badgers and their highly protective parents. Can the heroes discover which burrow the item fell into without orphaning all the helpless cubs?

Bats

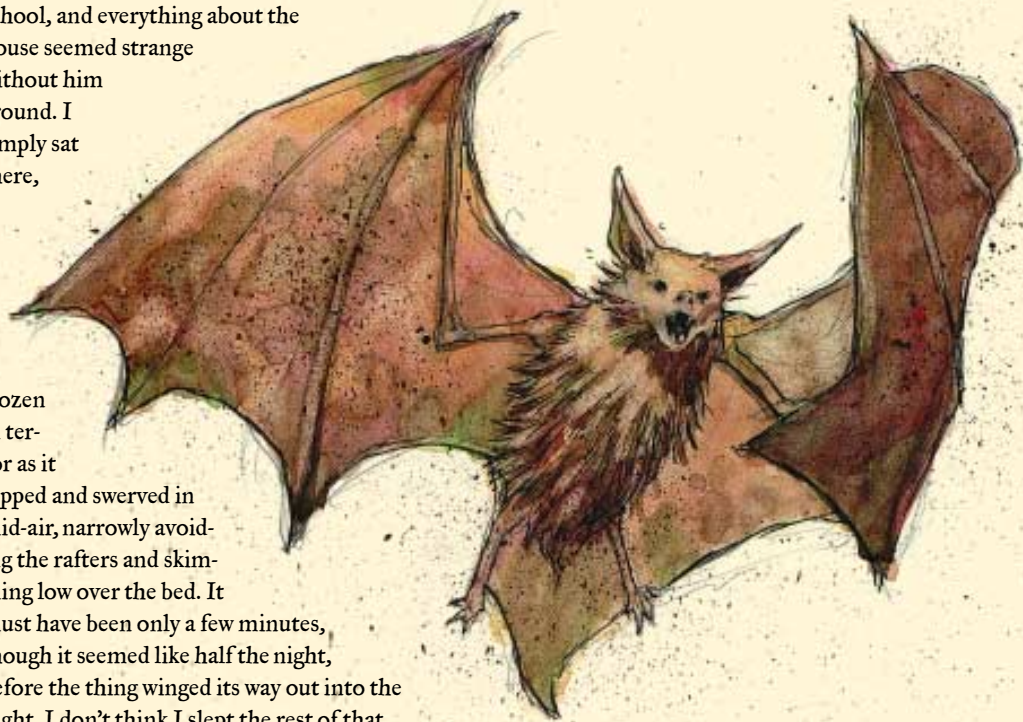
One summer night when I was about six or seven, a bat flew in through the open window of my room. This wasn't terribly long after Raist went away to school, and everything about the house seemed strange without him around. I simply sat there,

frozen in terror as it dipped and swerved in mid-air, narrowly avoiding the rafters and skimming low over the bed. It must have been only a few minutes, though it seemed like half the night, before the thing winged its way out into the night. I don't think I slept the rest of that night or the next.

I'm not sure why bats scare people. After all, there's nothing terribly threatening about them. Maybe the way they fly bothers us. I mean, first of all, they fly only at night. [I heard that this is because they are blind and cannot tell the difference, but Bertrem tells me this is not true.] And second of all, they look like they're completely out of control, flying headlong at a wall or tree or animal, only to pull up at the last second. Then again, maybe it is because they live in dark, foul-smelling caves. The bats hang upside down on the cave roof and foul the cave floor. Not only does their filth contain diseases, but rats, centipedes, and grubs make their home in it.

Ordinary bats are small creatures, having a wingspan of anywhere from six inches to a foot. They live all over but sleep through the colder months. In the spring, summer, and early fall, though, the evening sky can have more bats than stars.

I've grown to appreciate these animals more now that I run an inn, though I still hate it when one accidentally flies into the building. They eat flies and other bugs, and generally do not leave the mess that roosting birds often do.



GIANT BATS have bodies up to three feet long, and their wings can spread between five and six feet wide. As you might guess, they find it hard to gather enough bugs to satisfy their larger appetites. They make meals out of small rodents and sometimes even attack larger animals like cattle, horses, and even people. They clamp onto their victim using tiny fingers on the elbows of their wings and tear out a few coin-sized bites.

Perhaps the fear engendered by bats comes not from any physical characteristic, but rather from the fact that their bites so often prove fatal.

While bats do not have any natural venom, they carry an amazing number of diseases. Healers claim that an average person is more likely to die from one bat bite than a half-dozen scorpion stings.

At first, **MOBATS** look like nothing more than tremendous giant bats. Their wings stretch open wide, up to sixteen feet from tip to tip, and they need a very large open space in order to take to the air.

Mobats can be found anywhere that common or giant bats are, but in much smaller numbers. Unlike the smaller bats, mobats don't fly in large flocks. Even the largest caves can fit no more than eight or nine of them.

They fly about in the same fluttering way as their smaller cousins [only with much larger flutters], using sound as their guide. Where a smaller bat makes an annoying squeak, the mobat's shriek is an

COMMON BAT: *Animal.* Co 3, Ph 1, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +1, Def -3, also acute sense [hearing] and infect [rabies].

GIANT BAT: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 12, In 3, Es 2, Dmg +5, Def -2, also acute sense [hearing] and infect [rabies].

MOBAT: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 12-18, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +4, Def -2, also stun [screech].

Because of their acute hearing, bats are susceptible to loud noises. If the heroes create a loud enough din, they can reduce a bat's effective Coordination to 1 or, at the Narrator's discretion, stun it.

Victims most often contract rabies from a bat's bite. To determine whether this happens, draw a card from the Fate Deck. If the aura is black, the hero has rabies. Unless she is magically healed, she loses one card each week. If the player decides to lose a card from the Suit of Dragons, then the hero exhibits strange behavior from that point on. When the player's hand is empty, the hero becomes paralyzed for a number of days equal to a draw from the Fate Deck. If the hero doesn't receive mystical healing during those last days, she dies.

While flying, mobats make two attacks per exchange of blows. Their first attack, a painful shriek, causes an automatic stun attack to all who hear it, leaving the mobats free to attempt a physical attack.

- Returning from an adventure, the heroes find their home town completely surrounded by a swarm of bats. Hundreds, maybe thousands of the beasts fly in circles around the town, even through the daylight hours, making it impossible for anyone to get in or out. What is causing this odd behavior, and what can the heroes do about it?

ear-piercing cry. You can't help but know when mobats are about, and many folk I know have trouble doing *anything* but covering their ears if too many of them are flying in the sky. I think the beasts use the confusion of their cries to make sneak attacks on their victims.

Mobats eat meat and, though moose and stags will fill their bellies, they prefer the taste of intelligent races. A mobat attacks in the same way a giant bat does, except that it refuses to release its grip. They bite and bite until they know the victim is dead, then feed until they feel full. It is a grisly sight, believe me.

Do you think I'm giving them credit for too much brains? I have a story about the time I was traveling through the northern edge of the Qualinesti Forest. I heard the telltale shriek of a mobat while setting up my evening's camp. A few minutes later, I heard a cry for help that ended as suddenly as it began. Grabbing a torch from the campfire, I ran to where the sound came from and saw an elf warrior lying dead in a clearing, his face and neck covered with nasty bites and scratches. On top of the poor soul was the biggest mobat I've ever seen——seven feet from head to toe.

To my shock, it wasn't feeding on the elf. No, it was instead using its frail fingers to remove a gold band from around his arm. When the beast saw me, it hissed and worked at the shiny band with renewed vigor.

I did what anyone should do when faced with one of these creatures: used the flame to back the creature toward the nearest closed-up space——the dense forest itself. Once there, the mobat no longer had room to fly, and it was easy prey.

I never thought of any animal, no matter how deadly, as Evil. They're just doing what nature tells them to do to survive. But the mobat——I have no question in my mind that those beasts have hearts and souls as black as pitch.

It is certain that mobats have at least a rudimentary intelligence. Scholars have shown that shiny metallic objects attract them, and they will collect and hoard them for some unknown purpose.

Bears

I saw a man once who wrestled **BEARS** for the entertainment of visitors at a country fair. What a sight that was! He was a large man, but nowhere near as big as the black bear in that cage. The man grappled with the beast for a while, but it was too powerful for him. When it looked like the bear was about to snap his arms, the man nimbly released his grip and ducked behind the beast. He threw his arms around its neck [I assume he was trying to choke the thing], but it had such a thick neck that he could barely manage to hold on. It shook its head back and forth, trying to shake him off, but he clung there gamely. After a while, the pressure he placed on the bear's neck was enough to put the thing to sleep.

Sometimes when I'm in the woods and I come across bear tracks, I think about that man and how thankful I'd be to have his strong arms with me. I mean, I consider myself to be a fairly brave man, but there isn't enough steel in the Solamnic treasury to get me to wrestle a bear. I always stay as far away from the beasts as I can and attack with a bow.

Bears are large animals. I've never seen an adult that was smaller than I am, and tales are told of man-killers who stood twelve feet tall. They usually avoid people, but when they're really hungry, they'll walk right into your camp and root through your packs. Bears crawl into their caves and sleep through the winter, but you must be very careful if you find one in this state. They're very grumpy when they first wake up [just like me, or so Tika will tell you]. You're most likely to be attacked by a bear when it's just woken up, so beware them in the early spring.

Several texts tell us that bears will eat only animals that they themselves kill. If you feel ill-prepared to battle one and cannot escape, these texts suggest that lying perfectly still on the ground, as though you are dead, will cause the beast to merely sniff and prod you. If you succeed in your ruse, though, it will look for more lively game.

I'm told that a special breed of bear lives along the sea coasts of the icy reaches to the south. White as the snow, these giant **ICE BEARS** stand over fourteen feet tall. Not only that, they swim through the icy waters faster than a man can row.

Tasslehoff was quite impressed by these beasts when he saw them during the War of the Lance. "Oh, they were huge," he once told me. "As we sailed through the ice fields, they were everywhere.

"The captain told me that they live in caves in the floating ice mountains and hunt seals, large fish, and even people. I can't imagine what it would be like to face a hungry ice bear. They're so big I bet

they could swallow me in one bite. I wonder what the inside of an ice bear looks like?

"Oh, and they swim too. Well, swim isn't quite the word. They paddle along like dogs with their heads above the water, but they move so fast! And the water is so cold! I stuck my hand into it to see how cold, and I couldn't move my fingers

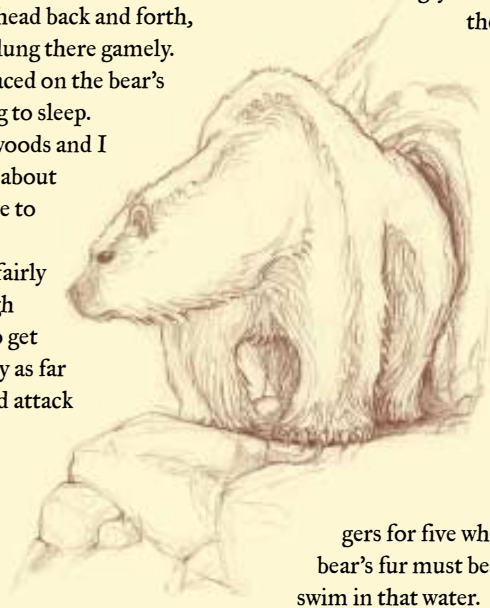
for five whole minutes. An ice bear's fur must be very warm for them to swim in that water.

"When they walk, they plod along with their toes pointed in like this. And they swing their heads from side to side, like this. Isn't that funny?"

As odd as it sounds, no one has ever told me anything that conflicts with what Tas said.

Ice bears are reportedly among the most malicious creatures on the continent. Reports claim that they attack anything that crosses their path, including any ice bears who are not members of their pack.

An ice barbarian fable tells us that the various ice bear packs once engaged in a battle so huge that it became impossible for anyone to approach the sea to hunt or fish. In response, the gods broke the coast off into ice floes, sending the bears off in many directions and clearing the shore for all the other animals.



In the tropical jungles of Nordmaar, the Blood Sea Isles, and the Dragon Isles, **MANDIBEARS** make their homes. They are large animals, with adults usually ranging from six to eight feet tall and weighing well over fifteen hundred pounds, and they live off fern leaves.

Mandibear fur has interesting markings; usually they have a reddish-brown coat with gray legs, tails, and patches around the eyes. They look like giant living dolls, and many an adventurer, lured in by this appearance, has fallen prey to the steel-sharp claws in their powerful paws.

Though mandibears eat only plants, they are painfully private creatures and have no conscience when it comes to defending their privacy. If they so much as smell a human, elf, or other intelligent creature in the area, the males gather all the cubs together while the females hunt down the intruders. A pack usually has two or three males and up to a half dozen females. They kill without mercy, but will not chase you beyond the edge of their territory.

Mandibears always live near large bodies of fresh water. They take their food, usually a large, completely uprooted fern, to the water's edge and wash it thoroughly before eating.

If you ever end up on the wrong end of a mandibear, head for the water as quickly as possible. Though you will likely run into more mandibears there, make for the deep water—the beasts cannot swim at all.

BROWN BEAR: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 12–24, In 2, Es 5, Dmg +6 to +14, Def –2, also acute senses [hearing, smell], climb, crush, death throe.

GRIZZLY BEAR: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 13, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +7, Def –2, also crush.

ICE BEAR [POLAR]: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 18, In 3, Es 5, Dmg +12, Def –2, also crush, death throe, immune to cold/ice.

MANDIBEAR: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 16, In 6, Es 9, Dmg +8, Def –2, also acute senses [hearing, smell, vision], climb, and crush.

Bears with the death throe attack are so willful [some would say “stubborn”] that even when mortally wounded, they find the heart to make one final attack.

Because bears are intelligent animals, they are reasonably easy to train.

- While sailing through frigid waters, the heroes' ship is attacked by ice bears. While a few of the creatures keep the heroes and crew busy, others claw and bite holes in the ship's hull. Since their ship begins to sink, everyone onboard must jump on one of the ice floes and walk the hundred or so miles to the next settlement. The ice bears, though, are waiting for them and harry them the entire way. Is this an extraordinarily clever group of bears, or is some more sinister force at work?



The author's assertion that mandibears belong under this heading is quite understandable [particularly considering their name]. However, scholars have determined that the mandibear is more closely related to the raccoon than the common bear.

Cats

Why do we use the same word to talk about a small, mouse-catching house pet and a huge, man-eating beast? Yes, I see the similarities between a barn cat and a lion, but no more than I do between a hound and a wolf, and we don't usually talk about wolves as "dogs."

Well, Ansalon has more than its share of cats of all shapes and sizes. In the forests and mountains outside Solace you can find two types of great cat. The first is the **LYNX**, a small, muscular cat with a bobbed tail and tufted ears that looks the closest to a normal cat of any creature I'm going to talk about. It's not the toughest of cats, but it is by far the smartest. If you're ever hunting lynx, be careful that you don't suddenly find yourself on the wrong side of the hunt. **MOUNTAIN LIONS**, as you might guess, can be found in the mountains. These powerful cats hunt the rocky ledges near the tree lines, usually launching themselves from

hiding onto their prey. Both of these cats can be found in almost all of Ansalon's forested mountains, though very rarely do more than a dozen or so live in any particular area.

Several great cats hunt the herd animals found on the plains of Abanasinia, Khur, Nordmaar, the Plains of Dust, and sections of the Northern Wastes. **CHEETAHS** are thin, spotted cats who can run faster than the swiftest steed. They're not as powerful as some of their cousins, but their speed allows them to bring down fragile creatures like deer, who easily outrun other hunters. **LIONS**, on

the other hand, are among the mightiest of cats. They're proud animals who hunt the plains by night and stroll them by day. You'll often see lions sleeping on sun-drenched rocks, but beware——not all members of a pride sleep at the same time.

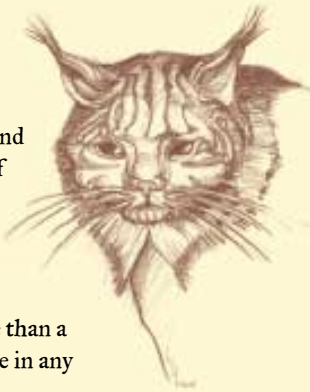
The **LEONINE** is a relative of the lion, though the two animals almost never share hunting grounds [probably because a leonine actually hunts its smaller cousins]. Unlike other lions, though, its coat has a spotty pattern of browns, yellows, and grays, making the leonine very difficult to see in the tall plains grass.

Luckily, fewer leonines exist than any other great cat. They live in small prides of no more than a dozen adults and stake out territories which they mark clearly by gnawing on the trees or digging out the grass along the boundaries.

The chief hunter of a Qué-Nal tribe I know told me how he lost his left arm to a leonine. The cat was so well hidden that the man, who taught me many things about surviving on the plains, actually *stepped on it*. "I was lucky to escape with my life," he admits. "Luckily, the cat decided my left arm looked tastier, leaving my right one free to defend myself. I had its fur made into a rug, which I keep in my home to remind me *always* to watch where I step."

Certain cultures, particularly kender, refer to leonines as "spotted lions" or "great lions." However, while the scholarly community recognizes these names, we prefer to use "leonine" to avoid confusion between the species.

The jungles of Nordmaar and the Blood Sea Isles are home to other great cats. **JAGUARS** and **LEOPARDS** are very similar animals. In fact, unless you're a





tan fur covered with large spots and prowl the lower branches of jungle trees, pouncing on unsuspecting prey. The **TIGER**, on the other hand, is the strongest of all the cats in the jungle. He roams the jungle as proudly as the lion does the plains, lord of all he sees.

The **SABERTOOTH** is largest of all the cats, standing about four and a half feet tall at the shoulders. It weighs close to a thousand pounds and has been known to kill a man with

one swipe of its mighty paws. The most obvious trait of the sabertooth, as you might guess, are its long fangs, which hang down a foot or more from the corners of its mouth and curve like dueling sabers.

These teeth may be obvious, but the cat does not use them in its attacks.

Rather, the sabertooth hunts in tall grass, where its brown fur makes it hard to see, springing out at prey and striking with its massive front paws. Though the beast looks very much like a relative of the lion, this hunting style makes me think that it's actually a cousin of the tiger.

Sabertooths live on the plains in packs of three to ten adults, usually with anywhere up to a dozen cubs of different ages. Still, they prefer to hunt alone unless they are chasing a very big animal, like an elephant.

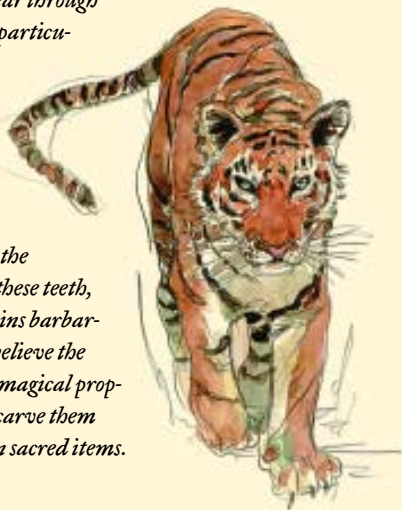
Experts remain uncertain as to the purpose of the sabertooth's distended fangs. In light of the fact that they do not aid the creature in hunting, most scholars believe



scholar, the only real difference you need to worry about is that the jaguar usually has a bit more strength and the leopard acts a little sneakier. Both cats have

that they tear through the hide of particularly tough-skinned prey, such as elephants.

Whatever the purpose of these teeth, several plains barbarian tribes believe the teeth have magical properties and carve them into certain sacred items.



- CHEETAH:** *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 9, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +6, Def -3, see below* and sprint.
- JAGUAR:** *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 13, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +7, Def -2, see below*.
- LEONINE:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 20, In 2, Es 5, Dmg +10, Def -3, see below*.
- LEOPARD:** *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 11, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +6, Def -2, see below*.
- LION:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 17, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +9, Def -3, see below*.
- LYNX:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 8, In 6, Es 2, Dmg +3, Def -2, see below*.
- MOUNTAIN LION:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 10, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +6, Def -2, see below*.
- SABERTOOTH:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 23, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +11, Def -2, see below*.
- TIGER:** *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 20, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +10, Def -2, see below*.

*All these creatures have acute senses [hearing and vision], camouflage, climb, pounce, and rake.

- During an adventure when the heroes are chasing a foe who has [or stole] an item of great importance, they suddenly come upon their quarry's dead steed. The horse was obviously mauled by some kind of great cat, but the heroes find no sign of the rider. The heroes track the cats and find them chewing over their foes' remains. The important item is nowhere to be seen—one of the cats has eaten it!

Dogs

Dogs may be loyal, brave companions when trained right, but remember that if someone has trained them to hate you, they change into merciless enemies.

Many armies throughout history have used dogs in battle. These war dogs tear through anything short of metal armor and, even if they can't do any real damage, launch themselves at foes, knocking them down and leaving them easy prey for foot soldiers.

Have you ever been chased by a pack of trained hunting dogs? I have. Let me tell you, I'd rather wrestle an ogre with one hand strapped to my side than repeat the experience. The best thing you can do if you find yourself in this situation is to climb the nearest tree, building, or wall. Dogs run quickly, jump high, and track better than almost anything else alive, but they can't climb.

Of course, if you don't have some kind of missile weapon, you've only put off the inevitable. Once they have you treed, the dogs stay below, barking, leaping, and snapping at you until you figure out a way to escape or fall from your roost.

Many volumes suggest throwing raw meat to distract canine pursuers. The author, though, claims this strategy has only about a twenty-five percent success rate.

Anywhere you find lots of elves living in a dense forest, you can also find packs of **COOSHEE**, what I call elven hounds. They're not really wild, since you can find them wandering through just about any elf town, but the elves don't usually keep them as pets the way humans do.

Cooshee are large, green and brown dogs with short, upturned ears [looking very much like furry elf ears]. Their coat makes them very difficult to spot in the woods, so you'd do well to keep your ears open. If the wind blowing through a patch of brush sounds like a beast growling, take another look. You usually find a cooshee with its hackles raised.



Like other dogs, cooshee usually attack by knocking down their prey, then tearing at it with their sharp teeth.

Elves consider cooshee to be brethren, like all the other beasts of the woods. They appreciate these dogs for their keen senses and noble mettle, and treat them with the utmost respect. Some elves invite cooshee into their homes, but always as honored guests. The notion that anyone would domesticate such a gracious beast offends them.



HUNTING OR WILD DOG: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +2, Def -2, also acute senses [hearing and smell] and charge.

COOSHEE: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 12, In 2, Es 6, Dmg +6, Def -3, also camouflage and sprint.

When a dog successfully charges a victim [whether mounted or not], the victim must attempt an *average Strength* [*Strength*] action. Instead of receiving double damage [or gaining the chance to inflict double damage], failure means that the dog knocks the victim down, while success means that the victim held his or her ground.

Elf heroes get an automatic trump bonus to Presence actions when interacting with cooshee.

- One night while camping on the plains, the heroes are approached by a friendly, obviously malnourished cooshee. These beasts are *never* found outside of the forests, so what is it doing here? Could it have escaped from a nearby castle menagerie? Might it be following an owner?

Elephants

One of the greatest beasts of the land, at least in sheer size, is the elephant. These beasts stand over ten feet tall, run about fifteen to twenty feet long, and weigh thousands of pounds. Thick, gray skin tougher than most leather covers them, and they have a long trunk in place of a nose. On either side of the trunk grow great, bony tusks which, I'm told, have an edge as sharp as a spearhead.

Tales tell of a herd of these giant beasts wandering the Abanasinian plains, but I've never seen them. They prefer warm weather, so I'm not sure how they survive our winters. I hear that if you're near the right lake or river at the right time of year, you can see between one and three dozen adults [and a handful of calves] eating the grass and leaves or splashing in the water.

My son tells me that, in the North, people use elephants as pack animals. I can understand why. Most merchants could fit an entire caravan worth of merchandise on two or three beasts. I expect that most thieves would think hard before attacking a group riding these beasts. A look-out sitting atop an elephant would see thieves coming from miles away. And the basketlike saddles that Palin tells me riders



use must surely act like parapets, allowing them to fire arrows or other missiles at enemies while gaining a bit of protection for themselves. Plus, while spooked horses or camels are dangerous enough, a riled elephant can be more dangerous than any set of caravan guards.

From what I've heard, frightened elephants try to step on their attackers, and with feet that big, they often succeed. In such cases, you should move behind the beast. They always move forward, and once you are out of their sight, they believe you are gone, at least until you do something else to draw their attention.

Angry elephants, on the other hand, tend to charge foes, trying to spear them with their mighty tusks. The beasts are very protective of their calves and have been known to grab a man with their trunks and throw him a hundred or more yards away.

Records from the Summer of Chaos tell us that the elephant has at least one other close relative, the mammoth. This beast stands taller than the elephant, running between twelve and sixteen feet tall, and is covered with thick fur. Its tusks grow twice as long as the elephant's and, presumably, prove twice as deadly. Unlike its cousin, the mammoth prefers cooler, often icy climes.

ELEPHANT: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 33, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +8, Def -4, also charge, prehensile limb, and trample.

MAMMOTH: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 45, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +10, Def -5, also charge, prehensile limb, and trample.

An elephant and mammoth can trample up to six opponents at one time, assuming the opponents are standing within melee range.

However, both creatures can also use their trunks as prehensile limbs to grab one additional opponent, or use their tusks to charge a building, other structure, or four individuals or less.

- The heroes come across a herd of elephants where all the adults have detailed Solamnian imagery carved into their tusks. The carvings seem to have been done at different times [ancient elephants have ancient carvings, while the youngest ones seem to have been carved only a few weeks ago], but all by the same artisan.

Herd Animals

Some animals congregate only in large herds. While most people think herd animals are harmless, remember that strength lies in numbers. On the other hand, the bards will never sing of an adventurer who meets his end at the hooves of a stampeding herd of sheep.

Several of these species live both in wild and domesticated herds. At my urging, the author has confined himself to discussing the wild variety. In almost every instance, the domestic animals act less aggressive, less intelligent, and even less interesting.

BUFFALO are huge, hairy beasts that stand eight feet tall at the shoulders. Their bodies consist of almost pure muscle, and, with the curved horns atop their heads, they are as deadly as any animal alive. Fortunately, they eat grass and would rather not deal with people. Great herds of buffalo roam most of the southern plains of Ansalon. The largest herds can be found in Abanasinia and Khur. I'm told that in some areas the herds grow so large that it would take a man on horseback two days to ride from one end to the other.

Hunting these creatures is no simple matter; a buffalo fights for up to ten minutes after its foe mortally wounds it.

The constellation for the noble god Kiri-Folith was a buffalo head, and plains barbarians universally consider these beasts to be good and honorable animals. Some tribes prefer the meat of these beasts to any other food, and they believe that clothing made from their fur provides protection from ghosts and other spiritual assailants.

I cannot even begin to count the different types of **CATTLE** I've seen in my journeys. Some have thick muscles and an ornery streak as wide as the



mouth of River Toranth, while others are bony and meek. Some have long, straight horns, others thick curly ones, and still others have no horns at all.

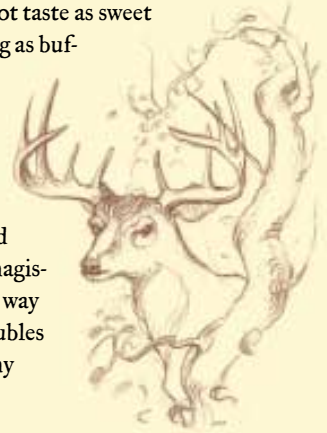
Despite their different appearances, all cattle seem to make good food. Since every hunting animal and intelligent race knows this, we're lucky that so many cattle graze around Ansalon still; otherwise predators would have killed them all by now!

Another common thing among known species of cow includes the fact that humans can consume their milk. Given the number of species where the milk is for some reason inedible for humans, this fact seems remarkable.

DEER are the only herd animal I know of that live in the woods, and that still seems strange to me. It just feels so odd to my way of thinking that a herd of anything could stay together through the bushes and trees of a forest like Qualinesti. Still, I've seen fifty or more deer grazing, strolling, and even running through those woods.

You can find deer in almost every forested spot in Ansalon, and quite a few on the grassy plains as well. Their meat does not taste as sweet as beef, or as strong as buffalo. In fact, the people of most large cities consider venison to be a treat, and presenting a few salted pounds of it to a magistrate can go a long way to settling any troubles you have with many city officials.

Some famous legends tell of a white stag that leads people into heroic undertakings or provides an omen of some disaster or providence to come. Sadly, not everyone follows the guidance of the white stag; some kill their guide. Some tragic ballads relate the tragedy that befalls those who slay the stag.



Aside from farms, the most likely places to find **GOATS** are hilly grasslands and rocky mountains. Wild goats live in small herds of less than twenty-five head and are poor versions of their tame cousins. They have tough and tasteless meat, and coarse and foul-smelling wool. In fact, I can think of only one good use for these wild goats: Their presence indicates that mountain lions live in the area. When you hear these beasts bleat, keep a watchful eye on the rocks above.

Wild goat milk nourishes as much as that of domesticated beasts. However, as with the aspects discussed above, the inferior flavor tends to have a dry, bitter aftertaste.



Wild **HORSES** can be found in all parts of Ansalon. Some look very much like the animals you ride and use to till your fields. Other more monstrous ones, though, stand ten or twelve feet tall, while some wild horses never grow bigger than tiny, hairy animals that could take only a dwarf or kender as a rider.

These animals live for nothing other than running furiously across the plains [and serving as meals for griffins]. Don't be fooled by their looks. You will always find it quicker to walk to your destination than to try to ride one of these animals. These unruly beasts are nearly impossible to break.

The common riding, plow, and war horses all descend from the horses of the plains of the Estwilde and

BUFFALO: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 15, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +8, Def -2, also charge, death throee, and trample.

CATTLE: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 9, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +2, Def -2, also charge and trample.

DEER: *Animal.* Co 14, Ph 15, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +2, Def -2, also charge and sprint.

GOAT: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 5, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +2, Def -2, also charge.

HORSE: *Animal.* Co 12, Ph 6, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +2, Def -2, also sprint and trample.

SHEEP: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +2, Def -2, also charge.

- As the heroes ride across the plains, they hear the rumble of thunder. When they cross a low ridge, they see an enormous herd of buffalo charging across their path. The herd stretches as far as the eye can see in every direction, and the heroes know that such stampedes take days, even weeks to pass a single spot.

Kbur. According to equestrians, these animals are the most versatile, intelligent, and easily trained horses.

Wild **SHEEP** live only on the sides of rocky peaks. They grow much larger, stronger, smarter, and meaner than the domestic sheep you know. You have only to see them engaging in mock battle once, running full tilt at one another and slamming their heads together with amazing power, to know that you should leave *these* sheep alone.

Though ram horns are hard and thick, inside they are hollow. When a craftsman carves the tip correctly, they make excellent hunting or war horns whose blasts are said to carry all the way to the realm of the gods. Whether or not this was ever true, it certainly seems doubtful in the wake of the Second Cataclysm. However, scholars have found tales of a set of rams' horns that a silver dragon and a Kagonesti elf used to notify each other when they needed aid.



Owlbears

First of all, I'm not entirely sure that the owlbear belongs in this group. For a few reasons [which I'll get to in a minute] I thought about listing this beast under "fantastic creatures" with the chimera and manticore. I mean, clearly something is unnatural about a beast with fur *and* feathers, right?

Still, as I thought about it, I came upon one very important reason for including the owlbear in the same section with the ordinary beasts of Ansalon: You find the damned things just about everywhere you go! Oh, they don't have the same numbers as wolves or regular bears, but they're out there. You don't even have to go looking in strange places to find them. If you spend enough time in the woods, an owlbear will probably find you!

From a distance, you can easily confuse these beasts with large brown bears. They look about the same size, maybe a little bigger [about eight feet tall when they rear], and have the same general shape as a bear. Once you get closer, though, you can see the difference. The thing has the head of a bird! It has keen eyes, a sharp beak, and thick feathers with matching fur that covers its head and shoulders.

Now you'd think with them being called owlbears and all, that the head would look like an owl, but it doesn't. Well, that's not really true. When the beast stands on its hind legs and holds its head tight against its chest, its head looks like an owl head. But when it walks about on all fours and raises its beak to look about [which is most of the time], it seems more like a hawk or eagle head. Its paws all have long, sharp claws that the owlbear uses to kill its meals, and a beast this big needs a lot of food.

Owlbears are one of the few animals that simply attack on sight; they also don't need any motivation other than the fact that you're there. Be warned that you can't reason with them, scare them off, or beat them into submission. When an owlbear attacks, either it or its prey will die.

Don't try any of the tactics you'd use against a normal bear when fighting one of these beasts. They don't care at all whether they kill their meat or scavenge it; they just want meat. They climb as well as they fight, and if you run into more than

one owlbear [I've heard tales of them hunting along merchant roads in packs of eight or ten beasts], watch your back. They fight with a natural teamwork that many militias would do well to copy.

The beasts live in deep, uninhabited forests, and can be found in every corner of Ansalon. Mated beasts build large nests made of grass, dried leaves, and pine needles in caves. Owlbears lay eggs, very large eggs, and guard them ferociously. While they don't actually collect or hoard treasure of any description, bones, clothing, armor, weapons, and coins from meals past litter the floor of their caves.

If you can muster enough bravery to enter an owlbear cave, or are unlucky enough to do so accidentally, you can walk away a rich man—or never walk away at all.

I met a thief once who claimed he and his partners were "hired by a black-robe mage to steal an owlbear egg"—for some nefarious purpose, I'm sure. Still, wicked coins spend just as easily as righteous ones.

"I took lookout duty," he continued, "but I knew the beasties would be gone for hours, so I scuffed up some pouches from the litter on the floor. We must've figured something wrong, though, 'cuz we weren't in there more than three minutes when the owners come back, growlin' and hootin'.

"Oh, but they were smart critters, maneuvering us into the low-roofed section of the cave [where a man can't swing his sword] and dealing with us as a group instead of as individual meals, like most beasts would. All the while, they kept on squawkin'. I swear it sounded like they were talkin' to one another.

"Once I saw my partners locked in combat with the beasts, I knew they were done for. But I also knew that I had a chance to escape. I ran as fast as I could past the owlbears and, as I did, one of them turned and hooted at me as if to say 'Get out and don't come back!' Let me tell you, I surely did. I kept on running until I hit the New Sea coast. Only then did I check to see what I have found—a fortune in jewels. I don't recommend seekin' your fortune in an owlbear's cave, but it turned out all right for me."

But not, I always wanted to add, for your partners.

The author's comparison between owlbears and manticores seems to be a sound one. Clearly, some magi-

cal force worked its will upon this creature to create a mammalian | avian crossbreed. However, while the majority of reliable reference material agrees with this hypothesis, few agree on the exact force responsible.

Some scholars point to the Graygem, that chaos-wreaking stone that may be blamed for so many of the fantastic creatures in the world. Several points detract from this argument, though, not the least of which is that the beast seems very well-suited for its ecological niche [a trait found in none of the Graygem's other crossbreeds].

A more likely scenario for the owlbear's genesis comes from an anonymous journal written during the early years of the Age of Dreams. It describes the life of a servant whose master was an ogre-mage with a penchant for magically enhancing his servants and pets [the journal's author claims to have five arms and six eyes].

One experiment that succeeded too well, though, was when the mage combined a giant owl with a brown bear. The creature was unmanageably aggressive, insatiably hungry, and far more intelligent than even the

OWLBEAR: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 17, In 3, Es 5, Dmg +12, Def -3, also crush.

Owlbears are intelligent creatures with a rudimentary language of their own. While completely uncivilized and unable to comprehend any other languages, they talk to and cooperate with one another using a series of growls, hoots, and whistles. They can also form basic battle strategies.

- While camping deep in the woods, the heroes are awakened one night by a horrible racket. Nothing attacks, but one of the heroes notices an owlbear on a ledge overlooking their camp. The creature howls a barbaric melody, standing on its hind legs, silhouetted by the full moon, performing an almost hypnotic dance. What is it doing and why?

mage knew. It slipped its chains one night, murdered the ogre-mage, and escaped into the wild.

If this tale is to be believed, all owlbears descend from that one creature.

Now you'd think with them being called owlbears and all, that the head would look like an owl, but it doesn't.



Pigs

Anyone who's spent time on a farm will tell you, pigs are trouble. They're smart animals, smarter than some people I know, and once they get riled up, nothing short of unconsciousness—or something to eat—will calm them down.

In most parts of Ansalon, you won't have to worry about running into wild roaming packs of pigs. You should, though, look out for their very close relative, the **WILD BOAR**. This tougher, hairier version of the pigs you know have one big difference: sharp tusks on either side of their snouts. A normal savage-tempered boar of about twenty or thirty pounds can kill a man who does not take care. Use bows and spears to hunt the beasts, and do not let them come any closer to you than is absolutely necessary. Boars live in almost every forest and woods in the land.

In some areas, boars grow so large that people call them **GIANT BOARS**. I'm not surprised, either, because I'd want a special name for a pig that stands nearly as tall as I do! Even the length of a normal boar spear allows them to get too close to you, meaning you'd do best to use arrows and bolts to attack them, or avoid them entirely!

In tropical jungles you can find a relative of the wild boar called the **WART HOG**. These beasts grow somewhat smaller than ordinary boars, but their tusks extend a lot longer. Wart hogs have such a vicious temper that even the mighty tiger hunts them only when no other food is available.

When Malys the Red claimed Kendermore as her home, she set about shaping the land more to her liking. What was once a thriving forest turned, almost overnight, into a heat-blasted desert waste, known today as the Desolation. The magic the dragon used warped not only the land, but the ani-



imals living there as well. Gilthanas described to me, when last he visited the Inn, how the boars from those vanished woods now have a horribly scarred appearance with tough skin that looked like it was tanned and hardened while still on their backs. The blood-red tusks of the

DESOLATION BOAR

warped into nasty barbs.

What's more, he told me that these boars have an even more malevolent temper than before and often attack because only the heat of battle can satisfy the magical poison in their blood.

No specimen of this new species has yet been captured for study. However, scholars and other interested parties have observed similar mutations in many of the Dragon Realms.

DESOLATION BOAR: *Animal.* Co 10, Ph 14, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +9, Def -5, see below*.

GIANT BOAR: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 21, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +9, Def -2, see below*.

WART HOG: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 9, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +8, Def -2, see below*.

WILD BOAR: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 12, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +6, Def -2, see below*.

*All these beasts have acute senses [hearing and smell], charge, and death throe.

In all cases, the *death throe* allows the beast to fight on for three exchanges of blows after its Endurance decreases below 1 point.

- At some point when the heroes are in an ally's castle, the entire building shakes repeatedly, as though an earthquake were hitting the area. This stops when a section of the wall explodes inward as a giant boar slams through it. Its tusks glow with a pale, unearthly light, and it snarls and begins to chase down and kill the castle guards.

Weasels

You might wonder, “Why is Caramon talking about **WEASELS**? Who cares about weasels? What difference will they make to me in my travels?” In fact, I wouldn’t blame you a bit if you’re thinking those things right this very minute! But let me tell you, weasels are more than they seem, and they’re much more than most folks give them credit for.

At first glance, weasels seem to be curious, energetic little balls of fur that scamper about and get into all kinds of trouble. True enough. If you lay your pack down in a weasel’s playground, the beast will most likely find a way to get inside, and break, tear, or ruin the pack. The beasts have a foul smell, so believe me, you won’t *want* to wear anything they’ve rubbed against. Also, on cold nights in the woods, weasels sometimes come into a campsite and crawl under your blankets [which makes for a rude awakening, let me tell you!].

At second glance, though, weasels fight fiercely and can bring down animals three or four times their size through sheer speed and determination. Once a weasel sinks its teeth into a foe, it lets go only to get a better grip.

I met a swordsmith who kept weasels as pets; I’m sure he had a dozen or more of the beasts running around his home, though he kept them out of his shop as best he could. When he wasn’t honing his art, the smith spent all of his time studying his weasels, learning everything he could from them. I felt sure the man was joking, or possibly daft, when he stared at me, his eyes grim as death, and said, “Don’t underestimate the weasel.” I laid aside my suspicions, though, when I saw the man fight. His methods were unorthodox, yes, but his strategy was brilliant; he thought quickly on his feet, always went for the kill, and none of his opponents ever knew what he would do next. All this he learned from watching weasels play games!

If all this does not convince you that weasels deserve their spot in this book, let me bring up **GIANT WEASELS**. They have all the qualities of smaller weasels, plus they drink their victims’ blood.

Can you imagine having to fight two or three of these things as they coil around your legs, sink their teeth into various parts of you flesh, and begin draining you of your strength?

The weasel is a relative of the skunk, which explains its foul smell. Most resources for folk-remedies say that musk oil enhances one’s health, and applying it as a salve eases fevers and relieves general malaise. As the author notes, though, the odor is quite pungent. Washing affected materials [including cloth, skin, hair, and leather] in tomato juice for two to four hours usually reduces the scent to a bearable level, though it still takes several weeks for it to dissipate entirely.



WEASEL: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 2, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +1, Def -2, also musk and sprint.

GIANT WEASEL: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 12, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +6, Def -2, also acute sense [smell], drain [Endurance], musk, and sprint.

- While the heroes camp in the woods, they attract the attention of a pack of curious weasels. The beasts eat any leftover food and decide to follow the heroes. This may not be apparent at first, as the weasels stay hidden, but once the heroes get out of the woods they should notice the animals following them. When the heroes stop, so do the weasels. If the heroes ride quickly ahead, the weasels track them and catch up two or three days later—they cannot be dissuaded.

Wolves

You can find some type of **WOLF** living in almost every part of Ansalon. In the cooler climates they usually have black, gray, or white fur, while in warmer places they usually possess brown or red fur. Some wolves have large, muscular bodies, while others look lean and hunger every bit as much as their expression indicates. Still, as I mentioned earlier, they live all over the place, so you'd best know a thing or three about them before you go into the wild.

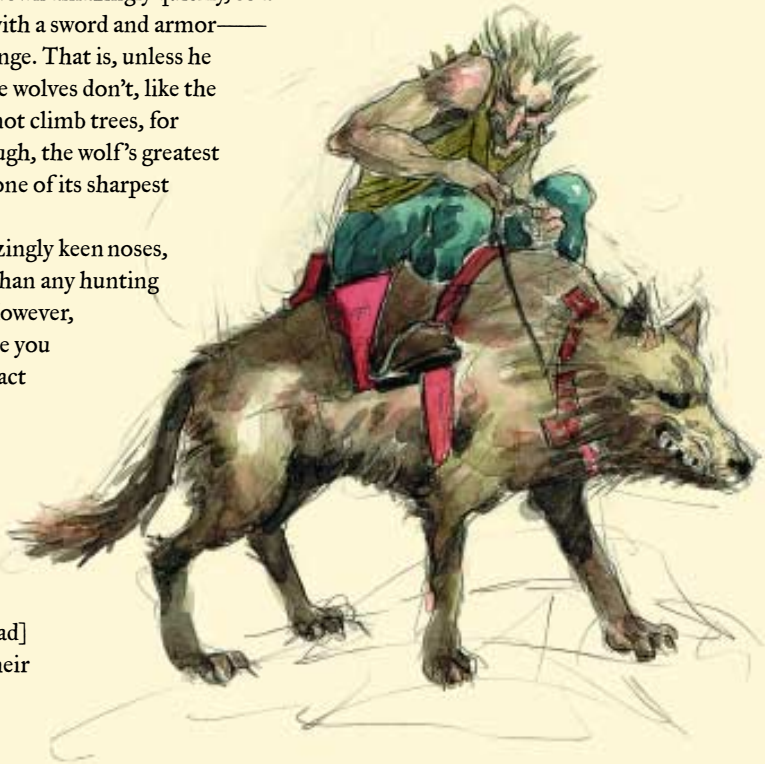
Wolves are pack animals. You'll almost never see a wolf by itself unless it's rabid—or leading its prey into an ambush by the rest of the pack. A pack can be anywhere from four to a dozen or more adults, all led by one mated pair. In the hunt, they seem to work with one mind, circling the prey, nipping and yowling, each one knowing when and where each other wolf will strike.

These beasts, no bigger than dogs [and often quite smaller], feed off bull moose and all but the largest of bears. Their teamwork lets them bring these great animals down amazingly quickly, so a man—even one with a sword and armor—presents little challenge. That is, unless he knows something the wolves don't, like the fact that wolves cannot climb trees, for instance. Oddly enough, the wolf's greatest vulnerability lies in one of its sharpest senses—smell.

Wolves have amazingly keen noses, quite likely sharper than any hunting dog in any kennel. However, I've found that, while you can sometimes distract them by throwing a large enough portion of raw meat into their midst, a more effective plan [if you plan ahead] includes attacking their noses in some fashion. Oh, not

with your sword, but rather with some powder, gas, or spray that causes their noses to burn and eyes to water. If you have an aeromancer or transmuter among your crew, you would do well to have her cast a spell to create such a thing. Otherwise, pepper will do, but you must be very lucky when throwing it that the wind does not disperse your attack too quickly. These attacks cause the beasts such suffering that they will break off the hunt and leave you and your party alone for the rest of your stay in their woods. [I've heard it said that a wolf so attacked will never again hunt *any* mortal race for a meal, though this is only a rumor.]

Despite their reputation as slaving, insatiable killers, wolves are, according to several scholars, quite gentle creatures. Furthermore, the Kagonesti elves will tell you that wolves possess noble, peace-loving souls. In any case, when intelligent races move into an area, the indigenous wolf pack leaves, though whether they depart to "keep the peace" is a hotly contentious point.



Scholars, hunters, and mystics may argue for years over whether the ordinary wolf is a creature of Evil, but nobody debates about **worgs** and their capacity for Evil. These beasts, called dire wolves by the elves, are larger, meaner and, if anything, even smarter than wolves. At first, you might not tell the difference, but if you wind up facing a worg pack in battle, you'll know it.

Unlike wolves, who howl all the time, worgs move almost silently through the night. Even in the midst of the hunt, they make only short, whiny grunts that sound almost like the beast is talking.

In the wild, worgs run in packs similar to their cousins'. They hunt with the same natural teamwork, or perhaps a better one. Unlike wolves, worgs often use guerrilla tactics, repeatedly attacking then retreating, in order to weaken a foe's defenses. Also, these beasts *prefer* to dine on the flesh of the mortal races, and foes cannot chase them off easily. Although their noses possess almost the same keenness as wolves', worgs somehow manage to ignore the pain of pepper or gas attacks and remain focused on their prey.

Luckily, you find very few packs of worgs in the wild. When you do, though, you don't need to worry about other wolves. Worgs chase off all other wolf packs within ten or fifteen miles, leaving the hunting ground free for them to ravage as they like.

Unlike wolves, worgs often use guerrilla tactics, repeatedly attacking then retreating, in order to weaken a foe's defenses.

Worgs tend to live in the hills and woods of Throt and other goblin lands, but you can often find them underneath the goblins themselves. You see, goblins use worgs as mounts, and they make quite a deadly team. It often appears that the worg controls the tactics, because while the goblin rider busily swings at anything that moves, the worg freely maneuvers about as it likes. Either the goblins ride much better than we might think, or the worgs are not the dumb animals we imagine they are.

Is the worg simply a larger, more aggressive version of the wolf? Scholars say yes. No one has ever demonstrated any physical difference between the two species.



However, woodsmen and mystics say otherwise. They claim that Takhisis gave the worg to her smallest warriors. A goblin adage says that "if you die on a worg's back, it will carry you all the way to its home at the Dark Queen's feet."

WOLF: *Animal.* Co 7, Ph 9, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +3, Def -1, also acute sense [smell].

WORG: *Animal.* Co 7, Ph 12, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +5, Def -2, also acute sense [smell].

If a wolf pack suffers an attack on their sense of smell, flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If its aura is white or red, the wolves run away; should a black aura result, they become more vicious and press the attack immediately. The Narrator should decide whether the wolves renew the attack later.

Worgs are semi-intelligent creatures and speak in their own language. Although some goblins and elves know this tongue, nonworgs can have only the most rudimentary conversations with the beasts. A successful *daunting Reason* [Reason] action allows a speaker to trade simple sentences with a worg. A successful *challenging* action allows him or her to get a general impression of its mood and thoughts.

- A group of goblins burst from the woods, panic in their eyes. They fall on their stomachs at the heroes' feet, begging for salvation. Suddenly a pack of worgs burst from the woods, growling and obviously intent on tearing the goblins to pieces. What have the goblins done to earn their mounts' wrath?

Avians

As you head out into the world, you should remember that the beasts of the ground are not the only ones you must worry about.

In some areas, keeping your eyes focused on the trees and rocks around you does nothing more than leave you vulnerable to attack from above. The air above Ansalon can be just as lively [and deadly] as any of its forests, and every adventurer should take the time to learn exactly what sort of things tend to come swooping down out of the local skies.

Like many city-dwellers, I never considered this point. After all, tiny, docile creatures fill the skies above Palanthas, not the hostile ones that the author discusses under this heading. I know of no one who, when a feeling of dread strikes him, looks up—a curiosity to me, but an error that could cost one one's life in the wild.

Common Birds

I wanted to call this whole section “Birds of Ansalon,” but once we started talking about it, Bertrem showed me how many of the beasts I wanted to include weren't really birds. We talked about it for a while, and the only word we could come up with that covered everything was “avians.” [I *still* can't believe I'm writing a section with a hoity-toity name like “Avians” for Paladine's sake!] To make myself feel better, though, I decided to start with birds.

People like birds. Don't ask me why; it's just true. Trust me, as someone who's lived in a tree city for most of his life, I can honestly tell you that I've never met anyone, elf, dwarf, minotaur, or centaur, who doesn't like birds. [Though, as an inn owner, I've noticed that while they are in the throes of a hangover, most folks have less kindly inclinations



toward them and their twittering ways.]

Some birds, like larks, sparrows, finches, and canaries, sing pretty songs. I know one inn owner who, when the local bard broke his hand, brought a cage of these birds in to entertain his customers. The rowdy crowd scared the poor things, though, and they screeched so awfully that he set them free before the sun went down.

The crow, raven, and other such birds are scavengers, and anytime you see a lot of them, you can bet that something terrible just happened—or is about to happen! After all, everyone knows the old saying “crows who follow a dragon never go hungry.”



Birds are, in fact, often seen as omens.

In any snowy clime, songbirds portend the coming of spring; kender consider the finch to be a sign that some amazing discovery lies nearby just waiting to be found; and goblins say that a bird with yellow feathers warns of impending treachery and betrayal.

It would behoove the reader to remember that birds are useful for more than just colorful feathers and pleasing songs. After all, pigeons can be trained to carry messages across the field of battle, allowing a great army to operate as efficiently as a veteran unit. Who knows what else birds could be capable of if properly trained?

COMMON BIRD: *Animal.* Co 6–9, Ph 1–2, In 1, Es 1–3, Dmg 0, Def 0, special abilities vary.

Birds do not usually have special abilities, but rare cases may include such things as charm, dive, poison, and swoop.

Flightless Birds

I was just a boy when I first heard about a bird [besides a chicken] that couldn't fly. A local farmer, a man just trying to earn enough steel to get himself home from his journeys, told me about how he had once ridden an **AUSTRITCH**.

I laughed. "No one can ride a bird!"



"These birds are as tall as a man, and run everywhere they go" he told me. "What's more, they can't fly at all!"

I was sure he was lying to me, trying to fool a little boy into believing fairy tales about such a ridiculous creature. The truth is that large birds with stubby little wings run across the Plains of Dust and, though I've never personally seen them elsewhere, other open grasslands of Ansalon. In fact, I even managed to ride an austritch myself, but I wouldn't recommend this experience.

Austritches have pig-sized bodies covered with dark feathers. But that body sits on two 3-foot legs strong enough to kick down the thickest door I've ever seen and has a three-foot neck attached to the other end. Silly looking things, they seem like impossibly tall ducks!

A close cousin of the austritch is the **EMRE**. While an austritch's skin matches the color of its feathers, an emre's legs and neck possess the same pink color that I do. At the same time, the emre's skin is thick and tougher than the austritch's flesh. Also, an emre has coarse, brown feathers not at all like the austritch's, which end in white, fluffy tips. I'm not sure if the emre's coarse feathers are the reason, but the emre can actually "fly" for very short distances. [When I asked if I should move it

to a different section than one labeled "Flightless Birds," Bertrem said that this bird doesn't fly enough to be put into a different section.] It uses the ability to fly only when evading predators and when attracting a mate.

The **'WARI** is the strangest of all, if you ask me. Flightless birds are all pretty dumb creatures, but the 'wari allows any creature to walk right up and stand near it. The 'wari has absolutely no sense of danger and stands calmly next to a human, wolf, or even a dragon as long as it doesn't attack. Once something attacks one of the flock, though, the rest of the 'waries begin to stam-pede. These stampedes can last for days and, I've been told, the birds act so stupidly that they'll sometimes stampede in a circle, coming right back to the hunters that they were running from in the first place.

Given the similarities of these birds, I find it interesting that they form homogeneous flocks. One never sees a 'wari standing next to an emre or an austritch. What biological imperative causes this, I cannot guess.

AUSTRITCH*: *Animal.* Co 9, Ph 6, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +3, Def -2, also kick and sprint.
EMRE: *Animal.* Co 9, Ph 9, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +4, Def -2, also kick.
'WARI: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 9, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +6, Def -2, also kick and trample.

*Krynnish spelling of "Ostrich."

These birds are all fairly harmless and react to immediate danger by running, though they kick or bite if provoked.

- While on the plains, the heroes are attacked by great cats, which they should drive off without much trouble. Afterward, the heroes learn that they were not the cats' primary targets—several of their mounts have been dragged off to feed the pride. If the heroes are in a hurry, this will be disastrous news. Luckily, they soon encounter a flock of austriches. If the heroes can capture and break a few of these beasts, they may continue on their way even faster than before.

Birds of Prey:

I've always wanted to learn falconry. Every time I see a soldier with a hawk perched on his arm, I immediately think he's intelligent, powerful, and well-respected. Of course, I know that this isn't always the case [in fact, my experience is that the only thing these falconers have in common is that they come from rich families], but I can't help it—those birds make them look so noble.

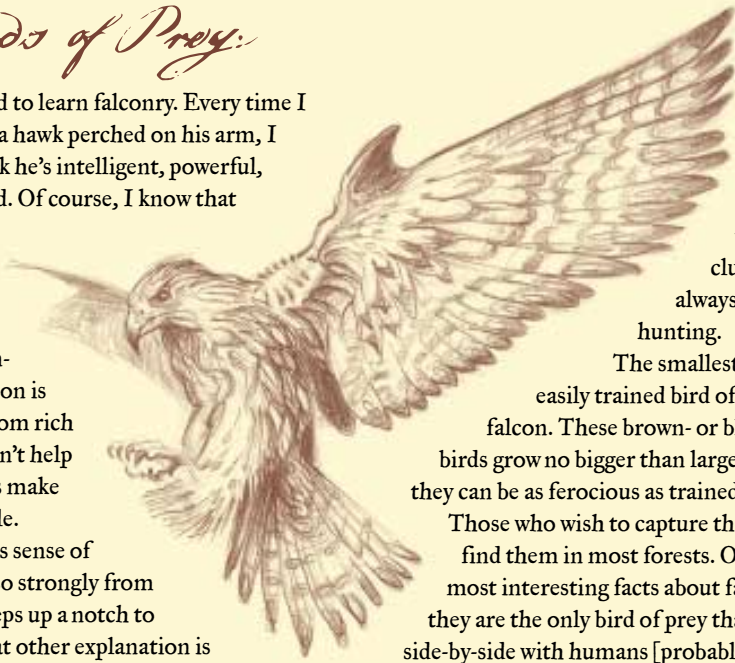
In the wild, this sense of nobility radiates so strongly from the bird that it steps up a notch to become awe. What other explanation is there for the fear or respect we feel when we see an eagle circling in the sky? After all, they're just birds. Still, a man sometimes feels the same terror a rabbit does when those wings flap and those talons flash.

Birds of prey come in all sizes and colors, but most have a few things in common. They almost all live and hunt in the deepest, most remote forests. While they have no natural fear of the intelligent races, when one of their hunting grounds becomes

BIRD OF PREY: *Animal.* Co 8–18, Ph 2–8, In 1–3, Es 1–4, Dmg +3, Def –2, also acute sense [vision], dive, and swoop.

Very few of the birds of prey are large enough to use their swoop attacks on anything larger than a small child. If trained to attack adults, they always do so using their dive ability.

- If a hero has a trained bird of prey, a Narrator can build an adventure where the group must visit a tribe of plains barbarians who revere these birds. The barbarians may believe that the hero is one of the gods walking the world in disguise, or they may believe that the hero is a sacrilegious heathen who dares to defile the property of the gods. Either way, if anything tragic happens to the bird, the heroes will find themselves in a very difficult situation.



settled, the birds always fly off to find a new home. It's as if they know that we clumsy people always ruin the hunting.

The smallest and most easily trained bird of prey is the falcon. These brown- or black-feathered birds grow no bigger than large barn cats, but they can be as ferocious as trained war-dogs. Those who wish to capture these birds can find them in most forests. One of the most interesting facts about falcons is that they are the only bird of prey that will live side-by-side with humans [probably because we don't usually hunt the small woodland animals they eat].

Hawks are slightly bigger, and they nest only in forested hilltops. They like to hunt along ravines and winding rivers. To me, hawks easily possess the most grace of any of these birds. I sometimes spend hours watching them circle effortlessly though the sky.

Owls act, hunt, and live much the same way hawks do, though they look very different. The biggest difference is that owls sleep all day and hunt at night.

Eagles and condors are much larger than any of the other birds of prey, with wings that spread as wide as a man is tall! They live only in mountainous areas, and they hunt large animals and fish. I knew one man who owned a trained eagle, but he never let it perch on his arm. [The one time he tried that, it nearly tore his arm from his shoulder.]

Birds of prey, it seems, are the only beasts that all the intelligent races maintain a unified opinion about. Whether you talk to a human, elf, goblin, or minotaur, they will all tell you these birds have noble spirits and should be honored and feared.

Axebeaks

At first, I thought I ought to talk about the axebeak in the flightless birds section. Its legs and body bear a close resemblance to the austritch, and it lives a life similar to all those plains birds.

The easy way to tell the difference between an axebeak and an austritch is this bird's large, powerful beak. As you might guess from its name, the beak has roughly the same shape as a stone axe, and is just about as deadly. A kick from any large bird can snap your ribs, but an axebeak can punch through a full suit of armor with its head!

The one difference, though, that made me consider the axebeak for a listing under birds of prey is the fact that these birds actually hunt. Bertrem assures me that the simple fact that axebeaks eat meat more than any other meal [unlike the 'wari, which tends to graze more than it hunts] makes them predatory enough to include here. Considering the other entries around it, I needed to know that this was actually a fierce bird, not just one with a strange appetite.

Now, with the axebeak you cannot count on the bird being more afraid of you than you are of it. In fact, I've heard a number of tales about flocks of axebeaks developing a taste for human flesh. Imagine, if you can, a dozen of these birds racing you across the plains, matching your horse step for step, and taking vicious nips at you without even once breaking stride.

Riverwind used to tell me that the worst part about visiting other tribes was crossing the plains, never knowing if a flock of axebeaks was in the area. "When you see them com-



AXEBEAK: *Animal.* Co 9, Ph 9, In 1, Es 3, Dmg +7, Def -2, also kick and trample.

Attacking axebeaks can be distracted by fifteen or more pounds of raw meat. This tactic requires a successful *average Reason* [Perception] action.

- The heroes come across a small flock of axebeaks, but instead of attacking, the birds graze contentedly on the prairie grass. A loud snort draws the heroes' attention, and they see a herd of cattle coming over a nearby bluff. These cows have hides matted with blood, and they eye the heroes hungrily. Somehow, the axebeaks and cattle have had their personalities switched. Who did this?

ing, you can do nothing but circle the warriors around the outside of the group and pray that your arms are quicker and stronger than their heads.

"The best thing you can do is wait until they are almost on top of you, then throw whatever uncooked meat you have over their heads. They do not actually eat very much, these birds, and they are quite stupid. If you can distract them with an easier meal, they will completely forget that you are

there. If they begin attacking, though, they will attempt to kill everyone in your group, even though they don't eat more than three or so pounds of flesh apiece during a meal."

Palanthas business records from the Age of Might tell of a successful merchant whose entire family and business were lost to axebeaks.

Apparently, while traveling through Hinterlund, the tail end of the caravan was beset by an extremely large flock [at least twenty birds] who followed them all the way across the plain, killing off and eating one wagon at a time. According to the merchant's journal, he and his family spent the last two days of their lives trying to outpace the bloodthirsty axebeaks, to no avail.

Kingfishers

No bird of prey has a better reputation than the kingfisher. It is known all over as an emblem of the Knights of Solamnia, and many folk consider the sighting of one to be an omen of just rewards gained by hard work in tough conditions.

It struck me the other day, though, that the people who say that are fishermen on the Solamnian coast. I can think of few people who work harder through more adversity than those folks. Now, the kingfisher is a pretty common bird along those shores. I think it funny that these people made a bird that they see all the time a sign of good things to come. It may not help you, but it will at least make you feel better, evidently!

Kingfishers are big birds, standing about five feet tall, with blue or gray feathers everywhere but their white chests. They possess a long, thin beak, good for spearing or snatching fish from the sea, and a deep blue crest tops its head.

They live along many of Ansalon's seas and lakes, but they can be found in the greatest numbers on the Solamnian coastline. Kingfishers spend their whole day circling over schools of fish and diving down to nab them. I hear they can go as deep as ten feet below the water if they dive from high enough. If you see a few dozen kingfishers flying over one spot, you can be sure a huge school of fish waits below.

Kingfisher nests live on rocky seashores. Usually ten or more birds build nests near one another, though I don't know if they do so for protection or warmth [since Frost took over Southern Ergoth, the waters the kingfishers hunt have become frigid year round]. Kingfisher nests usually hold three or four large eggs that, I've heard some sailors say, taste as sweet as honey. However, fishermen think it's extremely bad luck to eat the eggs, and several

Solamnian towns have severe penalties for being caught doing so.

Having said all that, I still have no clue what the Knights of Solamnia find so appealing about this bird. It isn't a great warrior, it doesn't do anything special or have any prophetic markings. Why do they make such a fuss over it?

Though I am far from an expert on such matters, I have read at least one explanation of why the Solamnic Knights embraced the kingfisher as the symbol of their order. Whatever else can be said about a kingfisher, it is a protective parent. It guards its nest zealously, refusing to leave even in the face of death itself. Several books on natural science report that kingfishers do anything to feed their young, including tearing off strips of their own flesh. I believe that this boundless sense of responsibility and honor that parallels the Solamnic Measure gives the kingfisher a place of honor within the Knighthood.



KINGFISHER: *Animal.* Co 10, Ph 3, In 2, Es 5, Dmg +2, Def -3, also acute sense [vision] and dive.

Kingfishers use their dive attack only while fishing. Occasionally, kingfishers have been known to dive at the crew of boats that sail too close to their nests.

- A kingfisher hunting for meat to feed its clutch makes off with a hero's pack [which contains an important item]. The heroes track the bird back to its nest: a steeple atop a temple in a nearby fishing village. The locals do not allow the heroes to go near the roost until the nestlings have flown off [which will be at least three months]. Any hero who attempts to do so finds himself the target of thrown and missile weapon attacks.

Skyfishers

Oh, these are horrible birds. I'd be just as happy not to talk about them except for the fact that they can cause such trouble!

First of all, they look like a cross between a giant bat and a buzzard, with hairy, gray-black feathers, long dangly legs, and a sharp beak filled with short, deadly teeth. Their cry sounds like a cat whose tail is being pulled, only ten times louder, and they squeal constantly as they fly through the air looking for prey.

You can find skyfishers in just about any hilly or mountainous place, though they don't usually share their hunting grounds with eagles or condors. If you ever find dead eagles lying on the ground with huge chunks ripped from their wings, you'll know skyfishers have just moved into the area.

Unlike most other birds of prey, the skyfisher actually hunts humans. You can look up at an eagle and be pretty sure it won't attack your group, but if you see a skyfisher circling over you, you had better get off the horses and draw your bows—trouble is definitely headed your way.

The worst thing of all, though, is that these birds are smart. I don't mean smart like intelligent—they don't speak or anything like that. They just use better tactics than some generals I've met.

Skyfishers always attack in groups, usually of five or six, but I've seen them work in teams of up to twenty. At least one bird circles the intended targets, sometimes for hours, screeching and watching for the perfect time to signal his brothers to attack. When they do attack, they move swiftly and brutally.

Their most common tactic is to dive at the group, forcing them to split into several smaller,

more vulnerable bands. Then, as skyfisher after skyfisher rakes at the heads of the larger warriors, the strongest of the birds swoop down and try to make off with the women, children, and kender. Once they have moved far enough away, they usually drop their victims from great heights, hoping to kill or knock them out. This certainly makes carrying the now unmoving victims back to their nests much easier.

Trust me, if you ever see a skyfisher [or even a bird you *think* may be one], pull out your bow and shoot it dead.



It has never been proven that the skyfisher's brain works in a more advanced fashion than that of any other bird. Scholars are at a loss, then, to explain how these creatures have such an intuitive grasp of teamwork.

By all accounts they come by it naturally, yet some theological extremists maintain a different line of reasoning. According to them, skyfishers are not really birds, but creatures created by the gods of Evil to carry messages to their first children, the chromatic dragons.

SKYFISHER: *Animal.* Co 12, Ph 12, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +6, Def -4, also acute sense [vision], rake, and swoop.

Skyfishers possess high intelligence, for birds. They have a very keen eye for exactly what targets they can and cannot lift, and naturally work in teams.

- While riding through a mountainous region, a hero is mysteriously knocked off his mount by a swooping skyfisher—an *invisible* skyfisher! Heroes with acute hearing can tell when one of the birds is about to attack, but what will the group do about it? The birds gain all the advantages of the *invisible* special ability. Is this a deliberate attack against the group or just a freak occurrence?

Aerial Mounts

In my time, I've ridden just about every animal that can have a saddle strapped across its back. On the whole, I'd rather walk than ride [I trust my own feet more than I do *any* beast's], and if I *ever* have to fly again it will be too soon.

Don't get me wrong——flying was a wonderful experience, one I'm certainly glad I've had. But unless my life depends upon it, I'd rather keep my feet on the ground from now on.

Perhaps the author's odd reluctance to fly [the most common dream of most ordinary folk] can be explained by the fact that every aerial experience he has enjoyed was in one way or another attached to a violent or tragic episode. Or perhaps he has a deep-seated fear of heights that comes into play only when on a flying creature.

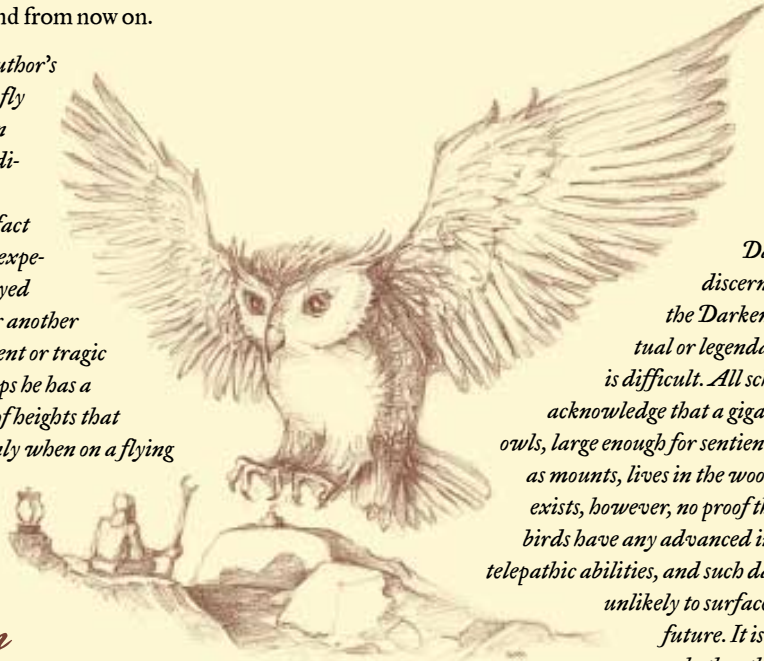
Darken Owls

Within sight of the Qualinesti Forest lies a stretch of forested land known as the Darken Wood, a haunted place where many strange and unexplainable things happen. The Darken Wood is the only place I've ever seen a unicorn or a pegasus, but its strangest animal must be the Darken owl.

Darken owls are huge, gray-feathered birds, standing about ten feet tall. Their eyes look like big polished stone plates, and a man could stand with his chest against one's beak and not be able to touch its feathers. I doubt more than six of these birds could possibly live in the Darken Wood at one time; there simply wouldn't be enough game to feed them all otherwise.

The really amazing thing about Darken owls is that they have as much intelligence as you or me——probably more! They can speak almost any language you can think of, but they prefer to use “mind speak,” or what the mystics on Schallsea call mentalism.

In his younger days, Tanis met a person who lived and studied with a Darken owl, which she often rode. Tanis never wanted to say very much about them, though. I'm not sure why.



As with many creatures and phenomena associated with the Darken Wood, discerning whether the Darken owl is a factual or legendary creature is difficult. All scholars acknowledge that a gigantic breed of owls, large enough for sentient races to use as mounts, lives in the wood. There exists, however, no proof that these birds have any advanced intellect or telepathic abilities, and such data seems unlikely to surface in the near future. It is unclear whether this breed of

owl exists elsewhere in Ansalon.

DARKEN OWL: *Aerial mount.* Co 12, Ph 18, In 8, Es 9, Dmg +7, Def -2, also acute sense [vision], mentalism, sensitivity, and swoop.

Darken owls are cynical creatures who look on the mortal races of Krynns as children who, if properly shepherded, may yet grow to contribute to the betterment of the world.

They live for hundreds of years, and during that time an individual owl chooses only two or three mortals with which to communicate. It treats these mortals as favored children, teaching them all it knows about magic, the world, and the gods.

Giant Eagles

I've seen giant eagles on a few occasions. They're amazing birds, tremendous versions of their smaller cousins and twice as graceful. It's easy to be lulled by the beauty of a giant eagle circling in the sky above; the sight fills a man's heart with peace and calm.

This can turn to a feeling of nervousness and vulnerability, though, when you see the eagle swoop down with its talons bared and carry off a full-grown moose! No single bird of prey poses more danger than a giant eagle. They have eyes so sharp that they can tell a steel coin from a silver one from a quarter of a mile away, and their talons are sharper than most swords I've faced.

When they've got a nest full of hatchlings, giant eagles spend every hour of the day and night hunting for food to quiet the hungry chicks, who are as big as a kender. The adult eagles stand at least as tall as an ogre, usually taller, and four men can stand side by side with their arms outstretched and still not reach the width of their open wings.

You might think that a proud, noble bird such as this would be difficult to train, and you wouldn't be far wrong. Adult giant eagles aren't suited for riding—they don't usually let people close enough to them to even begin training.

However, I've heard that if you can get an unhatched giant eagle egg, keep it warm, and raise the hatchling from the moment it peeks out of its shell, the bird will think that you're its mother. Assuming that the beast lives long enough to learn to fly, it will gladly carry you and anyone else you like anywhere you want to go. Once you get one of these birds trained, it will do anything for you. I've heard that when its master dies, a giant eagle will simply lie down next to the body and will itself to death.

Once every fifth springtime, several tribes of the Khurrib plains enact a dangerous rite centered around the giant eagle.

In the month of Earth Wakes, the two bravest warriors in the tribe travel to the foot of a cliff where giant eagles nest and fast from the night of the new moon until the night of the full moon. [Originally, this ceremony was tied to the phases of

GIANT EAGLE: *Aerial mount.* Co 24, Ph 12, In 2, Es 2, Dmg +12, Def -2, also acute sense [vision], dive, and swoop.

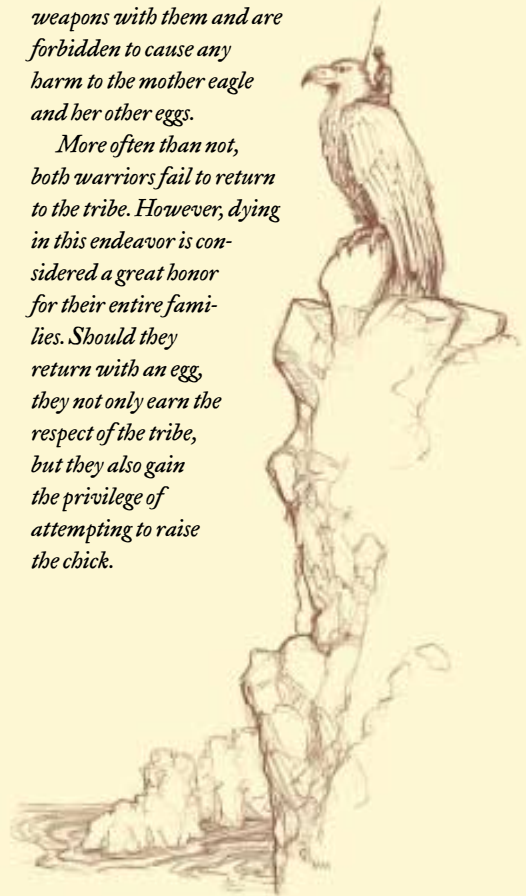
Like their smaller cousins, giant eagles prefer to perform swoop attacks, then carry prey off to their aeries.

- The heroes visit a town where the locals complain that their stores have been raided by a group of goblins riding giant eagles. If the heroes investigate, they find these unbelievable stories to be perfectly true. They're attacked by a small tribe of goblins using these majestic birds as well-trained, mature mounts. How did the goblins capture and train these birds?

Lunitari. Now, however, it links to the only moon in the sky.]

On the night of the full moon, they scale the cliff face and attempt to steal an egg from the highest nest they can find. They cannot bring any weapons with them and are forbidden to cause any harm to the mother eagle and her other eggs.

More often than not, both warriors fail to return to the tribe. However, dying in this endeavor is considered a great honor for their entire families. Should they return with an egg, they not only earn the respect of the tribe, but they also gain the privilege of attempting to raise the chick.



Griffins

In my travels I've met many different large, flying beasts. It seems strange to me that the griffin is the only one that you can really say has been tamed. Oh, more than a few wild griffins live out there [and you'd do well to know where they nest!], but of all the possible flying mounts, only griffins have been trained in any great number.



In case you don't know, a griffin is a weird-looking creature with the head, wings, and front claws of a golden eagle, and the body of a lion. They're one of the fiercest hunters in the skies, and probably on the ground, too. They make their nests on rocky mountains and cliffs that overlook open plains. The griffins do all their hunting on the plains, preferring horse meat to any other meal, but they aren't so picky that they'll turn down a horse *and* its rider.

Rather than circle through the sky, griffins usually sit in their nests or atop a mountain and peer out across the land below. This makes it nearly

impossible to tell when one is eyeing you up as a potential meal. By the time you see a griffin, it has already settled on a target and a plan of attack. You'd just better hope it doesn't want you or your horse.

Griffins live in prides, just like lions, and mate for life. The pride sometimes hunts together, and sometimes in smaller groups. Unlike some other animals I've talked about, they hunt only for food. You can look at this as good or bad news. On the one hand, you don't have to worry about being attacked just because you passed near a griffin aerie. On the other hand, a griffin attack happens as brutally as it does swiftly; the beast only cares about filling its belly, and it won't settle for simply frightening away you and your party.

In case you don't know, a griffin is a weird-looking creature with the head, wings, and front claws of a golden eagle, and the body of a lion.

Luckily, a griffin will probably never take you by surprise. In order to keep its powerful body in the air, it must beat its gigantic wings hard and loud. Add to that the fact that the beasts get very excitable when they're hungry and tend to screech like a five-hundred-pound eagle as they near their prey, and you know they didn't get all their hunting instincts from their lion half.

I have absolutely no idea who first thought of capturing and training such a deadly beast, but it was either the bravest or stupidest person ever to draw breath [and probably both]. As near as I can tell, though, a Silvanesti elf did it.

At the very least, the Silvanesti were the first to ride griffins into battle. Kith-Kanan founded the Windriders as an arm of House Protector during the Kinslayer War. Since that time, the elite of the Silvanesti warriors compete to enter the aerial combat group. All Windriders have personal mounts that they care for as if they were their own flesh and blood.

Before the Silvanesti Shield went up, you could see Windriders on their griffin mounts patrolling the skies over the forest and surrounding plains any time, day or night.

I know all this because I had Alhana tell the story three times while we were flying from Tarsis to Silvanost during the War of the Lance. In all, I would have gladly taken the extra weeks to walk, if time had not been such a worry.

The griffin I rode was a fine animal, its shoulders as tall as my nose and covered in a thick, soft fur. There was no doubt in my mind, despite its gentle manner, that in its chest beat the heart of a mighty hunter. When I climbed onto its back, though, I couldn't find a comfortable way to sit. I don't know why; maybe its muscular frame caused my discomfort.

This may seem like a silly worry, but let me tell you, when riding for hours, you need a comfortable seat [especially when the "road" you're taking lies hundreds of feet up in the air!].

Anyway, I hunkered into the saddle as best I could and held on tight to the reins. This was absolutely nothing like riding a horse, or any other land animal for that matter. Thank Paladine the griffin was so well trained. I still feel the aches from being thrown from more than one horse who found its rider a bit too nervous for its tastes. If I had been thrown that day, the fall would have lasted much longer than the pain at the end.

When you're flying, you have nothing to look at except the ground below. I feigned interest in elven history and a great many other things just to have the comforting distraction of listening to my friends' voices. I'm certain they must have known what was going through my head, but they kindly refrained from mentioning it. Well, all except my brother, who teased me mercilessly about a "fear of griffins" in private

"A big lummoX like you, afraid of a domesticated beast of burden!" Here he'd always chuckle—or cough. "Careful, Caramon, or you might one day awaken to find yourself too frightened to ride a pony!"

Actually, I'm glad he thought that. I mean, fearing a predator like the griffin is one thing. I would have hated for him to know that what really scared me was the height.

GRIFFIN: *Aerial mount.* Co 15, Ph 21, In 2, Es 6, Dmg +12, Def -4, also dive.

Griffin-riding takes more skill than it might seem at first glance. First-time riders must succeed at a *challenging Agility* [*Agility*] action in order to control the beast while remaining seated on its back. Once a rider establishes a bond with his or her griffin, then this action no longer applies. Instead, the Narrator may choose to apply it only in unusual circumstances [such as combat].

- While traveling near the Silvanesti Forest, the heroes see a griffin fly straight toward the tree line only to bounce off the invisible shield that protects the elven lands. As the heroes watch, the creature repeats the act again and again until it finally comes to rest at the shield's edge. Though battered and bruised, the griffin scratches at the invisible wall like a dog telling his master that he wants to come in out of the cold. Did this beast manage to escape from behind the shield only to be trapped outside? Or did an exiled Windrider send his mount here with a purpose, perhaps a message or plea for help?

As one of several creatures in Ansalon that seem so unnatural, one must wonder how exactly griffins came into being. What led to the creation of a beast with an eagle's head and lion's body?

In most cases, and in the griffin's in specific, the answer is the Graystone. That god-forged gem, which can be held more or less culpable for so many of the truly tragic and catastrophic events in our history, has an equally long record of warping, mutating, and otherwise influencing flora, fauna, and cultures across the continent.

It should be noted that in recent years, following in the tradition of their founder Kith-Kanan, the Qualinesti elves have also taken to training griffins to ride into conflict. In the final battle to halt Beryl's unchecked decimation of the land and people [in a fruitless search for the Tower of Wayreth], Speaker of the Sun Giltbas and the members of the Last Conclave rode in on griffins belonging to the Qualinesti Windriders.

Hippogriffs and Hippocampi

Of the aerial mounts, the **HIPPOGRIF** has the lowest number of sightings I've ever heard of. These creatures clearly hold some relationship to the griffin, but with some important differences.

The hippogriff is half eagle, half horse. Just like the griffin, it has the face, wings, and front claws of an eagle. However, its horse's hindquarters, ears,



and neck [including a mane] make it impossible to confuse this beast with the griffin.

Hippogriffs also have a much calmer manner than griffins. While they eat meat, they are not hunters like griffins. In fact, hippogriffs lead lives very similar to that of wild horses, running [or flying] across the plains in great herds, staying as far from cities as possible.

If you can catch and break one, I'm told hippogriffs make wonderful mounts. They become bridle-wise nearly overnight and keep their wits about them in the heat of battle, even when facing dragons or other gigantic monsters.

Some scholars claim that the hippogriff has closer ties to the pegasus, while others reject this notion based on the fact that hippogriffs enjoy feasting on the winged horses.

I'm not sure whether the **HIPPOCAMPUS** has any relation to the griffin, but this seemed like the best place to mention them [if only because their name *sounds* a little bit like "hippogriff"].

Exactly how this half horse, half fish came into being lies beyond my brain's ability to figure. Still, they're peaceful beasts, even if they look ridiculous. I mean, a horse head with a fish fin for a mane? The only thing weirder than that are the flippers at the end of their hooves!

I'm pretty sure they would have died out [or at least be unknown to most Ansalonians] except for the fact that both the Dimernesti and Dargonesti sea elves sometimes keep them around.

From what I hear, they might very well be the fastest things in the sea. I've heard a Silvanesti ballad about a messenger who delivered some news to the Speaker of the Sea. The Speaker was so pleased with the elf that she sent him home on a hippocampus. The thing swam so fast that the messenger lost his shadow and spent the rest of his days combing the Southern Courrain beaches hoping his shadow would wash up on the shore.

The only apparent relationship between the hippocampus and griffin is that both seem likely to have been created by the Graystone. However, I have to admit that putting the hippocampus under the aerial mount category is strangely fitting, if you forget that they "fly" underwater.

HIPPOCAMPUS: *Special mount.* Co 12, Ph 18, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -3.

HIPPOGRIF: *Aerial mount.* Co 18, Ph 15, In 2, Es 5, Dmg +11, Def -3.

Hippocampi cannot breathe air at all, and so inhabit only salt water at least twenty feet deep.

Riding a hippogriff is slightly easier than many avian mounts, due both to the creature's gentle nature and the similarity to riding on horseback. First-time riders must succeed only at an *average Agility* [*Agility*] action.

- The heroes awake one morning to find all their steeds replaced by hippogriffs. While this may seem like a boon, the creatures are unbroken. Even if the beasts are broken, the heroes must worry about having enough meat to feed them. It is impossible for the heroes to travel inconspicuously, and many liveries and inns refuse to stable the beasts. What happened to the original horses, and why were these hippogriffs left in their place?

Pegasi

Nothing is more graceful in the skies of Krynn than a pegasus. By now you must know that I am not a great fan of any type of mount, particularly one that flies, but I think that if I ever found a pegasus that would have me as a master, I would give up walking forever.

There exists no more perfect example of a horse, one that any knight would be proud to ride into battle, than a pegasus. They're tall, muscular, short-haired steeds with flowing manes and fiery eyes. That would be enough, but add to that their majestic wings, as wide across as a giant eagle's, with perfectly groomed feathers soft as snow wings, and pegasi are like a dream—too perfect to be real.

A pegasus's coat usually possesses a pure white shade—not the white of beech trees or sand, but the untouched color of a snowy mountain peak or a cloud floating in the summer sky. Some pegasi, however, have coats blacker than the heart of Nuitari. So black are they that they stand out in the deepest shadows and seem to be almost living silhouettes. This color does not indicate their hearts; black pegasi have just as pure a spirit as the white ones.

Unlike most of the other flying mounts, a pegasus is freely saddled and is as easy to ride as a well-behaved pony. Whether flying or walking, they have smooth and unhurried gaits. If you close your eyes,

the only clue that you're moving is the wind blowing in your hair. Of course, all this assumes that the pegasus allows you to ride it.

Don't think I'm overstating the difficulty of capturing these animals. Even if you rope one and tie him down in your stable, you'll never set your rump on his back unless the pegasus wants you to.

Let me say that another way:

You cannot break a pegasus—it either allows you to ride it or it won't! This is no willful, dumb beast, though. You can tell by looking in a pegasus's eyes that it has a quick mind. If you approach it with respect and deference, it may just allow you to climb on its back. Also, if you are lucky enough to have it accept you as its one true rider, the pegasus will do almost anything you say.

I remember the first time I sat atop a pegasus. I never thought I'd ever know a more perfect

feeling. Of course, I almost never got the chance to get that far. At first, the animal wanted nothing to do with me or my companions.

We had just met the Forest Master of the Darken Wood, who assured us that the fate of the world lay in our getting to Xak Tsaroth by the next day. This seemed a sheer impossibility, but we had not yet realized how much becomes possible when the gods take an interest in your life.

The Forest Master called a pegasus to carry us most of the way, but the creature was understandably unwilling to do such a deed without good rea-



There exists no more perfect example of a horse, one that any knight would be proud to ride into battle, than a pegasus.

son. In fact, Flint nearly ruined the whole thing for us with his sneezing and blustering about not wanting anything to do with such a “monstrous beast.” In the end, though, it took only one word from the Master, and the pegasus bowed and allowed us all to climb aboard.

Imagine, the entire company riding astride *one* pegasus. I say again, no greater steed walks on the face of Krynn or above it!

The only group I know of who has ever managed to gather an entire force of pegasus riders is the Knights of Solamnia. I have no doubt that the Knights’ steadfast devotion to Paladine allowed this to happen. Even in the days when the powers of the world looked unfavorably on belief in the true gods, and today when the gods have retired from Krynn entirely, the Solamnics remain true to the teachings of the Father of Good.

Why would this matter to a beast of burden? Why, because the pegasus is no such thing. It is one of the Children of Krynn, a creation of Chislev and tied to the very land itself. The pegasi would certainly respect and honor the nobility and constancy of the Knights.

I’m sure you’ve seen at least one copy of the great Solamnic tapestries showing scenes from the Third Dragon War. To me, the Knights shown there, riding their pegasi into battle against great red, blue, and green dragons—those Knights are perfect. They are everything I, as a child, ever hoped I would grow up to be, and everything I ever hoped for any of my children and grandchildren who chose to enter the Knighthood. I’m still charmed by them every time I see one of those images.

My granddaughter Linsha told me that the pairing of a Solamnic Knight and a pegasus is a sacred ceremony that most Knights hope one day to

PEGASUS: *Aerial mount.* Co 24, Ph 15, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +8, Def -2, also kick.

Although pegasi do not have intelligence of the same order as the mortal races, they do possess incredibly smart animal intelligence, as well as strong, individual personalities. The Narrator must decide if the beast will allow anyone to ride it at all, and if so, what type of person it favors. Heroes of that type may, at the Narrator’s discretion, attempt *daunting Spirit* [*Presence*] actions to prove to the animal that they are worthy to be its rider.

- The heroes happen upon a strange scene: a pegasus and a small green dragon standing in a clearing, peacefully conversing. They seem to come to a decision quickly, rub their snouts together, then fly off in opposite directions. What is going on? These two natural enemies have agreed on something, but what?

merely watch, at the least. To find a steed willing to embrace you as its own is more honor than most Knights can hope to gather in a lifetime of promoting the Measure.

The author’s assessment of pegasi seems to be based as much on romance as on fact. However, it must be said that not one written record anywhere disagrees with his assertions.

Perhaps this is true because the riders are the only people with intimate enough knowledge to write extensively on the creatures, and certainly these riders would be loathe to propagate anything but the most flattering of reports about their singular mounts.

On the other hand, perhaps the reports reflect pure truth. The only way to know for sure is to find a pegasus willing to accept a rider.

Roc

The largest bird I've ever seen, or ever hope to, is a roc. These monsters stand between fifty and seventy-five feet tall, and have wings that stretch wider than many castles I've visited.

You find these beasts living atop peaks in the Worldscap Mountains and other lonely ranges. They are so big that you'll never see more than one or two within a hundred miles of other rocs. No area has enough food to keep more than one alive.

Men are the absolutely smallest game that a roc bothers to hunt, but they prefer horses, moose, cattle, and even elephants. A roc must be pretty hungry if it considers a man a worthwhile meal.

When they attack, rocs swoop in and grab at their victims with claws the size of houses. Anyone who fails to get out of the way usually dies long before the bird flies back to its nest.

If the first attack fails, the roc settles down on the ground and pecks at its victim, like a chicken scratching for corn. The bird eats every living thing it sees and is not above uprooting trees and clawing out shallow caves to get every morsel.

Who would ride such a monstrous animal? Well, according to some plains barbarians I know, a tribe living north of the Silvanesti Forest had not one, but three trained rocs at one point during the Kinslayer War.

The elves were massacring the tribe, flying over the village on their griffins and raining death down using both magic and ordinary weapons. The village chief went to see the roc that lived atop a nearby mountain to ask the creature for help.

"Why should I help you?" the bird asked. "It seems like every time I come hunting, you and your people chase me away from the most delicious game."

The chief thought for a moment then answered,

"If you help us, we will promise to turn the mightiest of our horses free for you to hunt."

The roc not only agreed to help, but brought his brother and sister along as well.

They did not make any attacks against the elves, but neither did they let them harm the barbarian village.

When the wars finished, the roc reminded the villagers of their promise adding, "If you do not do as you said, my siblings and I will come back and eat your entire tribe!"

Is it any great surprise that every summer from then to now, the tribe releases its five strongest horses to the wild and protects the wild herds from all hunters other than the roc?

In all the accounts written of the Kinslayer War, there exists no tale similar to the one the author relates. Further, the roc does not seem intelligent enough to have the ability to speak, according to reliable texts. However, one barbarian tribal village performs an annual ceremony matching the one described above.

Roc: *Aerial mount.* Co 15, Ph 54, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +12, Def -3, also acute senses [hearing and vision], dive, and swoop.

A roc's *swoop* attack can grab two man-sized targets with one claw, if they are standing within ten feet of one another.

- A traveling menagerie comes to the heroes' town pulling behind it a gigantic covered wagon. In it, the show's barker tells them, is a roc! Anyone can go in and see the beast for the modest cost of ten steel pieces. The adventure really begins when the roc's mate flies in to rescue it. The menagerie owner has kept the bird's pin feathers clipped, so the roc cannot fly, and the other roc continues to attack the town and will not leave without its mate. What will the heroes do?



Insects

I've spent a lot of time telling you how the animals of the world think or feel. Of course, I don't really know these things, but I do believe I have a natural connection to them. Though I've never walked on all fours, been covered with fur, or brought down a boar using claws and fangs, I have had moments when I felt like a lion. I have not at any time, though, ever felt like an insect. So please forgive me if this section seems a little less heart-felt. I will tell you all I know, but I cannot give you any insight into what a mosquito thinks about before it bites you.

Insects, in the author's terminology, include arachnids and all manner of arthropods. Those looking for detailed, scholarly discussion of the differences between such species should look elsewhere. As stated earlier, this volume contains practical information, accessible for those traveling the wilds of Ansalon rather than those learning in the halls of academia.



Bugs

Bertrem rolled his eyes when I told him the name of this section, but what does he want? If I look down at my arm and see a black spot with a thousand legs crawling toward my shoulder, I don't ponder whether it's a spider, fly, or tick; I squash a bug. When I'm done, who knows what to call it other than that?

The editor has since come to see the wisdom in the author's approach. For the record, however, I never squash bugs, I swat them with a piece of paper.



Ants

We all know what an ant is, I think. In this section, I won't waste any time describing bugs that everyone knows just by looking at them. Instead, I'll try to give you some useful information about how to keep them from ruining your time in the wild and tell you about odd breeds I've seen in my travels.

Ants can be found everywhere, and once you put your pack down on the ground, they get into everything! Nothing is worse than putting on clean clothing [which can be a real treat depending on how long you've been traveling] only to find ants crawling over it.

Most ants bite, though the smaller ones do not always cause enough pain for you to notice. And each and every one of them knows when any of its brothers is angry. Bother one ant, and every one in the neighborhood will soon be crawling up your pant leg, raising welts with their painful bites.

In the deserts, I've seen fire ants the size of your thumb whose bite causes a deadly fever that withers your body. The blue ants found in the hills of the minotaur islands can be eaten as a cure for viper poison, though they must be swallowed still living and the bites on your tongue and throat may make

death seem like a preferable option.

Besides their industrious nature, ants are renowned for their construction of intricate tunnel systems. Several texts say that dwarves owe their superior construction techniques to the study of ant tunnels. However, elves wrote all these texts.

INSECT: Co I, Ph I, In I, Es I, Dmg o, Defo, special abilities vary.

Bees

You have no idea how many steadfast warriors who look death in the eye every day of their lives will stand up and run screeching like a crazed toddler when a single bee buzzes about their heads. For some reason, the prick of a bee's stinger fills many folk with a fear far greater than the pain it delivers actually deserves.

I myself have been stung dozens of times, with it never being anything more than a slight bother. It is, in fact, far worse for the bee, whose stinger rips from its body, causing the creature to suffer for a few minutes before dying.

I have met one or two people, though, whose bodies have a greater aversion to bee stings. I once saw a fop from Sancrist Isle stung only one time, and he blew up like a bloated wineskin. I'm sure he would have died except for the fact that some healers from the Isle of Schallsea responded to his pitiful cries for help.

The best thing about bees is that their presence leads to honey! Nowadays, I prefer to buy my honey from Perllon the beekeeper, but in the past I wasn't above burning skunk weed below a hive to get at its sweet treasure.

Those planning to raid a hive in order to plunder its honey reserves would do well to remember that not all insects that look like bees produce the sweet syrup. Before you anger the insects and face the wrath of a thousand stingers, be sure that the "bees" in your particular area are not actually hornets or wasps.

Centipedes

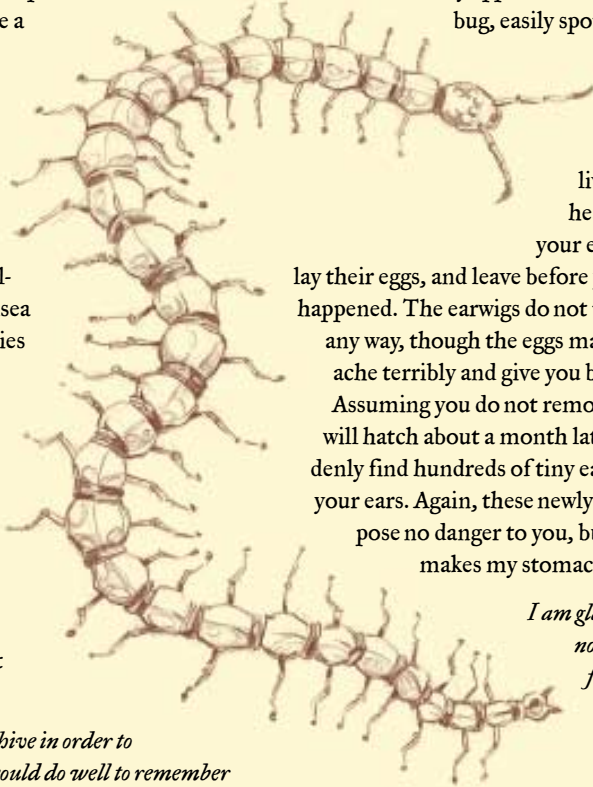
I've heard centipedes called by more names than I can recall, but a few include the terms water bug, tickle tick, roller, and leg worm. Centipedes are tiny bugs, no longer than the nail on my thumb, with many sets of wispy legs covering their twiglike bodies. They live under rocks, fallen trees, and anywhere water occasionally makes the ground muddy. For food, they like to burrow into fruits and other sweet treats. If poked or prodded, a centipede will roll itself up into a tiny ball.

One other name is often given to a certain type of centipedes: earwig. The name "earwig," though, really applies to a special breed of the bug, easily spotted by the pink

stripes along their bodies, which lay their eggs inside living human or elf heads! They crawl into your ear while you sleep, lay their eggs, and leave before you know what has happened. The earwigs do not threaten your life in any way, though the eggs may cause your ear to ache terribly and give you bouts of dizziness. Assuming you do not remove them, the eggs will hatch about a month later and you will suddenly find hundreds of tiny earwigs pouring from your ears. Again, these newly hatched earwigs pose no danger to you, but the whole idea makes my stomach turn.

I am glad that the author did not fall prey to any of the folktales that tell us that earwigs burrow into their host's head, leaving larval worms.

These worms supposedly tunnel through his brains until they exit fully grown, leaving behind a completely empty skull. While such things make interesting fiction, they have absolutely no basis in fact.



Dragonflies

At first glance, observers can easily see how the dragonfly got its name. Dragonflies are long, thin bugs with large gossamer wings and heads that look nearly as fierce as a dragon's. Huge eyes that reflect your face back at you frame what looks like a mouthful of wicked fangs.

How funny it is, then, that dragonflies are one of the gentlest creatures on Krynn. They do not bite, sting, or in any way even care about the mortal races. If I was to compare them to anything, it would be noisy butterflies [dragonfly wings make a loud rubbing noise as they beat]. Like their prettier cousins, dragonflies live to flit from plant to plant and bal-

ance
amazingly
on the tip
of a blade of
grass.

Usually, these bugs are seen only for a few weeks in the hottest part of the summer. However, I've been told that they thrive for nearly half the year in lands immediately surrounding a green dragon's lair. I cannot say whether this is true. I've been lucky enough not to spend a large amount of time in the homes of green dragons. Still, every time I cross a field where the drone of dragonfly wings fills the air, a chill runs through my blood, and I keep my hand on my sword hilt.

According to several ancient tomes on alchemy and physical components for High Sorcery, sorcerers and alchemists use dragonflies in the manufacture of several powerful potions, elixirs, and poultices. Also, spells such as fly, glitterdust, levitate, and summon swarm called for dragonfly wings as an alternate to the more traditional components [such as feathers] used in their casting.

Flies

Why talk about flies, you may ask. All they do is circle over manure and buzz in your ear when you're trying to sleep, right? Wrong!

Flies can tell you quite a lot about an area if you know how to look at them. For example, if you are cooking a haunch of meat over an open fire and attract a swarm of blue, round-bodied flies about the size of a sunflower seed, be sure to stoke the flames high and keep a careful eye out all night. Those flies live only in woods that harbor a large pack of wolves. I don't know why that is true, but trust me—it is!

If you learn which flies are fond of salt and which

throng to
burning
elderberry
leaves, or
which live
near
deserts and

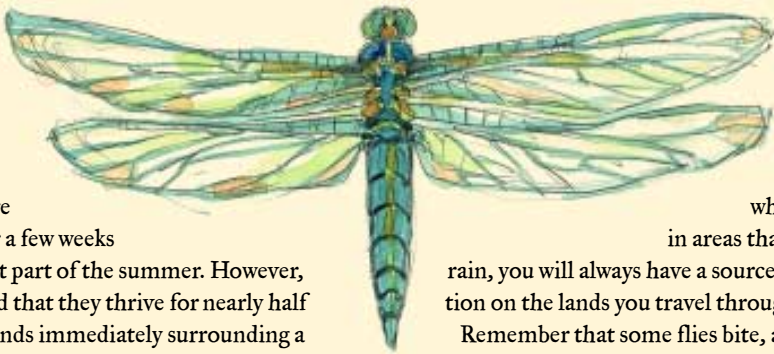
which thrive only

in areas that get heavy
rain, you will always have a source of information on the lands you travel through.

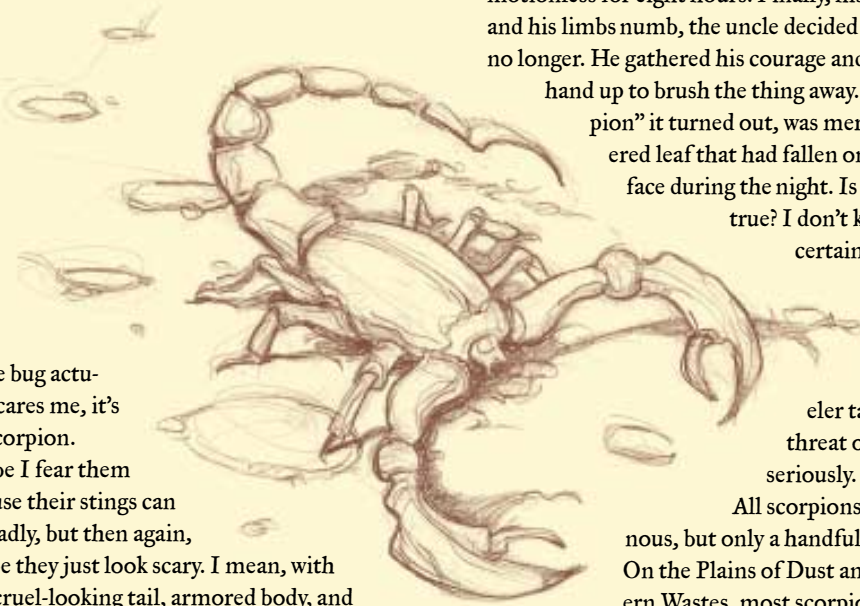
Remember that some flies bite, and some fly bites are poisonous. Horsefly bites raise a terrific welt but cause no other harm. Black bloodfly bites cause almost no pain, but they can be deadly to small children and the elderly. It is always wise to know what flies you may find in a given area and what their bites do.

Even with the vast amount of information available in the Great Library, I have never run across anyone who put the admittedly dull information about insect coloration and habitat to as practical a use as the author has displayed.

Caramon has again allowed me to see the truth with new eyes—this particular truth being that “knowledge is only as useful as one makes it.”



Scorpions



If one bug actually scares me, it's the scorpion. Maybe I fear them because their stings can be deadly, but then again, maybe they just look scary. I mean, with that cruel-looking tail, armored body, and a pair of sharp pincers, it's a frightening beast. I've never been able to enjoy shellfish because they remind me of very large scorpions.

I don't think I could live in an area that had scorpions. Luckily for me, Tika has no interest in moving to the desert or underground [the two places you find the things]. The worry of checking my bed, clothes, and shoes for them every day would wear on me. Scorpions are, after all, just bugs. They crawl around and get in the strangest places. I'm told that they're just trying to stay warm.

SCORPION: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +5, Def -3, also poison [death or paralyze].

The seriousness of scorpion poison changes from species to species. Tan and brown scorpion stings have the same effect as the paralyze special ability. If a victim is weak or small [or is stung repeatedly], the stings may prove deadly. The potent poison of a black scorpion and white scorpion poses even more danger than their tan and brown relatives; each and every sting contains a deadly poison.

A soldier under my command once told me a story about his uncle who, upon waking to find a scorpion perched directly astride his nose, lay there motionless for eight hours. Finally, his back aching and his limbs numb, the uncle decided he could wait no longer. He gathered his courage and flung his hand up to brush the thing away. The "scorpion" it turned out, was merely a withered leaf that had fallen on the man's face during the night. Is this story true? I don't know. But it certainly brings home the point that a smart traveler takes the threat of scorpions seriously.

All scorpions are poisonous, but only a handful are deadly. On the Plains of Dust and the Northern Wastes, most scorpions you see have a tan or reddish-brown color. A single sting from these bugs does not cause death. It can, however, freeze your limbs like the stare of a gorgon, leaving you helpless for about ten minutes. This is not so bad unless something attacks you or the scorpion stings you repeatedly. A dozen or more stings from these beasts can kill even a minotaur.

Sometimes, though, you will see a black scorpion. These are deadly creatures. One sting kills the hardiest of warriors. And, in the depths of the world, I'm told there lives a white scorpion that produces a poison so deadly that one drop of it can fell an army.

I can find no evidence to back the author's claim regarding the efficacy of white scorpion poison. It certainly is deadly, and several recipes exist for transforming poison milked from a living specimen into a more widely applicable toxin. However, I doubt that any creature's poison gland could produce a drop of fluid that could kill hundreds.

The story, though, does lead one to be even more careful when handling such beasts, so it certainly serves the point intended by the author.

Giant Bees

What can I say about giant bugs? They're just really big! In fact, if they weren't so big, most of them would hardly be worth mentioning at all.

The author's succinct explanation reminds me of a saying about how to guarantee that one's writings, even those with comments like the ones above, become the definitive treatise on a subject—simply be sure that yours remains in circulation. The books we reference are not necessarily the best, but they are generally the last of their kind.

Giant Ants

Unlike the smaller type, giant ants can't get into everything. They are just too big. Instead, they grab everything they can and drag it back to their mound. Actually, the little ants do exactly the same thing—except with giant ants, *you* and everything you own are fair game.

You find giant ants only in wide open, grassy plains. They dig their warrens in the soft, sandy earth below, and hunt the plains just like any other predator. Somehow, being attacked by a giant ant [or a group of them—they never hunt alone] is always more frightening than facing one of the great cats.

The hunting pack usually consists of one or two dozen ants, though a hundred or more hunt together in some cases. I remember standing on a



VELDT ANT: *Insect.* Co 9, Ph 8, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +4, Def -4, also entangle.

If the hero fails to evade an entangling attack, in each subsequent exchange of blows that the hero does not break free, the ant automatically succeeds in biting the hero with a damage rating of +4.

- The heroes come across a bizarre village where the local barbarian tribe lives in harmony with a nest of veldt ants. They build tunnels together, hunt together, and even adopt one another [ants gathering and feeding human children]. However, neither the ants nor the barbarians bear the presence of outsiders; they hunt down and kill anyone who sees them. When the ants or humans get more than a mile from the hill, they awake as if from a dream with no memories of recent actions.

hilltop once with a band of refugees, looking over the valley that had contained their homes; we could only watch as giant ants swarmed over everything. Trees, houses, herds of cattle, it didn't matter; they broke it down and dragged it all underground. By sunrise, you never would have guessed that anyone had ever lived in that valley.

If you ever get caught in a swarm like that, may the gods have mercy on your soul. You will not survive. However, if you face a dozen or so ants, you can do a few things to help yourself live through it.

First of all, run directly at one ant—it doesn't matter which one. Try to stay away from its mouth; if it grabs you with its jaws, the beast will start stinging you with a tongue as sharp as my sword, but stay as close to it as you possibly can. The other ants will try to attack you, and if they accidentally bite the first ant, it will become enraged and attack the others. If luck shines on you, the ants will grow too busy biting one another to pay any attention to you, and you can escape.

In scholarly circles, the term for these colossal creatures is "veldt ants," due to their chosen habitat. The Library contains a supposedly complete map of a veldt ant warren, donated by a kender who claimed to have gone in herself to get the information. While the story remains doubtful, the map is a fine rendering of a common anthill.

Giant Bees

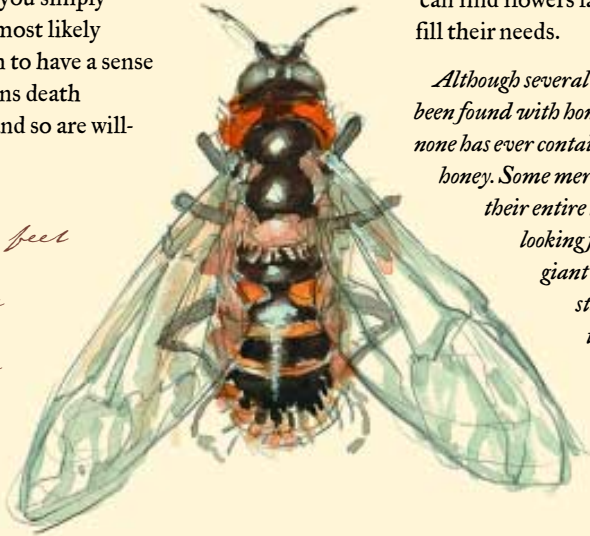
I told you before how the tiny bee strikes fear into the hearts of almost every soldier I have ever met. It seems strange to me, then, that the same does not hold true of giant bees. The men and women I have fought beside consider these creatures to be just another monster to be killed, the same as a draconian or basilisk. It's a good thing they do, too, because a giant bee is a terrible enough foe to fight without also having to combat one's own fear.

These insects are about the size of a large ram, but prickly fur covers them instead of soft fleece. They look like you might expect, just like a gigantic version of a normal bee, and they fight the same way too.

When giant bees feel their hive is threatened, three or four of them fly out to drive off the menace. At first they try to scare you away, but if that doesn't work quickly, one of the bees will attack with its stinger. Just like normal bees, the stinger tears off after the attack and continues to pump poison into the target. However, the bee's poison sac is the size of a large wineskin, and its poison can kill even the strongest person.

If the fight goes badly, one of the bees will fly back to the hive and summon aid. A dozen or more bees will respond, with another dozen waiting to join the fray next. If you simply run, though, the bees will most likely leave you alone. They seem to have a sense that combat for them means death whether they win or lose, and so are will-

When giant bees feel their hive is threatened, three or four of them fly out to drive off the menace.



GIANT BEE: *Insect.* Co 10, Ph 10-14, In 1, Es 7, Dmg +2, Def -2, also poison.

While they do not have a swoop attack, giant bees sometimes lift their prey into the air and, should the combat go badly, drop them from great heights. Use the rules for swoop attacks to determine whether the creature can lift a particular hero.

Giant bees may sting only once. After that, they can continue to fight for about one hour before they die.

- In an adventure where the heroes must explore a ruined castle or temple, they find that the entire structure has been taken over by a hive of giant bees. Even if they manage to overcome all the beasts, they find their exploration hampered by the fact that most of the walls, ceilings, floors, and furniture is covered by waxen cells. Can they find what they need in this maze of wax?

ing to allow routed foes to escape with their lives.

I called the bees' home a hive before, but that is not really true. They do not have a giant hive like the ones you might have seen hanging from trees or awnings. Instead, they take over large caves in high cliff faces and fill them with their waxen cells. The cliffs they choose usually overlook vales filled with deep forests or thick jungles so the bees can find flowers large enough to fulfill their needs.

Although several giant bee lairs have been found with honeycombs in them, none has ever contained even a drop of honey. Some merchants have spent their entire lives and fortunes looking for a honey-producing giant bee colony. Legends state that their nectar is the sweetest in creation and is the chosen drink of the gods themselves.

Giant Beetles

You may have noticed that I didn't mention beetles at all when I was talking about normal bugs. I don't generally give these insects much thought. They don't do anything terribly interesting, they don't pose any real threat to property [except for crops], they aren't poisonous, and no connection exists between them and any other threat like flood or larger monsters. Beetles are boring.

For some reason, though, they are the most common type of giant bug. I'll talk about the most dangerous and interesting types in a moment, but they just start the story. Be nice to every little beetle you see

crawling around in the mud; he could have a cousin taller than you somewhere on Ansalon.

Several types of **GIANT BEETLES** are more common than others. The bombardier, boring, and stag beetles live in almost every corner of Ansalon. They look and act very much like their smaller cousins and would never draw any attention except for the fact that they're all about ten feet in length.

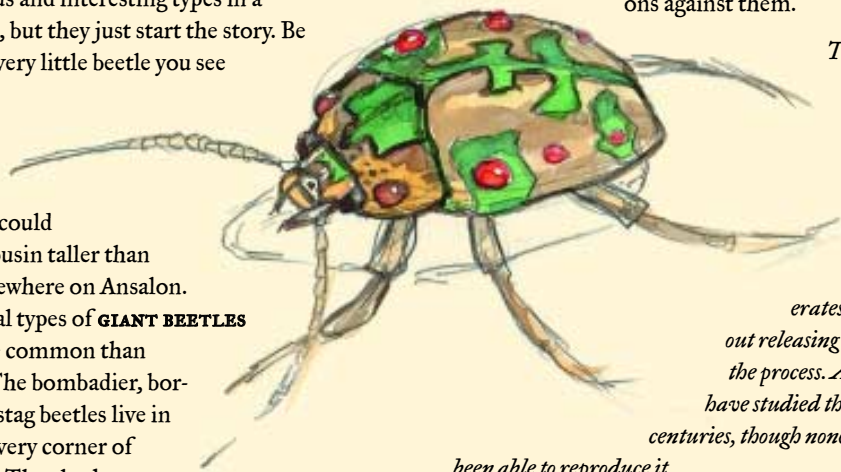
The author may have engaged in a bit of hyperbole by saying that beetles are the most common type of giant insect. On the other hand, he may very well be correct. No reliable data on the subject has ever been gathered.

FIRE BEETLES are the smallest of the giant beetles, usually growing no longer than three feet. If you've never heard of these bugs, their name has probably given you the wrong idea about them. They do not attack with fire or pyromancy, and they have no special love for [or protection from] flames.

The fire beetle gets its name from the fact that it has pouches above each eye and along its belly that glow bright red. It comes out only at night, and the light it gives off can very easily be mistaken for a warm campfire.

Fire beetles eat anything, and they often scuffle along forest floors, gnawing the bark and moss growing on trees. At times, they pounce on any small animal not smart enough to get out of their way. They hunt in groups of three or four, but any area they live in likely houses three or four such groups.

Fire beetles use a bone-crushing bite as their only real weapon. If you see one, be careful! The bugs move quickly. The short time between when they see you and when you find yourself hacking to get them off your arms and chest usually does not allow you to think about using any missile weapons against them.



Though the gleam from its glow sacs looks warm, in actuality the fire beetle generates light without releasing any heat in the process. Alchemists have studied this process for centuries, though none have yet been able to reproduce it.

In the thick jungles of the north lives the strangest looking bug I've ever seen. It's called the **HORNED BEETLE**, and what a sight it makes! First of all, it's a huge beast, at least ten or twelve feet long, covered with a shell thicker than almost any armor I've ever heard of. To top it off, the thing has a tremendous horn in the middle of its head. I'm telling you, the horn is as tall as I am and made from the same stuff as the shell.

Horned beetles live in small herds and generally act more like cows than bugs. They eat grass and make a deep bleating sound that makes me laugh. Usually, they act quite gentle, and if you scratch one behind its horn, it will chirp like a thousand crickets singing in unison.

However, if they have just laid a clutch of eggs, or if it is molting season, horned beetles are not at all friendly. In both cases, they move to a large, open field where they'll stay for as long as a month. Dur-

ing that time, the beetles charge any creature that sets so much as a foot in the field, trying to impale it and then fling it out of the area.

Folktales from various tropical regions tell of great heroes riding trained horned beetles into battle. "Ten score slew the mighty Hatchet afore mid morn," a goblin epic poem says, "And a score more died astride his mount's horn." Illuminated texts generally show the goblin hero riding a vicious horned beetle.

With its shimmering shell and long pincers, the **WATER BEETLE** really looks like a giant version of the beetles you usually find in your sugar cabinet. These bugs can live on land, but they move very slowly and after a few hours their shells become brittle and crack easily.

In the water, though, they are terrors. They swim nearly as quickly as a trout heading upstream and can track prey by the noise it makes splashing in the water. Water beetles eat anything they can stuff in their mouths, and unwary swimmers hold a very high place on their preferred menu. I've even seen schools of a dozen beetles chew holes the size of your head in the hulls of merchant ships.

These beasts live only in fresh water, and only in places that are less than thirty feet deep. Again, I think they can tell the depth by listening to the underwater noise. So, if one ever attacks you, and you can't prevent it from dragging you under, swim as hard as you can away from the shore. Just hope

FIRE BEETLE: Co 6, Ph 5, In 1, Es 2,
Dmg +4, Def -3.

GIANT BEETLE: Co 3, Ph 15, In 1, Es 1,
Dmg +10, Def -4.

HORNED BEETLE: Co 3, Ph 36, In 1, Es 2,
Dmg +17, Def -4, also charge.

WATER BEETLE: Co 4, Ph 12, In 1, Es 2,
Dmg +9, Def -4, also overturn and suffocate.

Giant beetles generally have very poor senses of sight and hearing. About half the species of giant beetle can fly.

- The Narrator can create an adventure that has the heroes tracking down a will-o-wisp. During their initial forays into the swamp, they find nothing, and then they see a circle of pale red glowing balls in the distance. Sure that they've found their target, they'll be terribly surprised to walk into the midsts of a pack of fire beetles.

that the lake eventually gets deep enough that the beetle will let go and swim to shallower waters.

Water beetles have the capacity to remain underwater for periods of up to an hour at a time. They accomplish this by capturing a bubble of air beneath their gigantic wings and carrying it with them. Often they drag this bubble to an underwater cave to set up a hidden lair.



Giant Centipedes and Millipedes

You can find different types of giant centipedes just about everywhere you go in Ansalon. Like their little cousins, they're thin bugs with far too many legs, and they come in a wide range of colors. Generally, a giant centipede's skin pretty closely matches the color of the dirt or rocks found in the area. These creatures often grow to about one foot in length.

A giant centipede hunts by lying very still in the same spot until something tasty happens by. Then the bug crawls out and bites the prey, filling it with a paralyzing poison. Most people can shrug off this poison for a while, but the trouble is that the giant centipede rarely hunts alone. A group of anywhere between a dozen and thirty of them hide in different spots around the same general area. When one finds a victim, the rest come running and quickly work themselves into a frenzy, biting anything that moves [sometimes a centipede will even bite itself or another centipede].

It's always a good idea for you to keep your eyes on the ground in front of you, but if you suspect that giant centipedes are in the area, looking down could save your life. The second you see one crawl from the underbrush, run. Don't try to step on it, don't pull your sword out, just run. Even if one clings to your boots and bites you as you run, don't stop. Giant centipedes move very quickly over short distances, but they can't keep up their speed for very long. After you've moved a few hundred feet from where it attacked you, you should be safe enough to swat at any bugs still clinging to you. Remember,

even if you fall victim to the poison, as long as the whole clutch of them isn't there, you'll probably survive the experience.

One of the most frightening stories I ever heard came from a peg-legged man who described what it was like lie there, his limbs frozen by centipede poison, and watch as the creatures ate his foot and half his leg.

"I didn't feel a thing, but that didn't make it any easier. They were all over my leg, crawling and taking steel-piece-sized bites and moving on. I think they

must have crawled over me for an hour before my mates showed up. I couldn't move a muscle, but I was smiling inside when they chased the twice-damned things off and bound my wounds. Do you have any idea what it was like waiting for the poison to wear off so the pain could begin? My limbs may have been frozen, but they tell me I cried the whole time."

Legends persist of a tome containing the journal of a particularly twisted priest of Chemosh. Before the Fourth Age, this wicked priest spent his whole life in the Kharolis Mountains bending animals to his will, to help

him worship the god of death. The legends say that the man trained giant centipedes to guard his library, particularly his journal, so that none but he could read the Evil genius therein. Such a volume would be a great addition to the Library, but I fear the price that would have to be paid to get it.

Giant centipedes move very quickly over short distances, but they can't keep up their speed for very long.

GIANT CENTIPEDE: Co 9, Ph 4, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +3, Def -3, also poison [paralyze].

GIANT MILLIPEDE: *Insect.* Co 12, Ph 7, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +1, Def -4, also crush and poison [acid].

TUNNEL WORM: *Insect.* Co 3, Ph 30, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +4, Def -3, also camouflage and crush.

- If the heroes are traveling with a kender, the curious character may come across a giant centipede in his or her explorations. After carrying the bug around for a bit, the kender grows bored and places the centipede down out of harm's way—in one of the heroes' packs. What a terrible surprise the hero is in for, particularly if several other centipedes decide to join their brother in this wonderful new hunting ground.

GIANT MILLIPEDES are even bigger than the giant centipede. They usually grow to about five feet long and gain the width of a sturdy oak branch. Thousands of legs cover them. Normally, the beasts hunt deer or wolves, but they can kill humans.

The millipede's poison is so strong that it burns like acid. If you're lucky enough to survive a bite, the pain this poison causes can make it impossible for you to hold your weapon.

These bugs show more cunning than the giant centipede and often hide in places where prey comes to them, such as rocks surrounding drinking pools. One time, upon entering a cabin and pulling back the blanket on the cot, I found not one, but three millipedes lying in wait.

That incident was particularly strange because millipedes do not cooperate well. In fact, I'm sure the only reason I don't have a scar from

that encounter is because the bugs killed one another before any of them could get close enough to nip at me.

Ogres reputedly use millipede poison as the base for a metal polish. This mixture, it is said, can scour away a thousand years of rust in one use. Too liberal an application, though, will eat the entire blade away.

TUNNEL WORMS are the largest of all the centipedes. Their bite is not lethal, but with bodies stretching twenty-five feet or longer, they don't need poison to kill a man.

Travelers and adventurers find these great beasts only in underground passages dug from the soft earth. They cannot burrow through rock, but move through dirt and sand as though they were water.

Usually, the bugs bury themselves in shallow tunnels and wait for prey to walk over or near them.

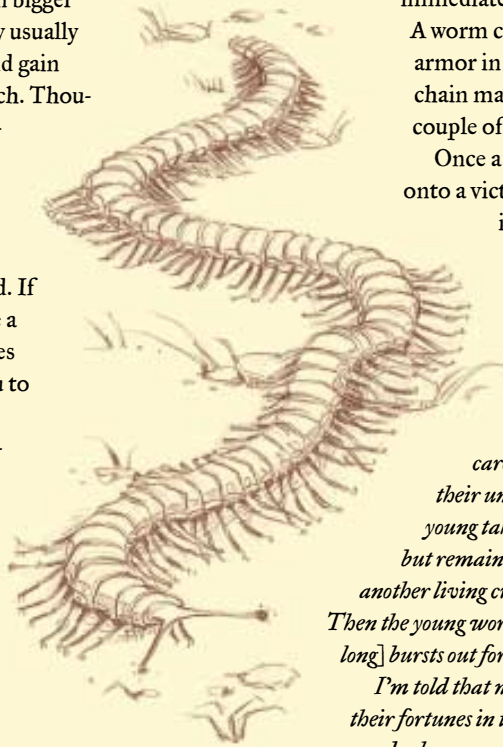
Tunnel worms spring from the earth with amazing speed, wrap around their targets, and immediately begin to devour them.

A worm can chew through leather armor in less than a minute, and chain mail keeps it out for only a couple of minutes more.

Once a tunnel worm has latched onto a victim, it will not let go until it or its victim is dead. Be careful, though. Where one worm is buried, four or five more lie in waiting.

Tunnel worms lay their eggs inside carcasses they find littering their underground homes. The young take only a few days to gestate but remain ensconced in the host until another living creature disturbs the corpse. Then the young worm [only eight or ten feet long] bursts out for its first meal.

I'm told that many adventurers often seek their fortunes in the pockets of the dead. I wonder how many of them ever consider the "bonus" that could be awaiting them in a dead man's belly?



Giant Crickets

I know what you're thinking. "Crickets are cute little things that sing a soothing song. Even if they're giant, how can they be monsters?" Right? Shows how much you know!

Of course, you're partly right. Giant crickets, what we call cave crickets mainly because they live in caves, look just like their little cousins except that they are about as big as a medium-sized dog. Just like their smaller cousins, the minute cave crickets see someone approaching, they leap far away.

What's the problem then? The noise—that's the problem!

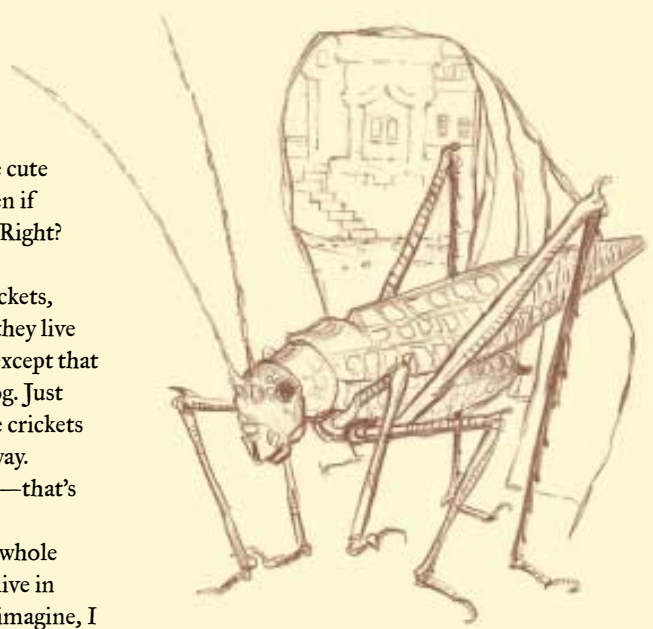
Each cave cricket is at least as loud as a whole field full of the little bugs. And since they live in flocks of eight, a dozen, or more, you can imagine, I think, the racket they make.

Once you get within near missile range of a chirping cave cricket, it becomes impossible to hear anything above the din. Try talking to the man next to you, and you'll find that you can hardly hear your own voice, so what chance has he got? Add to that the fact that they won't shut up until they know that you're nearby, and the caves they live in usually have a nasty echo, then you'll understand why such a cute, harmless bug gets me so riled up.

Although I have to doubt the truth of this story, my brother once told me that the chirping of a cave cricket is loud enough to keep the gods from hearing a mage's incantation. If the damned things *can* deafen the gods, what hope does a mere mortal have?

I remember one time when I was with a group tracking down a band of outlaws who had burgled nearly every home in Solace in a single night. The cave they had chosen as a base housed a group of cave crickets, and we decided to wade through the bugs to cover our approach.

Unfortunately, the bandits knew something that we had forgotten, and they waited in ambush while we approached the deafening noise that the crickets made. Those crickets chirped up enough noise to wake the dead right up until they noticed that we were around. Then, they shut up, signaling the bandits that we were close enough to spring their trap! The noise of arrows whizzing through the air, as



well as the sound of our friends falling mortally wounded to the ground, filled the void left by the now-silent crickets. Only four of us made it all the way to the bandits' perch, but four strong men of Solace proved more than a match for a cowardly bunch like that.

Some stories about cave crickets tell of how priests of the goddess Mishakal used trained cave crickets to guard their temples. This way they always knew when someone approached, but they never had to worry that they would inadvertently cause harm to an honest traveler.

CAVE CRICKET: *Insect.* Co 3, Ph 6, In 1, Es 2, Dmg 0, Def -4, also confuse and kick.

The cave cricket's chirping makes all actions the heroes perform one degree more difficult and makes any Perception actions based on sound *three* degrees more difficult. Acute hearing hinders the hero in this situation by causing enough pain to effectively emulate the blind special attack on her sense of hearing.

- In a cave full of otherwise normal crickets, the heroes come across one whose chirp sounds disturbingly like the words "help me." The beast does not let the heroes get too close, but the more they hear it, the more they are convinced that the beast is speaking to them. Is this some sort of sorcery, or is it just a cricket with a terribly coincidental chirp?

Giant Flies

Flies can certainly be a nuisance, buzzing around looking for a pile of dung or an animal carcass to eat. Giant flies, of which the bluebottle variety are the most numerous, are very much the same, except that they prefer manure piles the size of men or larger.

A giant fly is about the size and weight of a small cat, and people sometimes mistake them for stirges [but once you hear the buzz of their wings, you should instantly know the difference]. They usually prove no more dangerous than their smaller cousins, except if they mistake you for a proper meal. This usually happens only if some sickly sweet-smelling substance like honey covers you. I heard a tale about a noblewoman who wore so much perfume on a hunt that the fox got away while all the gentlemen were fighting off the cloud of giant flies trying to make a meal of her.

Even tiny flies bite. They don't, however, have any taste for living flesh. The same can be said for the giant flies. However, they have no compunction against taking gaping bites out of a living organism in order to devour the blood, offal, or other foul matter in which it may be covered.

HORSEFLIES are not as hard to scare away as stirges or giant ticks, but giant horseflies can be just as deadly as any blood-sucking bug.

Actually, the name “horsefly” suits these creatures much better than smaller horseflies. I’ve known them to drain a warhorse dry in a single feeding.

I don’t think these flies and normal-sized horseflies have any differences between them other than size. Luckily, the giant versions are nowhere near as wide-spread. I’ve heard of them living only on the islands in the Blood Sea, where they can bother very few creatures other than minotaurs.

In fact, I’ve heard a number of jokes that say minotaurs’ dour personalities come from the fact that their ancestors had to spend so much time fighting off giant horseflies. I don’t know any minotaurs, though, who find these jokes the least bit amusing.

The only good thing that can be said about giant horseflies is that, unlike giant ticks, they generally do not spread disease.



GIANT BLUEBOTTLE FLY: *Insect.* Co 15, Ph 9, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +4, Def -4, also acute sense [smell].

GIANT HORSEFLY: *Insect.* Co 14, Ph 18, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +8, Def -2, also drain [Strength].

These giant flies use their acute sense of smell to find suitable food. Any character who gives off a particularly strong, sweet smell or is covered with blood may attract giant bluebottle flies.

When a giant horsefly attacks, it bites into the victim’s skin, clings there, and does not let go until it or its victim is dead. Unless something forces it to fly away, it uses its *drain* attack on each subsequent exchange of blows. The creature can *drain* a total number of Strength points equal to its Physique score. After that, it is full and flies away.

- Swarms of giant flies beset the town the heroes are visiting. These creatures aren’t actually harming anyone but they are terribly troublesome, landing on and crushing crops, and making an awful racket. No one knows where they are coming from [the town has never had this problem before]. What is causing this plague of flies and can the heroes stop it?

Giant Mantis

I knew a strange old man who liked to keep a praying mantis in a cage. Each day he'd catch a dozen or so flies and crickets, always taking care not to harm the bugs, and put them in the cage with his mantis.

One day, he invited me to watch with him. We sat and stared for the better part of the morning. The flies buzzed around, and the crickets chirped the way they will and sometimes even hopped from here to there. All this time, the mantis, who had changed his color to match the twigs the old man had placed around him, simply sat and waited.

Just as the growling of my stomach told me lunch time had come and gone, a cricket leapt in front of the mantis. Faster than my eye could follow, it lashed out, grabbed the cricket in its powerful claws, and bit its head off. The old man clapped to see this, giddy as a child on the first day of spring. After a minute or two, he settled down and fell back to watching the mantis who, after finishing its meal, crawled back into the twigs to wait anew.

When I asked the old man why he did this, he told me he was trying to learn patience. After thinking for a while, I told him that if he could stand to sit there all day waiting for one bug to eat another bug, he already had more patience than anyone who ever lived.

I think about that old man every time I hear that an area I'm traveling through is home to giant mantises. More to the point, I think about his tiny pets and imagine that every tree on the road ahead could really be a bug just like them, waiting coolly and patiently for me to ride past it.

A mantis six feet tall [and I'm told they grow anywhere from three to twelve feet in height] could

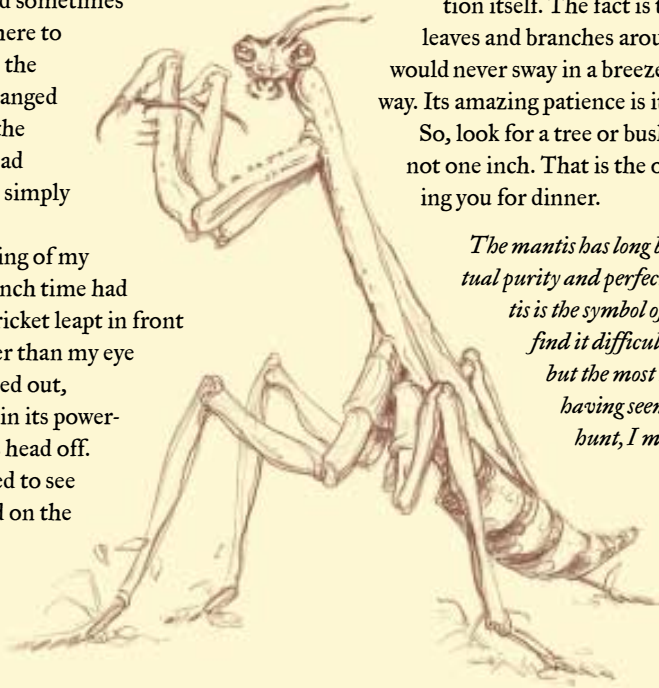
unseat a horseman and bite his head clean off before he knew what was happening. If he survived the initial attack, though, the man would have better luck, because he could surely disable or kill the mantis with its spindly limbs easily.

However, the question remains: How can you prevent such an attack when every branch blowing in the breeze could really be a giant mantis poised to strike?

The answer can be found in the question itself. The fact is that, unlike the leaves and branches around it, the mantis would never sway in a breeze or move in any way. Its amazing patience is its only flaw.

So, look for a tree or bush that never moves, not one inch. That is the one that may be eyeing you for dinner.

The mantis has long been a symbol of spiritual purity and perfection. In fact, the mantis is the symbol of the god Majere. I find it difficult to think of it in any but the most noble of lights. Still, having seen the tiny version hunt, I must say that the thought of a twelve-foot mantis gives me more than a little pause.



GIANT MANTIS: *Insect.* Co 8, Ph 6–36, In 3, Es 2, Dmg +9, Def –3, also camouflage, fly, and pounce.

The giant mantis can fly only over very short distances. It flies for no longer than one minute at a time and never any higher than twenty feet off the ground.

- As the heroes approach a ruined temple, they see that the gates to the site are marked by a pair of statues in the shape of giant mantises—or are they really statues? This thought should give the heroes some pause. How would they tell an actual camouflaged mantis from a well-sculpted statue?

Insect Swarms

A bug is a bug. I mean, the worst it can do is sting you once or twice, right? In most cases, yes. But an amazing thing happens when you get a whole lot of bugs together and riled up at the same time. The bugs stop being a bunch of individual insects and become a swarm, and swarms are no laughing matter.

Usually, if a bug [or even a few of them] lands on you, you can shoo them away, maybe even swat them dead. What if there were a dozen of them? That would be a little tougher, but you'd probably be able to handle it. But what would you do if there were hundreds of them, crawling over you like a second skin, finding their ways into your mouth, nose, and ears? Can you imagine what it would feel like to have bees stinging your eyelids? The idea makes you shiver, doesn't it?

I remember being roused from bed one morning by my daughters, Dezra and Laura, who were squealing something about the forest coming to life. I stumbled out of bed, grumbling that they'd regret it if this was another one of their foolish pranks, and stared out the window and across Crystalmir Lake. To my amazement, the woods on the other side wriggled and writhed with life and seemed to be moaning a deep, droning sigh. As my eyes cleared and I looked more closely, I could see that the mass was really a great swarm of mantises. There must have been thousands of them all buxung about in an angry cloud.

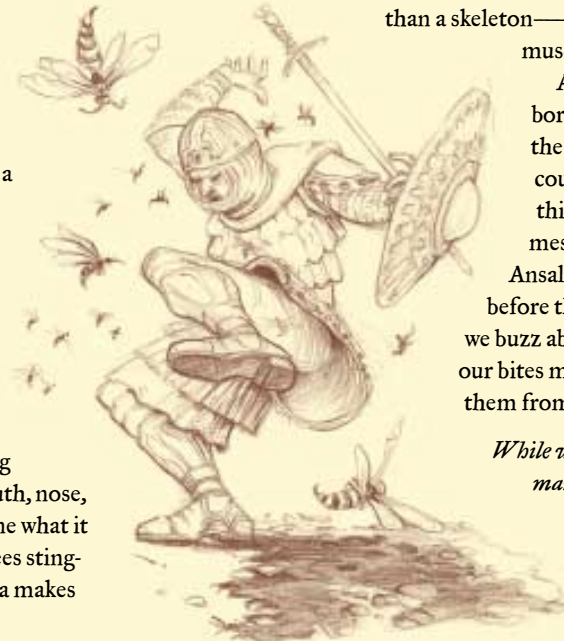
Just as I began to wonder what could have stirred the mantises up, a small green dragon, one of Beryl's lesser lieutenants no doubt, broke from the woods into the shallows of the lake. The swarm followed closely, circling the beast, landing on and

obviously biting it; the dragon bled from dozens of wounds, and its shoulder had been eaten away to the bone.

It was a horrible sight to behold, and I made the girls come away from the window. We could still hear the dragon's pitiful cries—but not for long. When we were sure that the danger was past, we went down to the lake to look; the dragon carcass lay half-submerged in the lake. Every inch that showed above the water line was nothing more than a skeleton—not one bit of skin or muscle remained.

As a score of my neighbors and I worked to haul the thing out of the water, I couldn't help but think that this swarm could serve as a message for the people of Ansalon. We may be as insects before the Great Dragons, but if we buzz about and work together, our bites may be enough to drive them from our lands!

While we were talking about the mantis, Caramon remembered the mantis swarm, which is why he wanted to place the section on insect swarms here instead of at the end of the section.



INSECT SWARM: Co *, Ph *, In *, Es *, Dmg *, Def *, also trample.

*A swarm has the attributes of a normal specimen of whatever insect is involved.

Every exchange of blows, a swarm receives one *trample* attack per every fifty insects in the mass. These attacks result in three times the normal damage for that type of insect. For example, a swarm of fire beetles has a +12 damage rating, instead of the singular fire beetle's +4 damage rating. To determine how long a swarm stays together, the Narrator should draw a card from the Fate Deck. The number determines how many minutes the swarm teems.

Giant Scorpions

There is no creature that I am happier to have *not* met than a giant scorpion. Like I said earlier, the little ones scare me enough. I can imagine my blood turning to ice at the sight of one of the ugly bugs with its tail hanging nearly six feet in the air and claws large enough to snap me in half.

Silvara, when I thought she was nothing more than a Kagonesti elf, told me all I ever needed to know about giant scorpions. I've heard these facts from many other people over the years, but every time I think of them, I hear Silvara's voice in my head. Maybe it's just my mind's way of linking some happy feelings to such a powerfully frightening thought.

"We must be very careful in this part of the forest," she told me after I spotted a giant spider hanging from an elm branch. "In the warm regions, these spiders are a sure sign that giant scorpions are also about."

She went on to say that giant scorpions look exactly like their smaller cousins, except for the fact that they are dusky green in color and give off a bitter smell.

I swallowed hard and looked around nervously. Silvara laughed and put her hand on my arm. For some reason this gesture made me feel more at ease.

"Do not worry, Caramon. They will not sneak up on us. Giant scorpions are many things, but stealthy is not one of them. They scabble through the brush making an awful racket. In fact, just the noise of their legs rubbing against their thick armor can be heard from quite a distance.

"If we hear one, the best thing to do is hide. Scorpions do not have a keen sense of smell and can spot things only if they move. Once they see a target, though, they always attack. I'm not sure whether they have voracious appetites or just cannot comprehend that animals are good for something other than meals, but they always try to make a meal of everyone they meet."

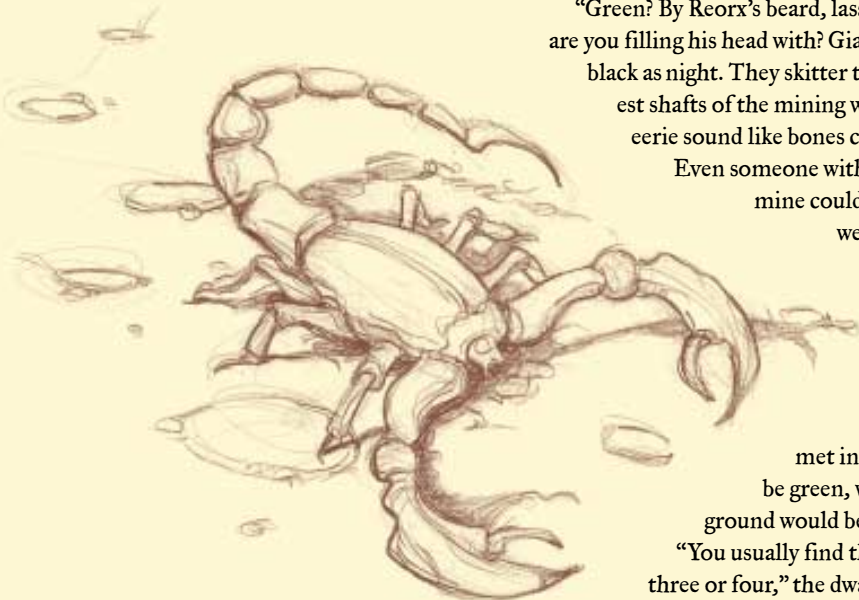
She went on to say that giant scorpions look exactly like their smaller cousins, except for the fact that they are dusky green in color and give off a bitter smell. I'm sure that's because of their poison, which I'm told you actually can see glistening on the tip of their tails.

Just then, Flint joined us.

"Green? By Reorx's beard, lass, what nonsense are you filling his head with? Giant scorpions are black as night. They skitter through the deepest shafts of the mining warrens, making an eerie sound like bones cracking."

Even someone with a brain as weak as mine could tell that these were probably just a different version of the same animal. I was sure that any scorpion we met in the forest would be green, while those underground would be black.

"You usually find them in packs of three or four," the dwarf continued,



“and when you do, you’d best draw your sword and prepare for a fight. You’re absolutely right about their tempers; if scorpions go too long without finding something good to eat, they’re likely to start killing off one another just out of sheer orneriness.”

At least he and Silvara agreed on something. In fact, my son even mentioned that he ran into a couple of giant scorpions a few years back while he was scouting the lair of the Blue Dragon, Skie. It makes me proud to say that, though he takes after his uncle in so many ways, at least a little of his father’s sense of adventure shines in Palin’s heart.

“I’d have to say they were closer to the scorpions Flint described. Their carapaces were the color of onyx, and they made an unnerving clatter as they moved about. But they also seemed a lot smarter than most animals. I know Skie was using them to protect his cave, but they seemed to be more intelligent than mere guard dogs.

“Maybe this was a special pair, but if not, then scorpions are even deadlier foes than you’ve always said.”

At this stage in my life, I hope that the days when I might be called upon to face a giant scorpion in combat have long since passed. Still, my mind can’t help but work along the patterns it always has.

Were I to come face-to-face with such a creature, based on Silvara’s sound advice, the first thing I would do is hide. If that strategy failed to work, though, I would play cat-and-mouse with the bug, ducking behind trees, rocks, or anything else I could find. If I could hide under something sturdy, so much the better. Let the beast waste time and effort knocking things down trying to get at me. With any luck, something heavy would fall on it.

In the end, though, the only strategy I have ever come up with that seemed like it had even a faint hope of killing the beast was to climb on its back. Don’t laugh, now. From everything I’ve heard, a giant scorpion gets so fixed on its prey that it’ll attack the foe anywhere—even if the foe is standing on its own head. I’d be betting my life that the scorpion is not proof against its own poison, but no other brilliant schemes have ever sprung to my mind. Like I said, I hope I never have to put this plan to the test.

GIANT SCORPION: *Insect.* Co 4, Ph 8, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +5, Def -3, also poison [tail].

A giant scorpion fights using both its claws and tail. In each exchange of combat, the creature makes two attacks, but they must both be aimed at the same target. It first attempts to grasp the victim using claws which, if the target fails to avoid them, causes the difficulty of defending against the tail to increase by one degree of difficulty.

- As the heroes camp one night, they hear the sound of a giant scorpion approaching. As it comes through the woods, though, they see that the insect has a rider—and a gnome at that! The gnome jumps off and asks if he can share the heroes’ fire for the night. If the heroes say no, he shrugs and rides off mumbling something about how unfriendly people are these days. If they agree, he proceeds to tether his mount near the horses and cannot comprehend why this might bother the heroes. The gnome sees nothing at all strange in his choice of mounts. What is going on here?

The author’s stratagem seems sound. Circumstantial evidence from his testimonials points toward the fact that scorpions have no immunity to their own venom. In fact, Flint’s account specifically claims that they routinely slay one another. Since no scholar has ever detected a noticeable difference between the poisons produced by various members of the same species, it seems safe to assume that someone actually can induce a clumsy scorpion to kill itself.

As to Palin’s account, given the fact that the dragon overlords influence the nature of the land they inhabit, as well as create spawn and other creatures, it seems likely that these scorpions were, in fact, not natural beasts.

Giant Spiders

When I came downstairs this morning, with sleep still in my eyes and the warmth of my pillow a much more welcome thought than the heat of the kitchen, I suddenly felt something brush across my face. I couldn't see anything there, but something had definitely clung to my nose and reached back to grab hold of my ear. Startled, I moved my hand up to brush furiously at my cheek until I realized it was only a spider's web.

It's amazing. You have people dust the inn every day, yet in the morning, the spiders have managed to spin new webs in the most inconvenient places. Those bugs have an incredible sense for where to string their nets to catch the biggest, juiciest meat.

Unhappily, you can find this gift in creatures other than tiny house spiders. Giant spiders also seem to discover high traffic areas in which to hunt. And their webs are not brushed aside so easily.

Do you have a clear picture in your head when I say giant spider? If you do, then get rid of it. So many different types of these creatures exist that I'm sure we could fill a whole other book with them. Some are giant only in comparison to the spiders

you see around your house, perhaps six inches around, while others are true monsters standing almost as tall as I do. Some spiders consist of hairy lumps of legs and teeth, others are covered in spiked armor, while still others have long legs with only a tiny nugget of a body supporting the whole thing. Giant spiders can be brown, black, green, yellow, blue, or covered with intricate patterns that look like anything from an hourglass to the face of a dwarf. I know of giant spiders that hunt nothing but other giant bugs, and some that prefer to suck the marrow from elf bones.

You can find giant spiders in every realm of the continent. At least one type of spider finds comfortable living places in swamps, deserts, mountains, or plains, and I hear that some live even underwater.

You're probably asking yourself, "If all this is true, Caramon, what can you possibly tell us that will be of any real use against so many different bugs?"

Plenty!

First of all, I've never met a spider that isn't afraid of fire. Prickly, dry hairs that catch fire quicker than kindling usually cover their bodies. Add to that the fact that most spider webs also burn well, and you can understand why a giant spider con-

Some are giant only, in comparison to the spiders you see around your house, perhaps six inches around, while others are true monsters standing almost as tall as I do. . . . If particularly large spiders live in an area, you can often find bloodless corpses wrapped in web cocoons strewn about.



siders a lit torch more of a threat than any length of sharpened steel.

Speaking of the webs, be sure to watch out for them! A spider can prove a tough opponent, but in a fair fight, a stout-hearted warrior can usually drive the beast away. However, if a web has entangled your sword arm, you can neither fight nor move to a more strategic location. Trust me, most of the brave souls who have fallen to giant spiders were really defeated by a sticky strand of web.

Giant spiders have all kinds of tactics for stringing their webs. In the wilderness, you find them slung randomly about, taking advantage of the paths deer and other game animals usually travel. If particularly large spiders live in an area, you can often find bloodless corpses wrapped in web cocoons strewn about. Keep a sharp look out, for wilderness spiders sometimes prefer to pounce on their prey from a tree limb rather than set up a permanent web.

Some of the bolder [and usually larger] spiders prefer to dine on mortals and arrange webs near well-traveled roadways. You might find some that weave them across a major roadway [though these stupid creatures rarely survive long enough to be much trouble, and anyone who walks dumbly into such an obvious trap deserves his fate]. Others prefer to place webs in the bushes and thickets alongside a road to trap anyone who wanders off the path for any reason [some even spring from hiding in hopes of scaring travelers into fleeing into the web]. A particularly crafty breed actually spins its web on the road, then climbs into surrounding trees and shakes loose enough leaves to cover its work.

One or two breeds of these bugs even work together as a team. Imagine, if you can, fighting tooth and nail with a half dozen spiders while another four spray webbing at you from the safety of the treetops.

Texts abound with examples of the more colorful hunting tactics employed by giant spiders.

The whisper spider, found in the deep, vibrant Qualinesti and Silvanesti forests, not only spins a web,

GIANT SPIDER: *Insect.* Co 2-9, Ph 8-32,

In 1-3, Es 1-7, Dmg +4, Def -3, also poison and web.

Giant spiders have an innate fear of fire, and every attack using pyromancy or natural flames gains an additional damage rating of +5.

The exact effects of a spider's poison changes from species to species, but at least half of the spiders known have deadly poison. The others may, at the Narrator's discretion, have effects that mimic any other nonmagical special ability.

- In an adventure, the heroes desperately need to cross a chasm that has no bridge. In searching around, they see a web that spans the chasm and no sign of the spider. In fact, the top strands of the web look suspiciously like a rope bridge. Is this the trap that it seems to be, or is the spider somehow cooperating with travelers? If the latter, what toll may the beast charge for crossing its bridge?

but also creates a large spider-shaped figure that appears to lurk in the trap, waiting for prey. When passersby pay too close attention to the mannequin in the web, they become easy prey for the spider, which hides in nearby shrubbery waiting to take its victims by surprise.

The trapdoor spider, which can be found in any cave whose floor is formed of loosely-packed soil, also prefers to ambush its victims. This spider, however, buries itself in the ground and grapples the first creature to step on it. In combat it spends as much time trying to spin binding cords around the victim's feet as it does trying to administer a paralyzing bite.

You can find giant spiders in every realm of the continent. At least one type of spider finds comfortable living places in swamps, deserts, mountains, or plains, and I hear that some live even underwater.

Giant Ticks

Normal, tiny ticks are a bother. Since ticks prosper in our city in the trees, about once each month, Tika insists that we check one another over for ticks. Giant ticks, though, are more than a bother, they're downright dangerous.

These bugs can be as small as the size of my fist, or as big as a large cat, but they all cause serious trouble.

Like the smaller ticks, they latch onto your skin, burrow in so that only their backs can be seen, and suck your blood. Disgusting! On the whole, they cause no more danger than regular ticks, except for the fact that they drink so much more of your blood. I've watched a giant tick drain a man dry in less than ten minutes. Then again, I've seen them latch onto minotaurs or centaurs and take weeks to kill them.

Giant ticks drop on their prey from tree branches or the roofs of caves. Unlike their smaller cousins, you notice when one of these bugs falls on you and immediately starts burrowing under your skin. Be careful when attacking them, though. Any time you miss a giant tick that has already attached itself to someone, you stand a pretty good chance of hitting its victim instead.

I've been told that giant ticks hate fire. If you can burn one badly enough, it will detach itself from its victim and crawl away.

Being bitten by one of these insects can be deadly even if you manage to drive the beast away. Giant ticks carry some of Ansalon's deadliest diseases, such as Ergothian Fever and the Spotted Waste. Though tiny ticks have been known to occasionally carry such diseases, the giant creatures almost always transfer afflictions of some sort.

Should you or anyone traveling with you receive a bite from a giant tick, watch for the following symptoms: high fever, insomnia, intestinal cramps, delusions, and/or spotty rashes. Should one or more of these symptoms appear, seek medical aid as quickly as possible. These diseases often prove deadly, but they can be treated with magical healing or certain traditional herbal regimens.



GIANT TICK: *Insect.* Co 2, Ph 6–12, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +2, Def -4, also drain [Endurance] and infect.

When a giant tick attacks, it burrows into the victim's skin, clings there, and does not let go until it dies. The victim must perform the action to resist a tick's *infect* ability only after the initial attack.

A giant tick can drain a number of Endurance points equal to its Physique score because its attack lessens a victim's fatigue threshold. After that, it is satiated and stops draining the victim, though it remains burrowed in his skin. The tick digests 1 point of blood per day and feeds again only after completely digesting its previous meal.

Any attack against an attached giant tick that fails to hit may instead strike the tick's victim. Flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If it is from the Suit of Dragons, the victim suffers the results of the attack. Despite rumors to the contrary, these creatures do not take any extra damage from heat- or flame-based attacks.

- The heroes meet a traveler with a hunched back who wishes to travel with them. If the heroes allow the traveler into their group, they discover by accident that the traveler's unusual symmetry is actually a bloated giant tick with an egg sack. The heroes can help the traveler get the tick off, but he seems strangely reluctant to allow them to do so. What mystery lies behind this reluctance?

Giant Wasps

When talking about the tiny versions of these bugs, I see no reason to go on about the difference between a bee and a wasp. When the creatures are as big as a plow-horse, though, the details become more important.

Unlike bees, whose barbed stingers tear away from their bodies after one attack, wasps can sting their targets repeatedly. These bugs don't need their powerful, paralyzing poison to kill you; a single wasp can poke enough holes in a man to lay him low.

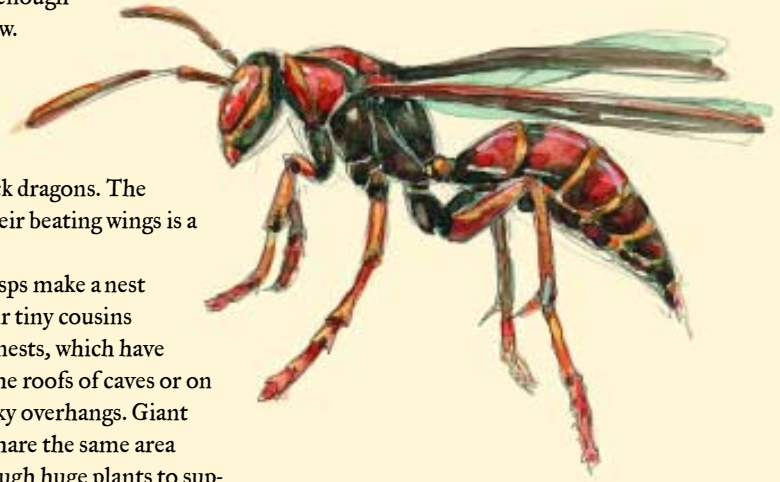
These bugs are ugly, with long segmented bodies and cruel smooth features. They look like they could be related to black dragons. The dull, throbbing, drone of their beating wings is a terrifying sound on its own.

Unlike giant bees, the wasps make a nest very much like the kind their tiny cousins do. They usually glue these nests, which have the feel of rough paper, to the roofs of caves or on the shady undersides of rocky overhangs. Giant wasps and bees very rarely share the same area because few places have enough huge plants to support both colonies. Usually, areas with both have ongoing wars between the bugs, which the wasps almost always win.

Giant wasps do not usually attack people wandering through their territory, although they jealously protect their nests and insist that all other creatures stay at least a hundred yards away at all times. They are terribly curious, though, and make passes in the air low over your head. If you leave them alone, the wasps become convinced that you mean them no harm and go about their business. If, however, you become flustered enough to fire an arrow at a passing wasp, you have only yourself to curse for the destruction that will soon descend upon you and your party.

When they feel threatened, wasps always attack in great numbers. You can expect no fewer than a dozen of them to drive off anyone who moves toward the nest, and six or more to respond to attacks against groups who strike a stray wasp.

Ogres prize the paper from giant wasp nests as a sign of status. Gathering the paper is so dangerous that the ogres consider only the most important laws and works of art important enough to warrant such a valuable medium. Though they rarely write anything of any literary merit anymore, ogres deem a chieftain who sends messages to his allies [or enemies for that matter] scrawled on wasp paper a commander of a force to be feared. If his men possess strength enough to gather such a prize, then they must be skilled warriors indeed.



GIANT WASP: Co II, Ph 12, In I, Es I,
Dmg +5, Def -3, also poison [paralyze].

While they do not have a swoop attack, giant wasps sometimes lift their prey into the air and, should the combat go badly, drop them from great heights. Use the rules for swoop attacks to determine whether the creature can lift a particular hero.

- The heroes arrive at the tail end of a diplomatic mission to the minotaur islands only to find that the scroll they bear has been torn. Though the writing is still clear, the minotaurs do not accept a torn scroll. The only way to keep from failing their mission is to copy the message onto another scroll. Unfortunately, the minotaurs also do not accept the scroll unless it is made from giant wasp paper. Can the heroes find a nest and procure the paper in time to prevent further hostilities?

Stirges

Stirges are the weirdest of the giant bugs. Unlike all the others, though, no smaller versions of these creatures exist. In fact, I don't know what exactly to compare them to.



On the one hand, a stirge looks very much like a mosquito. It has a long stinger which it uses to drain blood from its victims. Then again, it has a stubby, ridgy body like a cicada. But you can't ignore the fact that it has wings like a bat and likes to hang upside down from tree limbs.

Whatever its closest relation, the stirge's body is about the size of a large wineskin and covered with prickly hairs. These bugs live in just about any forest or underground location, but they move around a lot. If you find a colony of stirges one week and come back the next, chances are they'll be gone. They have amazing appetites, and they can kill all the large animals in an area in a few days.

I remember when a colony of stirges came to the woods around Solace. To say we panicked wouldn't tell half the story. Invading draconians is one thing, since people can imagine fighting them. A plague of giant insects seems much more overwhelming, in spite of the fact that the little buggers are pretty easy to kill.

Anyway, I led a group into the woods to kill the bugs before they actually reached the town. What an eerie feeling, walking through woods full of complete silence. No bird chirped around us, no squirrel scampered near us, and corpses of deer, moose, and

bear drained of every drop of blood littered the forest floor.

It took us a few days to track the colony down. It was easy enough to tell where they had been, but like I said, they strike hard and move fast. In the end, we didn't so much find them as they found us.

Whatever its closest relation, the stirge's body is about the size of a large wineskin and covered with prickly hairs.

We were riding through a normal stretch of woods, with nothing weird going on at all. In fact, it was so normal that we were about to turn around and head to another area, when I spotted a bull moose lying face down in a stream, twitching away the last of its life.

I dismounted and walked up to the poor beast, careful to stay away from its still-kicking legs, and sure enough saw a stirge clamped onto the moose's neck. As I turned to tell the others we were on the right trail, twenty of the bugs came flying out of nowhere to attack our group.

Armor seemed to be useless; the damned things recognized bare skin and thin cloth from leather and metal. Luckily, though, they found our horses to be tastier targets than we were [though some of the farmers later argued about how "lucky" that was].

One poor lad, I think it was Bronk Wister's youngest, had one latch right onto his neck. We eventually got it off him—by killing it—but the boy lost a lot of blood. To this day he refuses to go into that part of the woods.

Stirges are not terribly tough bugs. One or two good whacks will kill one, but once they attach themselves to a target, you have to be careful how you swing. They burrow in so close that, if you miss

STIRGE: *Insect.* Co 9, Ph 4, In I, Es 4,
Dmg +2, Def -2, also acute senses [hear-
ing and vision] and drain [Strength].

Using its acute senses, a stirge can function normally in complete darkness.

Once a stirge succeeds in an attack, it clings to the victim and will not release its grip until it has drunk its fill or the victim dies. Only by killing the stirge can the heroes get it to let go.

After the stirge has drained 6 points of Strength, it is full and flies away.

Any attack against a feeding stirge that fails to hit can instead strike the stirge's victim. Flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If a card from the Suit of Dragons shows up, the victim must suffer the results of the attack.

- There is a rumor that Sable, the Black Dragon Overlord, has created an intelligent breed of stirge. These beasts are said to be bigger, tougher, and hungrier than a normal stirge, but they have the ability to speak in the common tongue. To what use would Sable put these insects, and what would the stirges do if they ever broke free of their mistress' control?

with your blow, you're as likely as not to slice open the person you're trying to save!

Well, we lost three of the horses and had to make a rig to carry the Wister boy home, but we killed all the stirges. We never did find their nesting place, though. Usually, these creatures hang upside down from tree branches or the roof of a cave, looking like big, fat bats.

Let me tell you from experience, walking through a dragon's lair is dangerous enough as it is. Add to it the possibility of encountering a few dozen stirges, and it makes you think twice about doing it. . .

After it feeds, a stirge flies back to its nest and sleeps for up to a week. This is the best time to hunt them, because they're lazy bugs and wake up very

slowly. If you can sneak up on a bunch of sleeping stirges, you can probably kill the whole colony before they figure out what's going on.

I've heard tales about an even larger type of stirge living in the jungles of the minotaur isles. These tales describe them as being twice as large as the stirges you might normally see, and they evidently make a leathery buzzing sound as they fly. What's more, I hear they have a poisonous bite, and that local barbarians use this poison on the tips of their arrows and spears. But no one I've ever met claims to have actually seen such a creature.

Another interesting thing about stirges is that while tales tell of them feeding on just about every animal bigger than a dog, they never attack dragons or most dragonkin. I figure that dragon hide is such a tough armor that the stirges can't get through it. Anyway, these same tales tell of stirges making a permanent nest in a dragon's lair [or even on the dragon itself]. Let me tell you from experience, walking through a dragon's lair is dangerous enough as it is. Add to it the possibility of encountering a few dozen stirges, and it makes you think twice about doing it [which you should have done already—I mean, who goes into a dragon's lair without first considering each step *very* carefully ahead of time?].

A stirge colony has a hunting range of about one mile from its current nest. Colonies consist of up to thirty individuals, and they usually split into one or two packs for hunting purposes. However, a recorded instance tells of a swarm of more than one hundred stirges attacking a single village. It remains uncertain whether some magical stimulus was used to gather such a great number of animals.

Stirges do not generally spread disease with their bite, though whether this occurs because they are not germ-infested or simply because they rarely leave living victims is uncertain.

Reptiles

When we started working on this book, Bertrem told me I ought to include dragons, draconians, nagas, and their kin in this section. I still don't understand what connection he sees between these animals and dragons. How can you compare a crocodile, no matter how large or powerful it is, with even the smallest dragon hatchling? Sometimes I wonder at the workings of a scholar's mind.

I tried to explain the principles of related species to the author. How, in the same way that a cat and a lion are cousins, dragons and dragon-kin certainly have a link to the common lizards of the world. I'm certain that he understood the concept, but he refused to accept the application.

"Bertrem," he said, "sometimes a dog grows so big that you just have to call it a horse." I often find myself spending more time postulating about his source for such mad-denying platitudes than about what their actual meanings may be.

Crocodiles

I've seen crocodiles only once, but that was more than enough for my taste! We were crossing the swamps near Xak Tsaroth, trying not to be seen by the draconians patrolling the area. Our spirits were high and, though we had yet to learn much about draconians, we knew that we could handle foes fewer than a dozen in number.

As Tanis and Riverwind led us through the muck, Sturm, Flint, and I kept a close watch for pursuers. We watched the road behind us and scanned the trees all around for signs of a possible ambush. The one place we didn't pay particular attention to was the foul water that stretched out on either side. The swamp was murky and thick, and there seemed little chance that anything could successfully use it as cover for an attack.

"Hey!" Tasslehoff yelped, startling me and, I'm sure, Sturm as well, though he would never admit it. "That log is following us!"

As one, everyone who had a bow noched an arrow and aimed it in the direction the kender was point-

ing. Perhaps the draconians were using a dead log to disguise their approach.

Minutes passed tensely, and the log did nothing more than drift along with the swamp's slow current. It was moving in the same general direction we were, true, but so was every leaf and twig floating on the water. We each rebuked Tas in our own way. His accursed imagination was playing tricks on him.

We returned to our trek, slightly more calm for having broken the tension. So, about fifteen minutes later, we all laughed when Tas piped up with, "Uh . . . guys . . . I think that log really is following us. And it's getting closer!"

Flint looked back and told his friend to relax. "I can see the far side of the log, and nothing's beyond it. You aren't afraid of some soggy wood, are you?"

We all laughed even harder, but Tas, who usually didn't mind being the subject of a gentle joke, got annoyed. "I'm telling you, the log is swimming this way. Look!" He left the group and pointed toward where the water grew deep and murky. "It's coming even faster now. I've never seen a log do this. Do you think it's magical?—"

Without warning, the water exploded and out surged a beast like nothing I'd ever seen before. A long snout it had, filled with dozens of dangerous-looking teeth, and tiny yellow eyes that seemed to focus only on poor little Tas. How he got out of the way I'll never know. The jaws snapped and bit where the kender's head had been mere seconds before.

For a minute I thought this was some kind of water-breathing draconian we had never seen before, but the inhuman growl the thing let out told me that it had no more than an animal's brain. Later, I realized that it was a crocodile, which I had heard of but never really believed in.

The crocodile remained focused on Tas and moved more quickly than I would have thought possible after him, jaws open to try for another bite.

As Tas squealed and leapt further away, the rest of us recovered our wits. Swords were drawn all around, but I stood closest to the beast. With a mighty swing, I struck it across the neck with the sharp of my blade, intending to behead the creature and end the threat.

When my sword hit, though, it didn't cut through the hide. I felt a painful jolt up the length of my arm. Its skin was so dense that anything less than a sturdy axe seemed to do it no real harm at all.

The beast turned toward me, and I looked into its eyes, which were hot with hunger. I felt more vulnerable than I ever had in my entire life. Luckily, the others began to strike the creature as well, and it decided to look for a less well-armed dinner.

Crocodiles live in almost every swamp of significant size and grow from ten to fifteen feet long. They hunt and kill anything that walks, flies, or swims into the area, and have no natural enemies.

Patience is a virtue crocodiles practice in their hunting techniques, as demonstrated by the author's tale. They float lazily along, removing all fear and suspicion from their prey, until they move close enough to strike. A crocodile's jaws are strong enough to snap a grown man's back.

Whether the giant crocodile is merely an enlarged version of the one seen in swamps everywhere, or a creature generated in swamps where black dragons cast their fetid magic is a matter on which scholars cannot agree. The fact remains, though, that they are very real and twice as deadly as their mundane cousins.

Unconfirmed incidents tell of crocodiles, both normal and giant, capsizing boats twice their length. Scientific examination has revealed these creatures to be nearly pure muscle and designed to do nothing other than kill and eat.

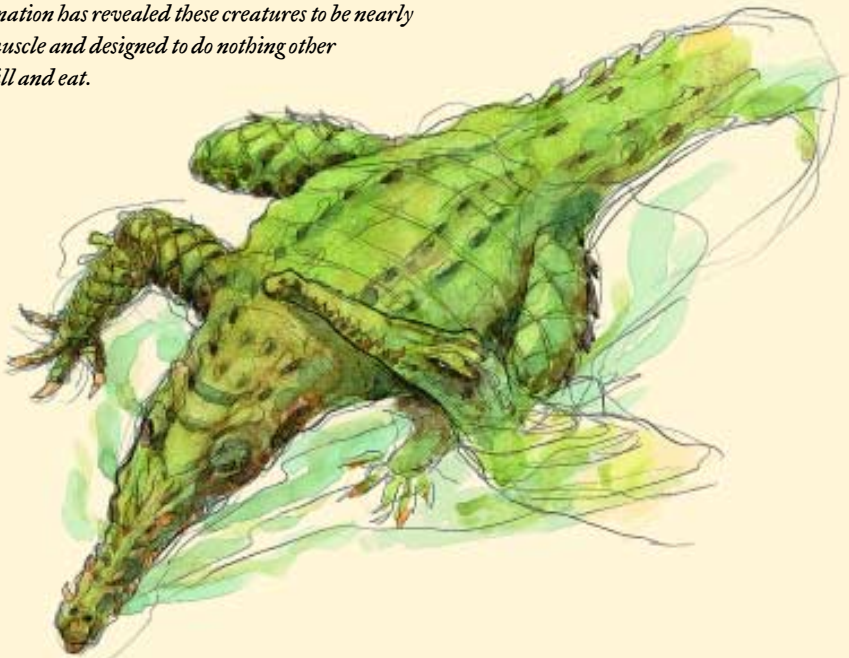
CROCODILE: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 9, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +10, Def -3, also overturn.

GIANT CROCODILE: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 21, In 1, Es 2, Dmg +19, Def -3, also kick [tail], overturn, and pounce.

Unlike other creatures, a crocodile can overturn boats up to a length equal to their own. They can also capsize vessels up to twice their size. If the creature attempts this action, the Narrator should flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If a black aura results, the animal succeeds.

Although giant crocodiles flick their tails with stunning force, they prefer to attack with their jaws. They save their tail attack for when they are surrounded or when discouraging pursuers while escaping.

- During a quest when the heroes seek some manner of favor from a swamp-based barbarian tribe, have the tribe's chief insist that he will not even speak with the heroes until they present him a dozen crocodile teeth. The only way the heroes can come up with enough of the teeth is to go out and kill one of the beasts [which, to the barbarians, is the point of the exercise]. Since crocs tend to congregate in the same area, the heroes must face more than a single beast.



Lizards

Lizards are like water. Sometimes they're green, sometimes they're blue, and they often change color depending on where you see them—but you can find them everywhere!

Common Lizards

During the summers, tiny pink newts can be seen in the shallows of Crystalmir Lake. Children still scoop them out by the handful and carry them home as pets, just like when I was a lad.

As I traveled around, I found lizards of every size and description. Oh, what stories my young mind could have invented if I'd grown up with the lizards of the New Swamp for inspiration. Chameleons, whose skin changes color as they pass from tree to tree,

look super-natural to me even today. And the only creatures that outnumber the mosquitos are the skinks that scurry over every tree, rock, and clump of moss.

In the northern and eastern deserts live other lizards, such as iguanas and gilias. These and other types of foul-tempered lizards hiss and snap at any living thing that crosses their paths [as if the sandy wastes were their private domains]. Unless you pitch a seamless tent, every morning you can count on finding several lizards snuggled next to you for warmth.

COMMON LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 1, In 1, Es 1, Dmg 0, Def 0, special abilities vary.

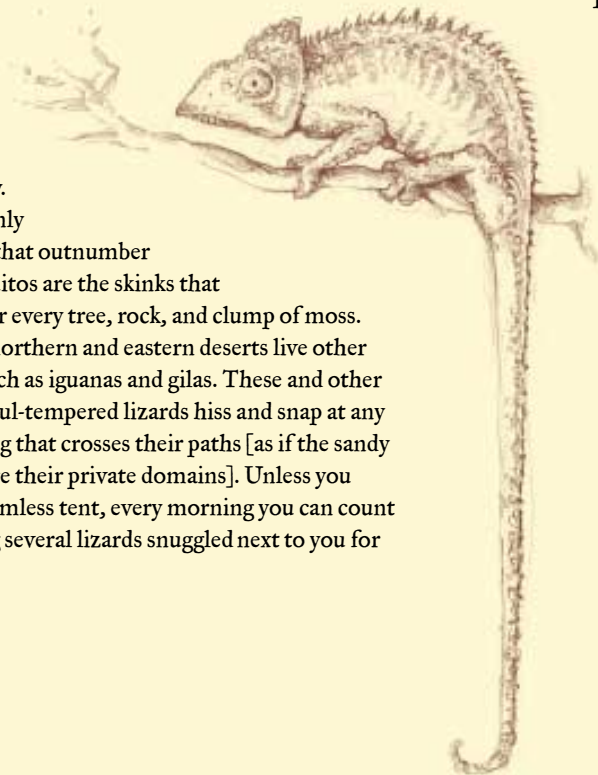
Special abilities include such things as camouflage, musk, poison, prehensile limb, and regeneration.

- The heroes travel to an area that, for natural or magical reasons, is suffering under a plague of lizards. The creatures are everywhere, crawling over everything—especially the people. Seeking warmth, the lizards cling to any warmblooded creature, soaking up heat. It is easy enough for the heroes to swat them away, but as quickly as they do, more crawl back to replace them. They must either find a magical way to repel the beasts or get used to wearing living armor. What is causing this plague, and can the heroes do anything about it?

On the sweltering islands that the minotaurs sail between live tiny geckos. No bigger than our local newts, these green lizards can, with a loud pop, snap their own tails off and fling them at predators [the tail grows back in a week or two].

The tails then twitch and dance for a few minutes, confusing the hunter while the gecko escapes.

The list of defense mechanisms exhibited by the lizards of Ansalon is worthy of future research, but too lengthy to include in this venue. Some examples include contact poison on the skin of colorful lizards and an ability to change skin color [as mentioned by Caramon earlier]. As another point of fact, many different types of lizards can let go of their tails and regenerate them later. I had never heard of Caramon's gecko with its throwing ability until I read about it.



Giant Lizards

Unlike the common lizards I spoke of earlier, giant lizards are creatures that anyone heading out into the wilds of Ansalon would do well to avoid. Most live in such remote areas that they have no natural fear of men, and their strength and girth can easily cause experienced adventurers trouble.

Several of these lizard breeds were originally thought to be hatchling dragons. A modicum of research disproved these ideas, but that fact serves to underscore the author's urge for caution in dealing with them.

Remember the tiny, pink newts I told you about when we started to talk about lizards? Well, imagine one as large as a barn, eyeing you hungrily, and you'll have an idea of what a giant lizard is.

I don't think these creatures are natural. They always appear suddenly and singly in a place that has never even heard of them. You'd think that if a race of such lizards lived in an area that the locals would know about it, wouldn't you? Anyway, occasionally, one of these great creatures simply appears out of nowhere and begins eating the locals. Naturally, the people fight back.

It is best, I've heard, to attack the creature from behind. Lizards generally have good eyesight and move their heads with amazing speed, but they are not particularly bright. Walking around in plain sight causes them to attack you in the only way they know how: by trying to eat you. Giant lizards have been known to try to swallow houses just because the smoke coming out of the chimney attracted them.

If you spray the lizard with arrows from the rear, though, it may never even notice it is under attack until it is too late. They are not terribly rugged animals.

Lizards generally have good eyesight and move their heads with amazing speed, but they are not particularly bright.

GIANT LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 10, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +4, Def -3, also swallow whole.

- A rumor circulates that in a nearby jungle, a tribe of barbarian kender [a frightening enough thought on its own] have built a village on the back of a giant lizard. They travel around, the stories say, wherever the lizard wants to go, and defend the beast against anyone who tries to kill it. Meanwhile, the lizard has been responsible for destroying several villages and merchant caravans.

After the creature is dead, the locals usually go off to locate its lair and kill any mate or children they find. The amazing thing is, they never find any. How can such a creature simply appear out of nowhere? Perhaps it is best if we never know the answer.

The idea that giant lizards are merely mutant offspring of normal newts is ludicrous. Since these creatures vary from the size of a dog to that of a horse or larger and don't seem to follow a consistent pattern of habitat, scholars can offer no logical explanation for where they come from.

It has been suggested that they are normal animals transformed by a mad wizard into the rampaging monsters we talk about, but this too seems unlikely. No accounts record a giant lizard ever acting in the service of any intelligent creature.

The wildest, but perhaps most likely, explanation I have read is that these creatures were simply born with a natural proclivity toward the mystic sphere of alteration. They begin enlarging themselves for protection from predators and continue to grow in order to hunt larger and tastier game. It has even been suggested that they simply are not intelligent enough to figure out how to bring themselves back to normal size.

Minotaur Lizards

In the hills and mountains near copper dragon lairs lives a huge lizard that has long, sharp horns growing from either side of its head. Adventurers usually find groups of eight to ten of these minotaur lizards while the creatures are hunting rabbits or medium-sized game. They sometimes grow to equal the size of a large dog, and they seem to think that humans taste just as good as any other meal.

Oddly, minotaur lizards do not use their horns in any form of attack. Instead, they wait in tall patches of grass for suitable prey to pass by. Then they spring out at their target, trying to grasp it in their powerful jaws. Tiny coarse teeth very much like jagged blades of sandstone line a minotaur lizard's mouth.

Once one of these lizards has you in its mouth, it won't let go until either you're dead or it is. Unfortunately, breaking free is easier said than done. I've seen minotaur lizards snap a foot-thick branch off a sturdy oak in one bite!

Luckily, it isn't terribly difficult to know when minotaur lizards are about. They make a throaty chirping noise that you'd find difficult to mistake. Although some folks I know say it sounds very much like a rushing waterfall, the beasts usually live nowhere near large rivers.

If you're ever camping in or marching through a mountainous area and hear the sound of a waterfall where no water should be, whatever you do, don't stand still. Move about in a wild and threatening manner. Minotaur lizards think that if you suddenly stand stock still, you are about to flee, so they attack immediately. If, however, you react to them like a hunter who thinks minotaur lizard steaks would just about hit the spot, they hold back or possibly even flee.

Should you ever need to fight one of these beasts, remember that, though they're hard to kill, minotaur

MINOTAUR LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 3, Ph 24, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +2I, Def -3, also pounce [crush].

If a minotaur lizard succeeds in its pounce attack, it grasps its victim in its mouth and does not let go until the prey dies. The victim faces the same effects as if she suffered a successful crush attack. She must escape from the beast's jaws before she can perform any other physical action.

A minotaur lizard attempts to flee once it has suffered twelve wounds.

- Narrators with a cruel streak may wait until their heroes' most desperate hour to surprise them with a minotaur lizard attack. If the heroes have been several days without a source of fresh water, they may very well rush headlong through tall grass toward the sound of a waterfall, never stopping to think that all that awaits them on the other side are some hungry minotaur lizards.

lizards are really big cowards. Land one or two solid blows against them, and they'll turn tail and run.

Scholars assume that, since they are not used in combat, a minotaur lizard's horns serve some kind of decorative purpose. Perhaps they frighten away potential predators; as the author points out, the creatures themselves do not stand up well to physical attacks.

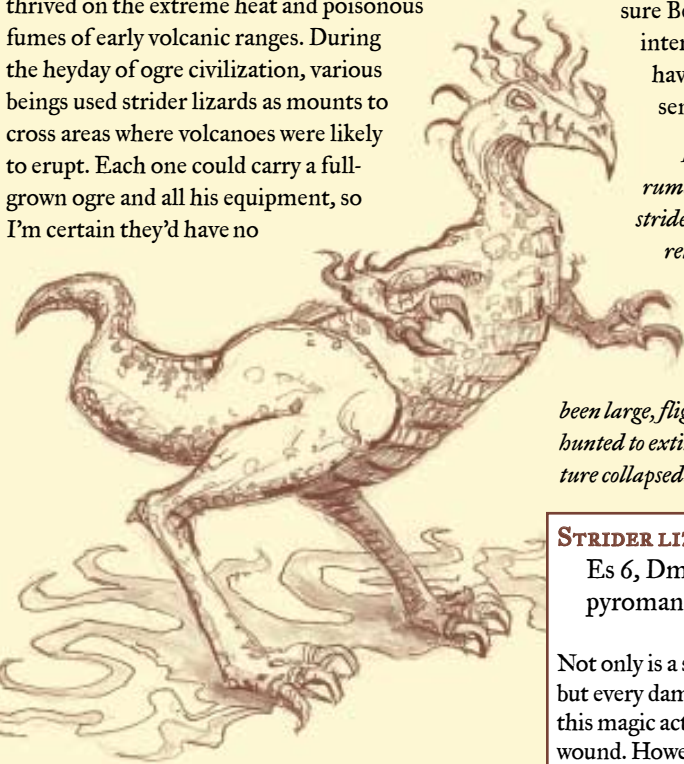
More likely, though, the horns are part of the creature's mating ritual. Perhaps the female chooses her mate based on the size, shape, or color of his horns. On another note, one text tells that the lost race of kyrie believe minotaur lizard horns can be used to create a powerful potion to enhance stamina.



Strider Lizards

Many creatures that lived in the Age of Dreams no longer walk Ansalon today. When dragons ruled Krynn, all kinds of lizards and beasts flourished while the mortal races were taking their first steps on the land. Normally I'd say these animals belong only in books for historians, not for people of action. The strider lizard, though, is another matter.

These two-legged lizards could be found anywhere that lava poured from a volcanic vent. They thrived on the extreme heat and poisonous fumes of early volcanic ranges. During the heyday of ogre civilization, various beings used strider lizards as mounts to cross areas where volcanoes were likely to erupt. Each one could carry a full-grown ogre and all his equipment, so I'm certain they'd have no



trouble bearing two or three adult humans or elves.

Strider lizards also made good war-mounts. They were bridle-wise and could emit flame on command. Their one weakness, though, was cold. I know several ancient barbarian ballads that tell of the tribe defeating marauding ogres by dousing their lizard mounts with water from icy rivers. The beasts always fell dead in their tracks, but some songs tell of them exploding, killing the ogres as well. Careless or overly bold humans sometimes died during these death throes.

The reason that I think the strider lizard is worth talking about while, say, the thunder lizard is not, is that I believe they can still be found in the mountains around, and the tunnels underneath, the city of Sanction. I saw a great many things there that didn't make much sense at the time. Maybe the fog of advancing age has set in, but I swear that while my companions and I were running through those oven-blasted tunnels, we saw strider lizards dancing along the banks of the rivers of lava. I can't say I recommend the experience, but if you are ever looking around there, keep an eye out for them. I'm sure Bertrem wouldn't be the only scholar interested to know whether these tales have more to them than an old man's senility.

It is not my place to argue the veracity of rumors about the continued existence of strider lizards. I would only point out that no reliable report of a living specimen [other than the author's] has been made in nearly a thousand years.

In point of fact, most scholars believe these creatures to have actually been large, flightless, featherless birds who were hunted to extinction by the ogres shortly after their culture collapsed.

STRIDER LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +7, Def -3, also immune to pyromancy and normal fire, pyromancy.

Not only is a strider lizard immune to pyromancy, but every damage point inflicted upon it through this magic actually heals instead of inflicts one wound. However, the beasts are vulnerable to cold. They take an additional 5 damage points from each successful attack using cryomancy or cold liquids.

Once every half-hour, a strider lizard can emit a ball of magical flame from its eyes that inflicts 10 damage points on any target who fails to dodge the blast.

- If the beasts live along magma pits as well as active volcanoes, the heroes may encounter them when they go deep underground. What's more, in an adventure where someone uses geomancy to summon a volcano, the Narrator may introduce strider lizards springing out and terrorizing any onlookers as an unhappy side effect.

Subterranean Lizards

Anyone who appreciates bawdy dwarven drinking songs surely knows at least a bit about subterranean lizards. For some reason, the dwarves find these beasts, with their pale green coloring and the ability to flick their tongues at prey up to ten feet away, to be just about the funniest thing the gods ever created.

Most subterranean lizards grow between one and two feet long and can weigh about as much as a raccoon, though I've heard rumors of some that reach up to twenty feet long. Their skin is a mottled green the color of cave moss, although some of them are a sickly pale white [these white lizards absolutely never leave their caves and, in fact, seem to be very sensitive to bright light].

They scabble along the walls and roofs of caves, caverns, and dwarven cities found in warmer regions. The ones that live in dwarven settlements are tame and, I'm told, make wonderful pets, guarding with their lives the children and home from uninvited visitors. In the wild, though, they are just as territorial and aggressive.



Pay attention to the rocks above you whenever you go below ground. If you're carrying a torch, the rocks will certainly seem to flicker and move in the fire light, but be wary that this motion is not more than a trick of the eye. If subterranean lizards nest in the cave, it could very well be a half-dozen or more of them scooting into range to attack.

GIANT SUBTERRANEAN LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 18, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +6, Def -3, also crush.

SUBTERRANEAN LIZARD: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 9, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +3, Def -3, also crush.

Telling exactly how far a subterranean lizard will be able to flick its tongue is extremely difficult for heroes. Before combat begins, the Narrator should flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If the card has a white aura, the lizard [or group of lizards] may attack only from melee range. If the aura is red or black, it may attack from near missile range.

Bright light, such as that caused by direct sunlight or spectramantic spells, usually causes the lizards to flee.

A lizard always strikes from range by flicking its tongue out and wrapping it around the target's wrists or arms. The tongues are sticky with a foul-smelling spit and have a grip as tight as a grown man's. They then pull whatever they've caught into their mouths and clamp down on it with powerful jaws. One lizard chewing on your sword-hand is a bother. Six of them attached to your arms, legs, and head can be deadly.

Remember the lizards' fear of bright light? Your torch or a glowing magical item is your best defense against these creatures. Should their attack douse your light source, get out of the cave immediately!

I had to admit that I had never before heard of the smaller subterranean lizard. I know of some tales with giant subterranean lizards, but, given my lack of familiarity with ribald tunes, my ignorance of smaller subterranean lizards was hardly surprising. Still, I could not imagine what the dwarves would find lewd about such an innocuous creature.

The author then regaled me with no fewer than twelve of the reputed fifty-seven verses of "The Maiden from the Lizard Warrens." I came away with a better appreciation for the creative depravity that dwarven ale can inspire, as well as several mental images that will haunt me to my dying day.

Snakes

A Qué-Shu folktale says that snakes once had arms and legs like all other lizards. They saw the Evil of the chromatic dragons, the Dark Queen's favorite children, and decided to copy it, in hopes of winning the affection of Takhisis. However, the snakes were so cruelly cunning and heartless that the dragons paled beside them. Takhisis was enraged that these tiny creatures could shame her dragons, so in punishment she removed the snakes' limbs.

When you see a snake, you never know whether you should fear its fangs, its coils, or nothing at all

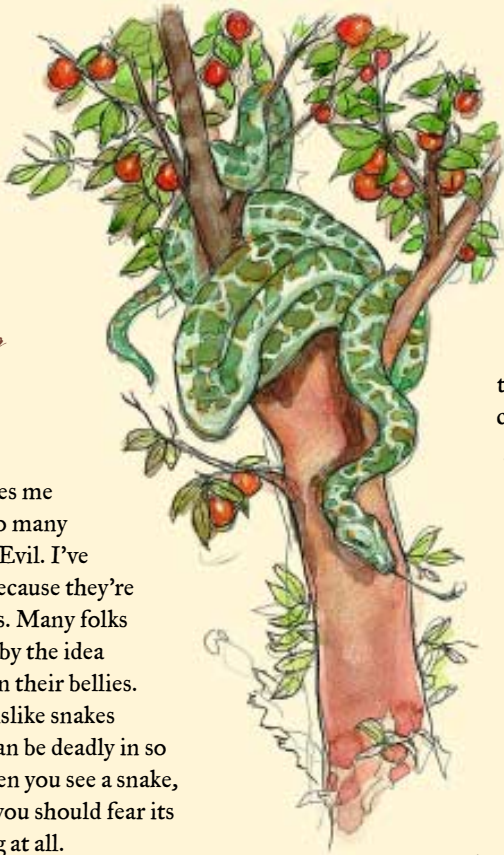
That story always makes me laugh. I'm not sure why so many people think of snakes as Evil. I've heard some say that it's because they're so different from humans. Many folks I know get unnerved just by the idea that snakes crawl about on their bellies. Then again, they could dislike snakes because these creatures can be deadly in so many different ways. When you see a snake, you never know whether you should fear its fangs, its coils, or nothing at all.

My personal thought is much simpler. I think snakes get their Evil reputation because they don't blink—they just stare at you stone-eyed. That's what makes them scary to me.

While I have heard of the tale that Caramon references, I cannot find any information that supports this story. I do have to admit to having my hair stand up when I see a snake, however. Fortunately, the only

snakes I've seen are the common garden variety, but the fear is still there.

Do you ever dream that you're sitting stock still while a snake coils up around you? You want to run. You want to scream. All you can do, though, is watch as the snake tightens its grip and crushes the life from you. I have no idea what the dream means, but the snake in it is a **CONSTRUCTOR** of some sort, you can bet on it.



Usually constrictors eat owls, owl eggs, and sometimes squirrels.

Constrictors are large, wide-bodied snakes, up to twenty feet long and two feet around, of different colors, that live mostly in jungles and swamps. They slither along the lowest limbs of the trees looking for prey. Usually constrictors eat owls, owl eggs, and sometimes squirrels. However, when they are really hungry, they lower themselves off their branches, looking for all the world like a loose vine, and grab at larger game, including wolves, herd animals, and even people.

A constrictor attacks by wrapping itself around its prey and tightening its grip. Their bodies are pure muscle and, with your eyes closed, the only difference between one of these snakes and an owlbear is that the owlbear breaks your ribs in only one place.

Medical texts speak of constrictor victims crushed beyond all recognition. The snake has a grip so tight that it tears the skin cleanly off and pulverizes bones into a coarse powder.

GIANT SNAKES are just big constrictors. I mean *really* big. These snakes never reach less than thirty feet long and at least four feet around. Their heads are easily as big as a man's, but their jaws open as wide as my arm is long!

These beasts are so large that anything smaller than a hunting dog is too little to bother eating. They usually eat hobgoblins but can't seem to tell the difference between these creatures and a human or elf.

I've seen one giant snake crush three men and a horse at the same time. All the while four soldiers and I slashed the great beast with our swords. We killed it but could do nothing to save its victims.

Unlike normal constrictors, though, it is impossible to mistake a giant snake for a hanging vine. They are far too heavy to crawl around in trees. However, since they tend to lie very still on the jungle floor, you might think that the creature is really a fallen tree, so be careful where you sit.

As the author stated earlier, occasionally an animal is so huge that it must be considered a category unto itself, regardless of its direct relation to smaller creatures.

Some people have tested the hide of a giant snake and found it to be tougher than any lacquered leather. Several figures of myth and legend killed one or more of these creatures [usually barebanded] in order to fashion impenetrable armor.

Of all the snakes, everybody fears the hooded **SHAH**. You'll find no more efficient killer in

Ansalon, and its poison is probably the quickest known.

Take heart, though, because shah snakes do not hunt humans or any other intelligent race. They attack only if you surprise them or threaten their nests.

You must watch out for their bite, but even more, beware their spittle! Yes, these snakes actually spit their poison at a victim. If any of this venom gets in your mouth, eyes, or an open wound, you're as good as dead.

Fortunately, a good suit of armor can protect you from all of a shah's weapons. Its teeth cannot pierce a suit of chain mail [though they can get through all but the sturdiest leather], and even normal clothing is proof against its spit poison.

No matter what, never look a shah in the eyes. It has the power to charm you and leave you helpless before its attack.

The shah's hypnotic powers are more legend than fact. The truth is that most intelligent creatures fear these dusty brown snakes so much that, when faced with one, their own terror causes them to freeze long enough for the deadly beast to strike. Although it may seem as though the shah has cast a spell upon the victim, it is in fact the victim that caused his own demise.

You'll find no more efficient killer in Ansalon, and its poison is probably the quickest known.



In the jungle, you might mistake a **VIPER** for a fallen switch or branch. In the desert, it can seem to be a shadow or a trick of the blazing sun.

Then, in the depths of a ruined keep, a viper may look like a discarded torch. No matter where you find them, though, these snakes are big trouble.

These thin, black serpents run between

CONSTRUCTOR SNAKE: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 8, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +2, Def -2, also crush.

GIANT SNAKE: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 19, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +6, Def -3, also crush and pounce.

SHAH SNAKE: *Animal.* Co 6, Ph 13, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +2, Def -3, also poison and spit.

VIPER SNAKE: *Animal.* Co 8, Ph 2, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +1, Def -2, also poison.

WATER SNAKE: *Animal.* Co 5, Ph 10, In 1, Es 4, Dmg +2, Def -2, also crush and suffocate.

Victims of the shah's poison lose two cards per minute if they are heroes, or 6 points per minute if they are characters. If the poison is not healed, the victim dies.

- An adventure could feature an encounter with a cursed constrictor who, rather than eating meat, must swallow steel [or gems, or even magical items] in order to survive. Imagine the heroes' surprise when they find a gigantic snake eating their treasure or weapons. To make things even more difficult, the snake may have some special immunities [to nonmagical weapons, for instance]. What happens to the materials the snake eats? Perhaps it brings them back to a master spellcaster who placed the curse on the creature in the first place.

a foot and three feet long. Their eyes, if anything, look even blacker than their scales and appear as cold as the depths of Takhisis's soul.

Normally, vipers feed on small birds and chipmunks. However, they will attack anything that crosses their paths, regardless of whether they can eat it. Unlike other snakes, who strike once and hope to drive their foes off, when a viper picks a target, it bites it repeatedly until the target either retreats or stops moving entirely.

This, of course provides the perfect method to avoid a viper's attack. Simply do not move a muscle until the snake moves away. Unfortunately, this is easier said than done, particularly after being bitten once.

It is interesting to note that the Solamnic Knights and the Knights of Takhisis both refer to members of

their opposing order as "vipers." I would imagine that the viper's reputation for attacking without provocation [a breach of honor both groups of knights claim the other is guilty of] caused this descriptive term to come into being.

The **WATER SNAKE** has kinship to the constrictor. It can be found in large, freshwater lakes [particularly those that beavers and other medium-sized swimming beasts live in or around], often winding its way through or along the edge of a patch of reeds.

Like its cousin the constrictor, the water snake kills its prey by crushing out its life. However, it also tries to drown the victim at the same time.

I've heard of the creatures attacking, and bringing down, bull moose in a lean year.

Most of the intelligent races are too large for any but the hungriest water snakes to attack [although kender and gnomes are about meal-sized for the larger beasts]. Still, I've heard of the creatures attacking, and bringing down, bull moose in a lean year.

As with so many other animals, the key to surviving a water snake attack is to remain calm and think clearly. Take as deep a breath as you can and dive below the water. The snakes cannot breathe any better underwater than you can, and unless it has an iron-clad grip, you can hold your breath longer than it can.

The longest water snake on record was just shy of twenty-five feet. However, such huge specimens occur only rarely. Most often these serpents have a radius of about six inches and range from ten to fifteen feet in length. Records indicate that they are much lighter than, though nearly as strong as, their land-based cousins

Chapter Two:

In my travels, I've come across many different creatures that simply are not natural. They do not spring from any woods, water, or mountain. Instead, some person quite clearly made all of these creatures. They serve no natural purpose on Krynn and exist solely because their creators wished them to.

I call these types of beings “magical creatures,” and although this might be a confusing name [many of them cannot cast spells, and even more creatures who *can* cast spells do not fall into this group], it is the best name I could think of. Think of them as creatures whose every limb and hair owes its existence to magic.

While I find the author's logic to be circuitous at best [and spotty at worst], I cannot argue that these particular creatures belong together in a special group. To my scholarly mind, though, the factor that links them is not one of arcane origins, but one of lineage.

The one thing that all these creatures have in common is that they do not have a historical record of ancestors [at least, in the case of elementals, not on Krynn]. They simply sprang into existence either through animation or summoning magic. With no past, they can hardly be considered natural, and so, in the end, I wholly endorse the author's choice of nomenclature for this group.

Animated Creatures

The first type of magical creatures includes those that consist of some unliving material brought to life by an unnatural force. Usually, the unnatural force comes from a magician or sorcerer. I can't count the number of times my brother waved his hands, mumbled a few bits of nonsense, and caused objects all over the room to jump up and follow any order he cared to give them.

Raistlin would do this for short periods of time and only in the most desperate of situations, though I've heard rumors of some strange things that once lived beneath his Tower in Palanthas. I know that other mages have made creatures that outlive their usefulness, and even their masters, by decades. Often the only reason for these acts was laziness or pride.

I mentioned to the author that, given the most popular accounts of how the world and all its inhabitants came into being, his stance labeled every animal on Krynn as an “animated creature,” living only because the gods turned dust, dirt, and stone into vibrant flesh, blood, and spirit. He was, in fact, providing the argument that a single familial link connects all living things.

He snorted in a most uncomplimentary manner and laughed long enough that I was not only uncomfortable, but more than a little insulted. “Bertrem,” he said, “that's why I like you. You look so deeply into everything you hear that even I come off sounding like a damned scholar!”

Constructs

Let's start with the most obvious type of animated creature—those that consist of nothing more than pieces of wood, cloth, and stone held together by magic. Wizards often make little helpers or pets from bits and pieces they have lying around their labs. For example, I've heard of a cat made exclusively from leather and paper scraps, fabric and thread remnants, fur bits, and various needles. The wizard who created it wished to have something to keep the mice out of her spell components, so instead of getting a cat from a nearby farm, she decided to create one.

Still, creatures like this appear only rarely, and none of them have shown up in more than one or two isolated cases. Except for the kani doll, they're better suited for books on sorcery rather than this collection of beasts.

Magical Creatures

Kani Dolls

Riverwind told me that most barbarian tribes across Ansalon have some version of the kani doll. Tribes make these small dolls in the shape of a charmed animal that they believe enhances or protects some aspect of the owner's life.



I can certainly tell you that, as a toy, a kani doll is harmless. Every time Goldmoon visited, she left one or two of the dolls for the family. My girls loved to play with them when they were little. They tried to get one of each animal.

Sometimes an Evil spirit takes control of a kani doll. When this happens, the toy becomes a deadly enemy of the thing it once enhanced. For example, I once saw a rabbit kani doll leap out from under furniture at people, biting their ankles and calves to hobble them.

Usually, only a powerful shaman can put an Evil spirit in a kani doll.

Usually only a powerful shaman can put an Evil spirit in a kani doll, but Goldmoon once told a tale of an unmar-

ried maid whose hatred for her wedded sister was so great that every dove doll she made came to life and tried to kill the sister's husband. "The moral," Goldmoon stated, "is that we must calm the secret hatreds in our hearts so that they never find a way into the world."

Research shows that all tribes have the ten doll forms listed below in common, and that these forms are the only forms that barbarians create. Scholars debate the significance of these similarities to this day, but they also find the situation unique because every known barbarian agrees on only these forms:

<i>Bear</i> [Strength]	<i>Lion</i> [Courage]
<i>Cat</i> [Stealth]	<i>Owl</i> [Wisdom]
<i>Dove</i> [Love]	<i>Rabbit</i> [Speed]
<i>Hawk</i> [Sight]	<i>Raccoon</i> [Dexterity]
<i>Human</i> [Luck]	<i>Turtle</i> [Safety]

KANI DOLL: *Construct.* Co varies, Ph 6, In N/A, Es N/A, Dmg +4, Def 0.

A kani doll's Coordination score varies depending on what form the Evil spirit possesses. It ranges from 1 [for a turtle] to 8 [for a lion].

Mental attributes have no equivalent relevance to a possessed kani doll. In its state as a mindless automaton, it exists solely to destroy the quality its creator wished to honor. It cannot oppose mental actions taken against it.

Possessed kani dolls can perform all the actions that their form indicates. For example, bird dolls can fly, while raccoon and cat dolls climb well.

At the Narrator's discretion, he or she can raise the damage and defense ratings of a kani doll by 1 or 2 points if the creator makes it from exceptional materials or is an artistic genius.

- Since all barbarian tribes have kani dolls, heroes can easily encounter a possessed one while traveling through their territory.

Gargoyles

To this day, I have confused feelings when it comes to **GARGOYLES**. I mean, as statues they look wondrous. I've always thought that no matter how big a castle is, it just doesn't come across half as impressive as it would if gargoyles perched on its towers. On the other hand, the few contacts [actually I should say battles] I've encountered with the living-statue gargoyles makes me hope I never meet another one. The frustrating thing about the nonliving, nonmoving statue and the very mobile monster is that while they are two completely different things, they are really exactly the same, as well. Does that make any sense?

What if I say it this way: I like the statues fine right up until the moment they leap off their pedestals and try to eat me.

In case you don't already know, gargoyles [both living and unliving] are monstrous beings with large batlike wings, and vicious horns, fangs, and talons. Sometimes they look like hideous versions of other animals or monsters. I've seen monkey, hawk, lion, fish, and dragon gargoyles.

Gargoyles perch on rooftops, battlements, towers, and above doorways and windows—always in a protective crouch, it seems. If they have tails, they look unnaturally long, wrap around the gargoyles' feet, and end in another sharp horn.

I wish I knew what Evil soul first decided to take the proud, protective form of a gargoyle and fill it with the spirit of a fiend from beyond the Abyss! Living gargoyles have one of the meanest, most vicious attitudes of any creature I've ever met. They live for nothing other than attacking anyone or any-

thing that wanders near their lairs. Also, since any building with living gargoyles always has unliving statues as well, and gargoyles can sit supernaturally still, you often can't tell whether a gruesome stone figure comes from fine craftsmanship or is really about to bite your face off.

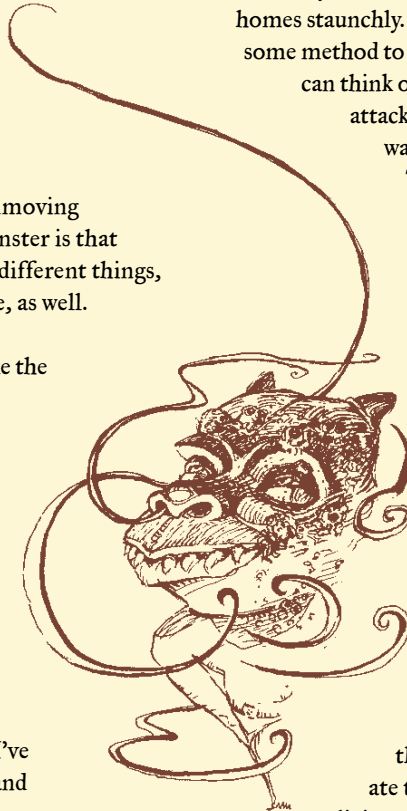
Gargoyles live in small groups; only the largest castles can support groups of more than a dozen, since they often have problems with infighting if too many inhabit the same area. They protect their homes staunchly. Unless the building's owner has some method to control them [and the only way I can think of involves magic], the gargoyles attack everyone who approaches the walls of the building they perch on. This includes those who live inside.

Usually, they attack by swooping down and either ramming their stone bodies into unsuspecting visitors, or grabbing them and carrying them into the air where they can attack their victims more easily or simply drop them to their deaths.

Why gargoyles act in so vicious a fashion, I don't know. They do not eat or drink, so they don't attack from some sort of supernatural hunger. If I had to guess, though, I'd say that, since sculptors normally create the statues for pure protection, living gargoyles can find no other purpose for their lives.

I would be remiss in my duties as an editor if I did not point out that a significant number of volumes insist that gargoyles [and all related species] are not animated creatures. Rather, these sources claim that gargoyles came from an unknown creature that naturally evolved stony skin. These creatures provided the inspiration for the popular architectural decoration long ago.

The truth may never be known, but at least, dear reader, you now have the option of deciding which tale you choose to believe.



site for a lair without relying on the presence of unliving gargoyles.

It would be, I think, an interesting experiment to place a batch of gargoyle statues in a wholly incongruous place [perhaps near a straw hut] and see if living gargoyles could be fooled into roosting there as well.

Why in the world this creature needs such a tongue-twisting name like **KAPOACINTH** is beyond me! They are only gargoyles that live underwater. In all other respects, they have exactly the same characteristics as a typical gargoyle.

They usually live in sunken ruins among any sort of lost statues, but sometimes they build lairs in undersea caves. Though they're heavy, kapoacinth can use their wings to "fly" through the water, making them incredibly fast swimmers.

A rather waterlogged text of Dimernesti lore speaks of kapoacinth as the most feared creatures in the sea, slyer than a moray eel and deadlier than bull sharks. The sea elves build their cities in deeper waters than kapoacinth usually frequent, but these water gargoyles occasionally harry small outlying communities and Dimernesti hunting parties.

GARGOYLE: Construct. Co 6, Ph 16, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +8, Def -3, also dive and swoop.

KAPOACINTH: Construct. Co 3, Ph 16, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +8, Def -3, also pounce and suffocate.

MARGOYLE: Construct. Co 6, Ph 18, In 4, Es 6, Dmg +14, Def -4, also camouflage, dive, and swoop.

All of the different types of gargoyles are covered in skin that looks and feels like granite [or occasionally marble]. At the same time, all the usual strengths and weaknesses of stone affect them. In other words, they weigh a lot [kapoacinth can swim, but when they stop beating their wings, they sink like stones], have patches of moss or other vegetation covering them, grow weatherworn, and tend to be covered with cracks, nicks, and chips.

- Any ruins or castle could possibly support one or more of these, causing a group of heroes much grief if they are not prepared.



Having already told you that gargoyles behave meaner than most creatures I've ever met, I now have to say that no gargoyles have a wider vicious streak than the wingless **MARGOYLES**.

Though they sometimes live on or around large buildings or statues, margoyles can also live in any rocky or mountainous region. Their skin tends to take on the tone and feel of the surrounding rocks, and these monsters can expertly camouflage themselves. They step back against a stone wall, close their eyes, and stand motionless while waiting for a victim to wander by.

The margoyles' wider range of habitat is more than an interesting sidebar in their ecology. It shows that they have developed mentally more than other gargoyles. Their level of intelligence allows them to select a suitable

Golems

When Bertrem and I first sat down to talk about this chapter on magical creatures, I suggested one entry for “Iron Men” and another for “Stone Men.” He looked at me with that funny look scholars get, as though he felt certain I was making a joke except for the fact that what I said really wasn’t very funny.

“Why don’t you just make one entry for all types of golems?” he said.

“What’s a golem?”

I mean, who ever thought up such a ridiculous name for these creatures? It doesn’t say a thing about them. “Golem.” It sounds like a fish you’d pull out of Crystalmir Lake—“caught a pink-tailed golem today . . . weighed at least five pounds.” At least if you say “Stone Man,” everyone knows what you’re talking about.

After I calmed down, though, I realized that, no matter what you call them, these men carved from the elements are pretty much all the same. The only real difference between them is the stuff they are made of. So, in order not to embarrass my son with my lack of magical education, I’ll tell you what I know about golems.

Not much.

Truthfully, my son can tell you more about them than I can. Though they walk and talk, they act more like moving statues. Not one of them looks the same as any other as far as I can tell.

In fact, they don’t even have to be in the shape of men. I remember when we were searching for Huma’s dragonlance, I was searching the chambers inside Dragon Mountain. Two very finely crafted stone statues of silver dragons

guarded the entrance to the Upper Gallery. When they spoke to us, I nearly jumped out of my skin.

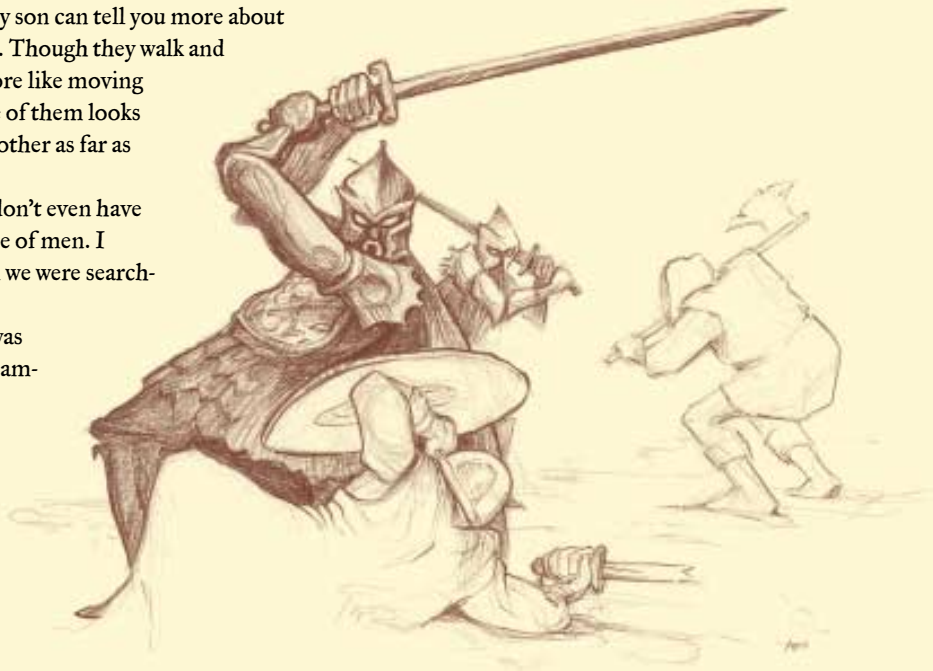
“The only Evil here is what you bring,” said the first statue.

“One of pure heart can do the task of many,” answered the other. Then they were still.

This magic is beyond my understanding, though my brother would likely point out that *all* magic is beyond my brain. Still, it seems to me that those statues were probably golems, though very simple ones.

I don’t know what would have happened if my friends and I had more impurities in our hearts. Perhaps the dragons would have crawled from their alcoves to prevent us from entering. How would we fight a stone dragon? Our swords would likely break before we did it any great harm. I’m glad we didn’t have to find out!

No matter what you call them, these men carved from the elements are pretty much all the same. The only real difference between them is the stuff they are made of.



IRON GOLEM: *Construct.* Co 3, Ph 54, In 1, Es 10, Dmg +20, Def -4.

STONE GOLEM: *Construct.* Co 3, Ph 42, In 1, Es 10, Dmg +12, Def -3.

The attributes listed above describe the specific creatures illustrated in the previous text. Normally, the abilities of its creator limit all of an individual golem's attribute scores. The examples above detail physically impressive creatures of limited mental ability. It would be just as easy for their creators to have made brighter golems who were a little less deadly. For further details on the process of animating a golem, see Chapter Five of *A Saga Companion*.

Narrators, though, may assign whatever attributes they feel are appropriate to individual golems in their campaigns.

- Often, heroes can encounter golems while trying to find guarded artifacts or even in ruins where mages once lived.

I wasn't there, but Sturm told me about a pair of iron men——errr, golems——he encountered in the Tower of the High Clerist. His group was searching for one of the lost Dragon Orbs and walked into a room where the doors closed and locked without a hand to guide them. An iron statue of a Solamnic Knight in full armor stood in each of the two far corners.

A mysterious voice posed a riddle for the group to solve and, when they took too long, the golems came to life, swinging their broad swords, fully intending to separate Sturm's head from his neck.

"It was incredible," he told me later. "They fought with all the skill of trained knights, but they were completely invincible. They not only wore armor——they *were* armor. Iron through and through. Simply landing a blow on their mighty frames sent a jolt through my arms that left them tingling for hours.

"We ducked and we parried and we dodged, but the iron knights just kept on coming."

I was terrified for him, though I knew he must have escaped safely or how would he be telling the story?

"What did you do?" I asked like a child marveling at tall tales spun by a visiting uncle.

"Luckily, we didn't have to do anything! After ten minutes or so, the iron knights simply stopped fighting and went back to their corners. Then the doors unlocked and opened. Solamnics don't shed blood unless it is absolutely necessary, you know."

I've always felt this story ended terribly, even though it's the truth. Sturm should have invented a more fanciful ending, one with glory and honor and his defeat of the golems, but Sturm never boasted unnecessarily.

Still, his tale proves one thing about golems: They do only what they're told. Obviously, someone set these iron knights to chase away visitors who did not know the answer to the riddle. Vinas Solamnus may have built the High Clerist's Tower to be deadly for invaders, but he obviously did not want to kill every poor lost soul who wandered into the wrong room.

The author's confusion about the word "golem" proves, if nothing else, that the common man in Ansalon knows very little about the workings, language, and theories of magical processes.

Historically, wizards rarely created golems. The spells took too much time, certain size limitations applied, and the results of the spell seemed too uncertain. If one forgot to include a specific order or ability during the creation process, he or she had no way to add it later. Wizards found it easier, cheaper, and generally more efficient to hire lackeys to do any job that didn't require eternal vigilance.

Today, golems are another story. The magic required to make one depends entirely upon what materials the spellcaster is using. However, both Palin Majere and Goldmoon of Schallsea frown upon their students practicing the craft of golem creation.

Imps

Maybe I'm just thick, but I always thought that any creature a wizard [or sorcerer] summoned from another realm—or plane, or region, or whatever—was an **IMP**. My brother used to laugh at me when I'd say such things. "Oaf! Things are rarely as simple as they seem, and *never* as simple as they seem to you!" But I never let these insults bother me. They were usually true. When he finished ranting, though, he'd almost always teach me something, and so I grew *less* ignorant.

Still, I knew little enough that I had to call my son aside to ask him what exactly an imp was.

"They're tiny creatures of pure Evil," he said. Now, Palin is not given to bouts of exaggeration [in that much, at least, he does not take after his father], so I pricked up my ears and urged him to continue.

"Imps are about two feet tall and have leathery, red skin covered with scabby blotches and prickly black hairs. They have thin batlike wings and a barbed tail armored with a carapace. Their elongated faces have large noses and ears that come off the back of their heads like fins. They sometimes have horns atop their heads; both these and the tiny fangs that fill their mouths are needle-sharp.



"To look at imps, you'd think they were fragile creatures, thin limbed with tapering fingers that end in sharp claws. It really seems as though a sharp blow might break every bone in their bodies. In truth, though, they are quite hardy enough to be very deadly.

"Imps cannot be harmed by heat, cold, fire, or electricity. Also, normal weapons do them no harm. In order to injure an imp, you must use either a magical weapon or one forged of pure silver.

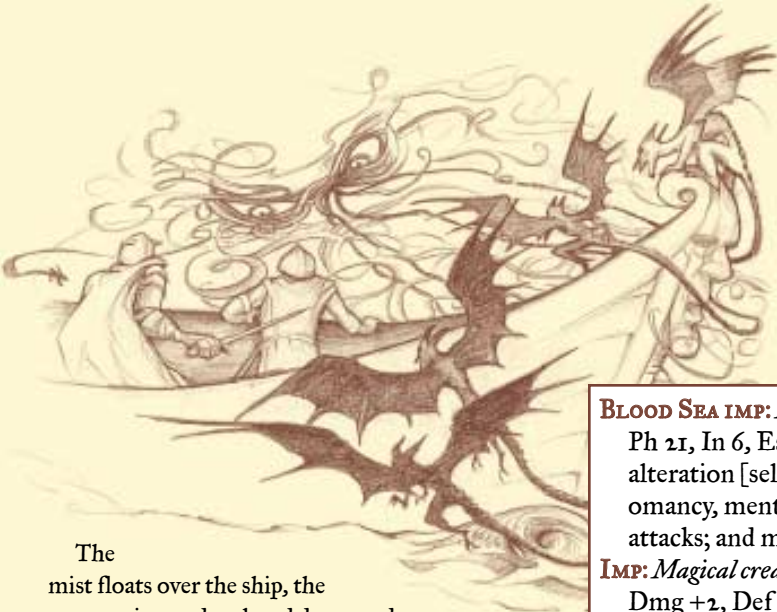
"Furthermore, deadly poison fills an imp's tail in its natural form. I'm told that only one person in twenty can survive it.

"In the past, Black-Robed wizards called them to Krynn to act as spies and sometimes assassins. Luckily, only very powerful sorcerers can summon imps now. The beasts have notoriously strong wills and, the nature of sorcery being such as it is, I doubt if most of those capable of summoning the beasts would have even a clue as to how to control them.

"Every imp can take the form of two other animals [usually ones that hold some portentous or superstitious significance for us, such as a giant rat, raven, or large spider]. This helps them walk the world without being noticed."

Several diaries left to the Library by former members of the Conclave of Wizards confirm that the most powerful worshipers of Nuitari habitually used imps to keep an eye on their enemies and rivals. According to the descriptions within these books, the imps would sometimes use more mundane items to destroy powerful foes of the Black-Robed wizards. Not only would this avoid any questions posed by marks left by a poison sting, but it also allowed the imp a way to frame another person for the murder. Of course, the mage would ask his servant to magically rid itself of its tail until after the murder—just to be sure it did not use the tell-tale stinger!

For years, ships sailing the Blood Sea of Istar have reported attacks by a strange creature. At night, sailors tell me, ships sailing those cursed waters find themselves suddenly surrounded by a thick red mist. Pairs of glowing yellow eyes float in this mist, and a haunted, echoing laughter fills the air.



The mist floats over the ship, the eyes passing under closed doors and through portholes. At some unknown signal, the mist solidifies into a horde of **BLOOD SEA IMPS**: two-foot tall, red skinned, grinning devils with long, spike-tipped tails.

Unlike other imps, their sting does not contain poison, but the sailors say that being hit by these tiny creatures can freeze your blood and leave you shivering for hours.

They overrun the ship, tearing at the sails, shattering the wheel, and breaking off the rudder. When done, they attack any crew members who do not make way for them. Then they search the cabins and hold for treasure, particularly anything made of metal. In the end, they make off with their booty, either in their cloud form or in imp form, and leave the crew to fight for survival on a ship that is no longer seaworthy.

What it is that the imps love about metal is a mystery, but no sailors I know have ever been brave enough to ask.

Blood Sea imps have an affinity for electricity. They often linger around a ship's mast during a squall, hoping to be struck by lightning. The log of an ancient minotaur vessel tells that being struck by lightning allows the beasts to procreate. When lightning [or any sufficiently strong electrical attack] hits an imp, it spontaneously generates an exact copy of itself.

Although people can hear hideous laughter whenever Blood Sea imps are about, no one has ever heard them speak, though they work together in a highly organized

manner. Some scholars speculate that the imps talk using a form of the mystic sphere of mentalism. However, this theory remains unproven as there has never been a recorded case of an imp communicating with anything other than another imp.

BLOOD SEA IMP: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 2I, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +3, Def -3, also alteration [self]; fly; immune to cryomancy, mentalism, and nonmagical attacks; and mentalism.

IMP: *Magical creature.* Co 9, Ph 8, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +2, Def -4, also alteration [self]; poison; regenerate; sensitivity; immune to cold, electricity, fire, and normal weapons; and resistant to sorcery and mysticism.

A cloud of red mist contains between six and forty Blood Sea imps. To determine the number, the Narrator can draw a card from the Fate Deck with the following results: white aura equals five plus the card's number, red aura equals five plus twice the card's number, black aura equals five plus three times the card's number. If any card from the Suit of Dragons results, then forty imps form the mist.

If an imp suffers any wounds from electromagnetic spells [or is struck by lightning], it reproduces.

The imps wish only to disable ships and gather treasure. If the crew stays out of their way, the imps do not bother them. However, they gang up on and kill anyone who tries to prevent them from continuing their activities.

In order to bring an imp to Krynn, a sorcerer must possess skills in the schools of summoning and enchantment. The spell costs at least 20 spell points, which the imp resists. Succeeding at casting the spell does not guarantee that the imp will cooperate. If the hero cannot control the creature using the mystic sphere of mentalism, the Narrator can decide its disposition.

Imp poison is particularly deadly. Victims must make a successful *challenging Endurance* action to resist it rather than an *average* one.

- Evil sorcerers sometimes send imps after heroes to keep an eye on them or even meddle in the heroes' affairs.

Elementals



I've faced enough elementals to have a very clear notion of how much power they have and what they are made of. I can't for the life of me, though, explain them in a way that makes sense in my head. Perhaps I should leave it to Bertrem to explain the scholarly details, while I explain the creatures themselves.

Elementals are sentient beings that come from beyond our plane of existence. What we call the Abyss contains everything in creation that is neither Krynn nor the Gray [the realm our spirits pass into when we die]. The former home of the gods lay in the Abyss, and several theologians maintain that they live there still.

Tucked away in the four corners of the Abyss are worlds formed from one of four elements. These include a world of fire, earth, air, and water. Everything on the planet of fire, for example, consists of fire: fire trees, fire mountains, and, of course, fire elementals.

Krynn sits in a spot equidistant from the elemental worlds. Thus, all four elements exist on Krynn in relatively equal proportions. [Some scholars believe that Krynn is slightly closer to the worlds of water and earth, citing a lesser quantity of fire and air in the basic "stuff" of the world. I am unconvinced by this argument.]

Elementals wield great powers due to the fact that they consist of a single pure element, while everything on Krynn contains a mixture of the four. However, they also have great vulnerabilities. Each type of elemental has a bane, or an element or substance that is anathema to it. That bane comes from the elemental world located on the opposite side of the Abyss from the elemental's home.

No one knows what happens to an elemental when something destroys its body on Krynn. Some scholars maintain that nothing can create or destroy the basic elements, so the creature's spirit flees from Krynn and returns to its elemental world.

Elementals and Magic

Sorcerers with skills in the various schools of elemental magic [pyromancy, hydromancy, geomancy, and aeromancy] can use their powers to create elementals. Of course, the elemental must reflect the nature of the spell used to summon it. For example, a pyromancer cannot summon a water elemental.

Elementals created by elemental magic retain their form as long as the sorcery's duration lasts. However, by using the long-term duration rules described in *Heroes of Sorcery* or *A Saga Companion*, a sorcerer can create elementals that last for weeks or years.

Heroes with knowledge of the school of summoning, in addition to an elemental school, can try to call all types of elemental creatures from their home planes. In exchange for versatility in this matter, however, they must work a little harder. The vast range of an elemental summoning spell always increases the cost and difficulty of that spell by at least 10 points [as indicated on the "Summoning Spell Points" table in *Heroes of Sorcery* and further broken down in the section "Long-Range Spells"].

Another drawback to the art of summoning an elemental [instead of creating one with elemental magic] is that the summoner does not control the newly-arrived creature automatically. If the spellcaster cannot strike a bargain with it or dominate it via other means, like the mystic sphere of mentalism, then the elemental can do whatever it pleases.

Air Elementals

Picturing a creature made entirely of air is hard, isn't it? I mean, what does air look like? What does it sound and feel like?

One of the advantages to having a son and a brother who spend the majority of their lives probing the deepest secrets of magic is that they teach you the answers to questions like "what does air look like."

An air elemental changes its look depending on its mood. If happy, it looks like a fluffy cloud, the kind you might see sailing over a crystal blue lake. More likely, though, they rumble angrily; elementals always seem to be at least a little bit angry, and I can't say I blame them [imagine how upset you would feel if someone suddenly whisked you from one of the elemental worlds]. An angry air elemental looks like a tornado, with deep gray eyes in the clouds above.

You cannot touch an air elemental any more than you can grab hold of the wind. However, by focusing its energy, it can blow itself at you with such force that it feels like you have been hit with a fist of steel. I've heard tales of an angry air elemental tearing a man to pieces just by pulling him into its cyclone body.

The power of an air elemental's funnel can also completely scour an area. Palin told me about research rooms at the Academy where an air elemental crushed every piece of furniture, clothing, or equipment into a fine dust after students summoned the creature without the proper supervision.

Magical treatises tell us that the language of air elementals sounds like a low, murmuring wind that grows harsher and wilder as the creature becomes more agitated.

Not all air elementals are equal, however. Each individual creature possesses distinct strengths and weaknesses. In fact, they show nearly as wide a diversity in abilities and skills as do humans.

I read with interest the journals of Shellan Longtress, an ancient wizard who wrote about several specific ele-



mental spirits she summoned repeatedly. One was thoughtful and insightful. It studied its own version of sorcery and spoke several different languages [including the language of blue dragons]. Another was described as "a brute . . . sadistic and cruel, but easily manipulated."

Shellan concluded that air elementals [and probably all the other sorts as well] came from a society at least as vibrant and diverse as our own. "To assume that these are simply dumb beasts is to be not only ethnocentric, but dangerously foolish."

AIR ELEMENTAL: *Magical creature. Co 18, Ph 24-48, In 3-5, Es 8-11, Dmg +10, Def -4, also aeromancy, dive, fly, immune to aeromancy, and incorporeal.*

The exact ability scores of an air elemental vary within the ranges listed.

In general, air elementals enjoy philosophy and the arts and have a thoughtful attitude. They get along best with mortals who speak slowly and have relaxed demeanors.

Earth is the bane of air elementals. They suffer twice the normal damage from spells cast using geomancy or weapons made of dirt or rocks.

- Heroes should be wary of these creatures while on the plains. An air elemental can build up a furious attack with nothing in the way to block it!

Earth Elementals

Have you ever had a dream where the ground you're standing on suddenly rises with a life of its own? Before you know it, you stand face-to-face with a mountain with eyes. This story outlines more or less what you might experience when meeting an earth elemental.



To me, they are the most awesome of all the elemental creatures. You cannot help but know it when you approach any other type of elemental. Those from the world of earth, though, could lie silently beneath your feet as you walk by and you'd never realize it. Every bard I've ever met who sings songs of the Dragon Wars knows the one about three wild mages who called upon the earth to swallow up their dragon foes. I'd bet anything that they really summoned a small army of earth elementals.

These creatures don't usually act this way, though. They are not sneaky manipulators, but great hulking figures who try to dwarf and dominate everything around them. An earth elemental's voice rumbles deeply and seems to carry through the ground at your feet. When the elemental speaks, you feel it in your legs as much as hear it in your ears.

If you ever face an earth elemental in battle, though, speed is your greatest advantage. Large and powerful they may be, but they move terribly slowly. Keep moving. If one or two warriors can keep its attention focused on them, the rest of your party can easily slip behind the elemental and attack it unhindered.

Fortifications like castles, keeps, and forts, though, provide little protection against an earth elemental. These creatures do terrible damage to anything made of stone or packed earth.

All elementals are known as proud, arrogant creatures. Made directly from the building blocks of the gods, they consider themselves superior to the races of Krynn, and earth elementals have the haughtiest attitude of them all.

This makes them, according to reputable sources, the most difficult of the elementals to adequately control. Sorcerers must be very careful with the orders they give an earth elemental, for if they leave any room for interpretation, particularly one that will cause the "master" to appear foolish or weak, the creature will surely take advantage of it.

EARTH ELEMENTAL: *Magical creature.* Co 3, Ph 24-48, In 3-5, Es 8-II, Dmg +16, Def -4, also crush, geomancy, immune to geomancy, and regenerate.

The exact ability scores of an earth elemental vary within the ranges listed.

Earth elementals double their normal damage against any building or structure [regardless of the material with which it was constructed] built with a foundation set into the ground.

In general, earth elementals are impassive. They find it very difficult to generate any interest at all in the plans and schemes of mortal creatures. Arrogant or pretentious people earn an earth elemental's disdain and, if they insist on voicing their own importance, its ire.

Air is the bane of earth elementals. They suffer twice the normal damage from spells cast using aeromancy.

- Heroes traveling underground or in any place enclosed in stone can be especially vulnerable to an attack by an earth elemental.

Fire Elementals

You don't know the meaning of a fierce temper until you've faced a fire elemental. If a fire elemental had its way, the scorched city of Sanction would look like the garden spot of Krynn.

Though they may not be the most powerful of the elementals, they are probably the most widely feared ones. One thing all men, elves, dwarves, and kender [well, maybe not kender so much] share is the fear of being burned. Can you blame any warrior who considers retreat when facing a six-foot tall, talking column of living flame?

Earth elementals may strike stronger blows, and water elementals may be able to drown their victims, but not even the air elemental's tornado can cause the widespread damage that a fire elemental does simply by walking down the street. They give off such heat that any clothing or equipment that can burn will burst into flames in their presence. Even when something defeats the elemental itself,



FIRE ELEMENTAL: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 24-48, In 3-5, Es 8-11, Dmg +12, Def -4, also incorporeal, pyromancy, trample, and immune to pyromancy.

The exact ability scores of a fire elemental vary within the ranges listed.

In general, fire elementals have impetuous and quick-tempered natures. They resent being summoned to Krynn and always attack savagely, trying to burn not only their enemy, but everything and everyone around him or her.

The fire elemental's trample attack works in that simply by closing to melee range, the creature creates unbearable heat and sets most clothing alight. The victim suffers damage from the trample *and* any other melee attacks the creature makes until something extinguishes the flames.

Water is the bane of fire elementals. They suffer twice the normal damage from spells cast using hydromancy or attacks using large quantities of water.

- As with air elementals, fire elementals can prove especially dangerous while on the plains during a dry spell, since their flames can easily outrun most attempts by heroes to flee.

the fires it started continue to burn. Let me tell you, as someone who lives in a city built in the trees [and seen much of the town reduced to ashes more than once], I'd rather have an army of draconians come through town than one single fire elemental.

For those of you who have to face these creatures in battle, though, the good news is that everything you *think* can hurt it probably will. Fire elementals can be weakened or even extinguished by large enough blasts of water. Sand or dirt can also put out the fires started by the creature, but they have no special effect on the elemental itself.

You'd do well to drop anything flammable before entering combat with a fire elemental. The fight will be challenging enough without having to worry about the flasks of oil in your pack exploding when you least expect.

Theory has it that red dragons, whose basic nature consists, in part, of fire, possess complete immunity to the powers and attacks of fire elementals. One particularly deranged scholar insists that every chromatic dragon is in fact an elemental spirit permanently bound to the world of Krynn.

Nature Elementals

During the darkest days of the Third Dragon War, before Huma Dragonbane ever drew a sword, the dragons held sway over much of Ansalon. Kingdom after kingdom fell before their assault, but a small tract of land could not be taken.

This forest housed a few elf woodsmen who cared for the trees, nurtured the animals, and tended small farms. Nothing of particular value existed here, but they loved the land dearly, and it loved them too.

The woodsmen had no weapons with which to defend themselves, and would, in truth, hide themselves away whenever the dragons came. However, every time the dragons tried to lay claim to the land, the woods themselves would fight them.

The hills and trees would rise up into a vaguely human shape. All the elements would join together to become a single beast, more powerful than any three of the dragons. Walking on legs hewn from the rocks and streams, this nature elemental would turn its eyes to find the invaders and beat them back with strong arms formed from the newly planted fields. All the aspects of nature obeyed this creature. The plants and animals of the forest responded to its call, which echoed through the land like a great clap of thunder.

The dragons had no choice but to give way before the might of the nature elemental. After the land purged this invading force, it would magically return to its original shape. The elves' houses still stood, completely unaffected by the chaos, and the fields, trees, and streams all remained untouched by the change.

Throughout the years of insanity that made up the Third Dragon War, no force ever conquered this small parcel of land.

No one knows what magic brought that land to life. Perhaps merely the love and respect the woodsmen had for their land allowed it to protect itself from the ravages of dragons. If only we could muster similar feelings today. Such a creature would certainly help free places like the Qualinesti Forest from the grips of the Great Dragons.

The veracity of this entry comes under question in that I cannot find any verifiable sources in print anywhere, not even in any tome in the Library's collection. If any grain of truth exists in the tale, though, it seems likely that the forest being discussed is the Darken Wood, since that place has often been said to be haunted by a spirit all its own. The author of this tome attests to this latter observation.



NATURE ELEMENTAL: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 54, In 5, Es 10, Dmg +50, Def -5, also crush; overturn; regenerate; and immune to aeromancy, geomancy, hydromancy, and pyromancy.

This enormous creature exists for one purpose: to return the area it inhabits to its natural state. Although this usually means destroying artificial structures such as cities, roads, and dams, it also includes any changes made to an area's ecology by the land-shaping powers of the dragon overlords.

A nature elemental cannot exist on Krynn for more than one day at a time.

- Since nature elementals can form anywhere [even at sea], Narrators should be imaginative when describing how the terrain morphs into the elemental's form.

Water Elementals

Stand on the shore sometime and watch the tide come in; waves softly hug your ankles then rush back to sea. It is easy to feel that the ocean is not just a gigantic pool of water, but a living creature—the largest one on Krynn.

When you first see a water elemental, it seems like a wave magically held in place. The top rolls and foams, but never gets one inch closer to crashing. Its body always moves, flows, and bubbles, and its voice sounds like waves lapping against a ship's hull. I find these creatures bewitching; just looking at one calms me and makes me feel at ease [assuming it isn't attacking me].

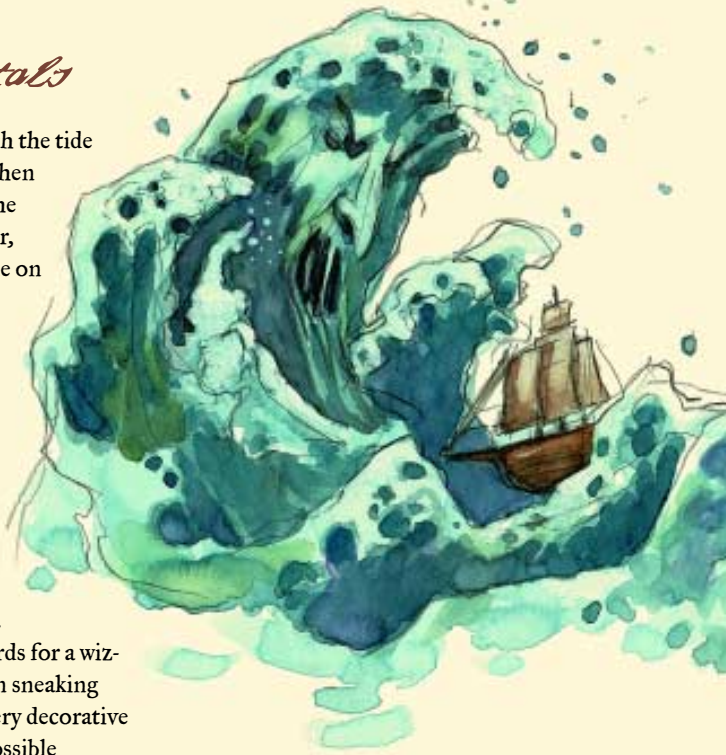
Water elementals often serve as guards for a wizard's laboratory. I've learned that, when sneaking into such a place, one has to look at every decorative pool or tank full of sea creatures as a possible enemy. Luckily, these creatures cannot stray very far from the pool from which they were made.

When it attacks, the elemental grapples its foe, surrounding him and cutting off his source of air. It's a terrible thing to see a comrade drowning in the belly of a water elemental and not be able to do a thing about it.

These creatures are even deadlier if you meet them on the sea. A water elemental can completely stop a ship's progress though the waves, holding it in place while its master or his minions lay siege to it. Just as easily, it can capsize a ship, throwing the crew into the sea where they can drown.

It is interesting to note that, in the past, wizards have summoned water elementals using all kinds of liquids. References abound to elemental spirits bound to bodies of wine, ale, and even oil. My personal favorite, though, tells of one eccentric mage who conjured what can only be described as an herbal tea elemental.

One allegory that many wizards tell their apprentices starts like this: A water elemental wanted to learn about the "dry world." To begin its studies, it trailed a stream behind it, to remain connected to the pool that was its life-source. By the time it wound its way a mile into the woods, it had seen more "dry things" than it ever



dreamed existed. However, it used so much of its body to connect itself back to its source that when a thirsty doe walked up, the animal simply lapped the elemental out of existence.

I'm not certain what the moral of the tale is, but every sorcerer I know insists that the lesson is key to growth as a spellcaster.

WATER ELEMENTAL: *Magical creature.* Co 3, Ph 24-48, In 3-5, Es 8-II, Dmg +15, Def -4, also crush, hydromancy, incorporeal, overturn, suffocate, and immune to hydromancy.

The exact ability scores of a water elemental vary within the ranges listed.

In general, water elementals have an inquisitive and mischievous nature. They do not mind being summoned to Krynn as much as other elementals do and enjoy exploring the "dry world."

Fire is the bane of water elementals. They suffer twice the normal damage from spells cast using pyromancy or attacks using large quantities of fire.

- Heroes can encounter water elementals wherever the smallest amount of water is present.

Elementalkin

In my travels, I've come across some creatures, many of which I'd go so far as to call people, who just don't fit into any group I can think of. They all seem to tie to one or another of the forces that elementals represent, so I guess they must be related, somehow, to those creatures.

Anyway, "elementalkin" is as truthful a name as I could think of for them.

Many of the entries in this category include creatures that the majority of educated people believe to be mythical. However, the author has convinced me, far too often for my comfort, how many of the animals and peoples that scholars chalk up to legend or drunken hallucinations really do exist.

Air Elementalkin

The two relatives of air elementals that I know of are sprites and sylphs. Not all elementalkin look as "normal" as these two, but it makes for an easy way to begin. Oddly enough, each one bears more than a passing resemblance to the elves.

Perhaps the elven features are not so hard to explain. After all, elven culture has produced a number of legendary figures who found fame not only for their heroic deeds, but also for their willingness to follow true love beyond the boundary of their species. For example, Gilthanas fell in love with a silver dragon, and Kith-Kanan sired a son with a woman who later turned into a tree.

In the deepest parts of Ansalon's great forests live groups of tiny, winged creatures called **SPRITES**. They have pale skin, long pointed ears, and a delicate grace that speaks of possible elven heritage.

You will never see a sprite unless it wants you to. They can turn invisible and remain that way for as long as they wish. However, sprites are friendly folk, and one or two usually approach visitors, curious to know what brings them to the woods.



They're bright eyed, enthusiastic, and unendingly nosy. In fact, if one race on Krynn is generally considered more annoying than kender, it is sprites. They get into everything: your bags, your pockets, and [if your collars and cuffs aren't snug enough] even your clothing. Still, they cause little harm.

Sprites have the ability to sense what a creature's heart holds, and they passionately hate everything even slightly touched by Evil. In spite of their size and frailty, they always attack any Evil creature they meet, attempting to drive it out of their forest.

The author has expressed great regret that sprites are so single-minded. He feels that they would make valuable additions to the Qualinesti resistance movement as spies if only they could keep themselves from launching assaults on Beryl and her troops wherever they find them. Unfortunately, due to their spirited attack on Evil, the sprite population in that forest continues to plummet.

SYLPHS look like beautiful elf maidens except for the fact that their hair often varies in shade from blue to purple to green to bright orange, and five-foot-long gossamer dragonfly wings grow from their shoulders. Although they stand about five feet tall, sylphs weigh next to nothing [which I suppose clues you in to their elemental nature].

They make their homes at the tops of tall trees, on the sides of mountains, and in any other lonely place that seems to touch the sky. Sylphs prefer never to visit human cities and, when they do, often exhaust themselves by hovering for hours at a time so that their feet never touch the ground. They consider the dirt and grass of the world to be cursed, and any creatures who live below ground [such as dwarves] to be demons.

SPRITE: *Magical creature.* Co 9, Ph 3, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -2, also invisible, poison [sleep], and sensitivity.

SYLPH: *Magical creature.* Co 12, Ph 9, In 8, Es 7, Dmg 0, Def -1, also aeromancy, invisible, and summoning [air elemental].

Sprites can turn invisible at will, but they usually attack in full view of their target. Their weapons [small versions of either a bow or long sword] have a poison coating that causes victims to sleep for several hours. The Narrator should draw a card from the Fate Deck and use the number of the card to determine how many hours the victim slumbers.

They live in tribal units of a dozen to a hundred [except in Qualinesti, where there numbers have been quartered], and usually buzz about a glade or meadow like a cloud of intelligent gnats.

Sylphs can turn invisible at will, but they prefer to remain visible unless they feel threatened or crowded.

- Sometimes heroes can encounter sylphs while upon aerial mounts.

A shy and quiet race, sylphs spend most of their lives alone and only rarely gather in groups larger than three. They pine for the endless stretches of the elemental world of air, to which they find themselves naturally attuned

Every sylph has the ability to summon an air elemental once per week. This they do as often as possible in order to learn and practice the elemental's language.

Sylphs believe that when they die, if they have led good lives, their spirits go to the world of air. If they have led bad lives, though, they believe that they will be reborn as a ground-dwelling creature or [if they have done particularly Evil deeds] a burrowing one.

I asked the author how he knew so much about these creatures. Although most scholars accept their existence, none of them can find a reliable source on sylphs.

He told me that once when he was performing roof repairs among the uppermost branches of the vallerwood tree that harbors his inn, he saw what he thought was an elf maiden lying unconscious on the treetop. Upon closer inspection, though, he found that the creature was a sylph with badly damaged wings.

It seems the creature had been invisibly flying over Solace, when a hawk accidentally struck her while diving at a potential meal on the ground.

Caramon offered her aid and promised not to reveal her presence to anyone else. In the few days it took for the sylph's wings to heal, she told him many things that no mortal other than he has ever heard.

After the sylph left, he did not repeat the stories. However, he did not keep silent out of respect for the creature's privacy, but rather because he did not believe that anyone would find the information of interest.

Sprites have the ability to sense what a creature's heart holds, and they passionately hate everything even slightly touched by Evil.

Earth Elementalkin

Earth elementalkin have closer ties to what I would call monsters than people. Maybe elementals can combine with only animals and fiends, plus dwarves and gnomes in a few areas.

Given the intelligent nature of the other elementalkin, these examples do seem incongruous. Perhaps because we live our lives on top of the earth, we cannot appreciate the intellect or motivations of creatures who spend all their time moving through it.

Caves and caverns are strange places. For those of us who usually look up and see green leaves and blue skies, we find it pretty unsettling to be someplace where the only thing above you is a roof of raw rock. The waving shadows created by torch light on the peaks and valleys of the rock appear even more

unsettling. At first you feel certain that the ceiling itself moves above you, then it seems as if the very earth has a life of its own and wishes to sneak up on you when you turn your back.

As silly as these thoughts seem, sometimes you should trust them. It isn't the ceiling, though, that wants to surprise you. Instead, it's probably a

LURKER.

Lurkers are round, nearly flat creatures that cling to the ceilings of caves. Occasionally, they find their way into castles and keeps with dark, dank dungeons.

Their bellies have the shape and color of the rocks to which the lurker clings. I'm not sure whether this pattern changes when a lurker moves to a new area or if the beasts simply live their entire lives on a specific type of rock.

When a lurker senses food passing below, it releases its grip on the ceiling and drops onto the target. Now, a lurker is not a light creature, since it has the consistency of rock after all. It aims to land on its target's head and then grips the target tightly, trying to choke the life from it.

One day, you walk out your door and the next thing you know the ground reaches up to grab you!

This makes fighting lurkers very difficult. I mean, in order to hit one, you have to swing at your own [or your comrade's] head. Be careful not to run the creature through!

I found that bashing it with the flat of a blade or using another blunt weapon is the best plan. Pick up a rock and swing away—you may wind up with a lump or two, but your head will still be attached to your shoulders.



I am aware of no exhaustive studies on the protective coloration of lurkers. However, the author brings up an interesting question.

We know that lurkers slowly migrate within a limited range, sometimes using internal gases to fly for a short distance. Is this range limited by the creatures' slow pace, or is their speed of locomotion restricted so that they do not move to an area where their coloration will be a disadvantage? Will a lurker's pattern change if it moves onto a different type of rock?

Perhaps the Library can sponsor an expedition to look into these questions.

I remember a time when Flint Fireforge thought that a merchant was overcharging him for a poorly crafted weapon. He haggled and argued, but eventually paid the high price the man demanded. As we left the store, Flint yelled over his shoulder, "May you build your house on a sandling's nest!"

I had no idea what this meant, so I asked Flint what a **SANDLING** was.

LURKER: *Magical creature.* Co 1, Ph 30, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +3, Def -2, also camouflage, fly, pounce, and suffocate.

SANDLING: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 12, In 1, Es 8, Dmg +8, Def -4, also immune to mentalism and pounce [entangle].

Spotting a lurker is very difficult, and heroes can generally see them only from melee range. Heroes may attempt a *challenging Perception* [Presence] action to notice a lurker before they pass directly under it [heroes with intimate familiarity with the area may perform this action with an *average* difficulty].

A sandling uses its *pounce* ability not as an attack, but as a natural reaction to being stepped on. The sandling does not do physical damage to the target, but rather surrounds it with coils of its body resulting in the same effect as the *entangle* special ability.

- Heroes who take the ground for granted can often be surprised by a sandling.

"They're terrible nuisances, that's what they are! Creatures made of living sand that swim through the earth like otters in a stream."

That didn't seem so terrible to me, and I told him so.

"No? Maybe not when they just come and go below your feet, but how about when one decides to

build a nest in your yard? The bloody things don't play well with others.

"One day, you walk out your door and the next thing you know the ground reaches up to grab you! You can't tell the sandling from the ground it lives in, and they *hate* being stepped on. They may not have teeth [or even mouths for that matter], but they fight to the death. I've seen the cursed things crush grown dwarves to death in seconds.

"The worst thing is that after they've killed something, they move on. Guess any ground that's been soiled by 'living things' has a bad taste. So to keep them away, we make a broth from pan drippings and pour it on the ground; it usually keeps the sandlings away for a year or more."

I asked more and more questions until Flint looked ready to explode. He said sometimes he didn't know who was more annoying to talk to, me or Tas. "At least I expect it from a kender!"

I did find out that sandlings are about ten feet long, always live by themselves, and seem to favor lands rich in mineral ore [which they apparently eat]. If you have to fight one, hydromancy is your best weapon. Large amounts of water make the creatures sluggish and easier to manage.

A dwarven almanac tells us that sandlings change color, consistency, and temperature to match the land they live in. They prefer cool, sandy regions in the summer, and rocky land closer to volcanoes in the winter.

Lurkers are round, nearly flat creatures that cling to the ceilings of caves.

Fire Elementalkin

I cannot imagine how fire elementals ever produced offspring. Who could stand the heat of passion with a flaming creature?

Judging by the fire elementalkin, it could only be another supernatural creature. What a horrid thought.

An interesting question, above and beyond the prurient ones, arises. How exactly would a fire-elemental mate with an undead or other supernatural creature?

We were sitting around the campfire once, some soldiers and I, telling tales of battles past. One fellow told us a tale about a “demon that rose from the flames of a campfire, very much like this one,” and attacked his troops. He was the only one to survive the attack of the **FIRE MINION**, and he did so by leaping into a nearby lake.

We all laughed and agreed that this was a wonderful story, that we’d remember to tell it to our children on chilly autumn nights. But the soldier grew indignant.

“It’s true!” he yelled. “This devil slaughtered my whole company, and I never knew why!”

This shocked us into silence. Obviously the man was mad with grief, but we didn’t know what to say to ease his pain.

“Because,” a gravely voice said from nowhere, “my master ordered you all dead.”

We all scrambled for our weapons as the fire around which we sat rose up in the shape of a man. It had glowing green eyes and a mouth filled with cruel fangs. It was a creature made from the fire itself, holding a long sword and shield of identical origin.

“And with your death, my mission will be complete!”

It swung its flaming sword in a long arc, setting everything it touched ablaze. Then it actually stepped out of the fire and pressed the attack.

Things were going badly for us, when one of my comrades doused the beast with a bucket of water drawn from a nearby stream. This did not hurt the thing severely, but it saw several other men running to the stream. It lowered its sword and laughed as the flames that made up its body lowered until it became nothing more than a normal campfire.

It was a creature made from the fire itself, holding a long sword and shield of identical origin.



Just before its eyes faded away, it looked at the soldier who had told the tale. "I will be back," it said. "You cannot live in cold darkness forever."

Perhaps not, but we did not light a fire again that night nor for the rest of that journey.

I asked Caramon what became of the soldier. His silence told me that the man's end was not a good one.

If this tale is any indication, fire minions are among the most tenacious and efficient killers from any world.

I've never seen a **FIRESHADOW**, and neither has anyone I know. From the tales that Arman Kharas, a descendant of the dwarf who carried the Hammer of Kharas, told me as we traveled to the Valley of Thanes, no one would ever want to.

We were on our way to retrieve the Hammer of Kharas, an ancient dwarven artifact, and Arman was telling us of all its wondrous powers.

"For one thing," he said, "the hammer can kill fireshadows with a single blow." After I asked what a fireshadow was, he answered, "They are great goutts of green flame that rise thirty feet in the air. Wizards of old summoned them to crush their enemies, but as frequently as not, the fireshadows turned on them.

"Anyone who is touched by a fireshadow finds his skin begin to slowly transform into green flame. Unless someone magically heals the victim, the monster eventually absorbs him completely.

"Worst of all, though, a fireshadow has the power to instantly wither its opponents away to nothing. A fanged maw opens in its flaming body, and anyone standing in its path simply ceases to exist.

"Fearsome as these creatures are, though, they cannot stand before the righteous might of the Hammer of Kharas!"

Arcane texts speak of such creatures. They say that the wizard who summons one from the world of fire may order the thing to take any shape or form he chooses. The fireshadow obeys, but the form always stands about thirty feet tall and burns with a green flame.

Scholars and mages have written very little about fireshadows. Perhaps this is for the best, for too many behemoths already beset Ansalon. The last thing the continent needs is a force of destruction we foolish mortals loosed upon ourselves.

FIRE MINION: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 18, In 9, Es 8, Dmg +6, Def -3, also immune to pyromancy.

FIRESHADOW: *Magical creature.* Co 3, Ph 42, In 9, Es 8, Dmg +20, Def -5, also disintegrate; mentalism; poison; and immune to mentalism, pyromancy, and nonmagical weapons.

Fire minions are not only immune to pyromancy, but it refreshes them. Each damage point inflicted upon a fire minion in this manner causes it to heal one wound.

They can take form in any natural fire, but they cannot rise from fires that are under the influence of pyromancy. Because it rises slowly, taking about one minute to fully form, a fire minion rarely gains surprise on heroes [unless they fail an *easy Perception* [*Presence*] action].

Fire minions take twice the normal damage from cryomancy or hydromancy spells and attacks using large quantities of water.

Fireshadows communicate telepathically with the person who summoned them, but no one else. However, they can hear and understand everything thought by anyone within near missile range.

The fireshadow's touch pollutes its victim with a poison that turns her skin to green flame. The poison progresses like any other, but when the hero's body is empty of normal tissue, she simply becomes absorbed by the fireshadow.

A fireshadow's disintegrate attack may be used at missile range only.

A successful attack against a fireshadow with the Hammer of Kharas utterly destroys the creature. Other items of glory or legend that have special powers versus undead creatures can destroy the fireshadow or cause double damage, but only if they are blunt, not edged, melee weapons [such as a mace]. The Narrator should flip a card from the Fate Deck to determine what the weapon does. A white aura indicates destruction, while red or black auras result in double damage.

Nature Elementalkin

I've heard hundreds of tales about creatures that could be elementalkin. One tells of a warrior whose entire body consists of insects. He supposedly protects the swamplands along Northern Ergoth's Huldre Bay.

Very few of these stories have any bit of proof behind them, though. As Bertrem has taught me, when writing a book for people to use as a guide, you must be very careful what sources you quote.

Your humble editor begs for forgiveness for any undue influence over the author. I hope only to lead by example.

If any creature can be called a child of nature, it's the **DRYAD**. Depending on when you meet one, you could easily mistake her for an elf maiden. Dryads are beautiful, thin, pale creatures, the very essence of a woman that a human lad might lose his heart to at first sight. However, they have no human

blood within them—they're not even mortal.

A dryad's life is completely tied to the woods she lives in. In spring and summer, her skin takes on a tanned look and her hair turns deep green, matching the surrounding leaves. In fall, her skin pales and her hair becomes a deep brown hue, streaked with flashes of red and gold. When winter comes, her skin and hair both take on the color of the drifting snow, and her eyes [which normally sparkle green] fade to wispy gray.

Protecting her forest from harm is a dryad's only mission in life. She doesn't stop hunting or tree harvesting if the process respects the forest.

In fact, I know many stories of dryads taking hunters and woodsmen as lovers, teaching them the best places to trap or chop. Although they remain youthful as their lovers age and die, I've heard that dryads prefer human lovers to elves. Perhaps the elves' deep respect for the woods causes this type of match. After all, every human a dryad can teach to honor the forest is a potential enemy turned into trusted ally.

Some scholars commonly believe that a dryad either is the spirit of, or is psychically attached to, an ancient oak tree. Legends say that the creatures cannot wander more than a half-mile or so from their trees, but recent research teaches us otherwise.

While dryads prefer to remain close to their associated trees, they no longer seem as bound to them as ancient lore states. At least one dryad has spent time at the Citadel of Light studying mysticism, and a group of the creatures has been seen wandering the Abanasinian plains raising support for the Qualinesti resistance movement. Some stories tell of strangely shaped dryads that result from the transformation of the land by a Great Dragon.



The reason most dryads remain close to their oaks is that their lives are inextricably entwined. If anything happens to the tree, the dryad will wither and die not too long after her tree dies.

I've heard it said by wiser men than me that beauty is power. I never knew what that meant until I heard the truth about **NYMPHS**.

Everyone knows that nymphs are stunningly beautiful nature spirits who are linked to the most gorgeous spots in the world. Most people, though, have no idea how deadly nymphs can be. Sometimes, the human mind can take only so much beauty.

Seeing a nymph often blinds most men—and women, too. Although nymphs are all women, their beauty has nothing to do with romance, but some kind of elemental power. Not only that, those who see the creature in the nude usually just fall over dead. A nymph's beauty simply kills.

Like dryads, nymphs live only to protect the lands they are bound to. All the animals of the area recognize nymphs as their protectors. Deer, rabbits, and wolves all lie together in peace at their feet.

I'm told that if a nymph touches you, all painful and troubling memories flee your head, all becomes right with the world, and you can think only beautiful, happy thoughts. At first that sounds pretty good, but in times of danger, I rely on my darker thoughts to keep me alive.

What draws a nymph to a particular site? Beauty, after all, is a subjective quality. How does a locale qualify as beautiful enough to warrant a guardian nymph—let alone two or more, as some places purportedly have?

If a glade or lake or prairie with a vista of towering mountains touches the souls of those who view it, if it moves poets to write sonnets and bards to compose sweeping lyric ballads, then the place may be deserving of a nymph.

While some scholars speculate that these spirits exist without form until they find such a magnificent location, others believe that some greater power summons and binds them to specific places. We may never know the truth of the matter.

DRYAD: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 7, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -1, also camouflage and charm.

NYMPH: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 9, In 8, Es 4, Dmg 0, Def -1, also blind and death.

In their native forests, dryads seem to blend in with the foliage, giving them a unique brand of camouflage. They do not take on a treelike facade, but they look so naturally a part of the scenery that most heroes overlook them.

Dryads are nonviolent creatures who never engage in combat unless no other choice is left them. When danger threatens, they usually use their ability to charm people, putting them in a pleasant mood and urging them to leave the forest. If forced to fight, dryads use either daggers or selfbows.

Anyone who looks directly at a nymph, even for a moment, becomes a victim of its blind attack. Heroes must make a successful *average Reason [Presence]* action or the beauty of the nymph strikes them blind. Every time the hero encounters the nymph, he must make this action.

If, however, the nymph is nude [or if the heroes retained their eyesight and the nymph later disrobes], the heroes must resist a death attack. If they fail an *average Reason [Presence]* action, the sight kills them [this differs from the death ability described on page 7]. They can be revived only by healing magic [the healer must have an Essence code of "A" and generate an action score of 18], and only if it is cast within five minutes of death. After the hero's revival, the Narrator should draw a card from the Fate Deck to see how the hero's Spirit score fares: Should the aura be black or red, the hero permanently loses 1 point of Spirit [along with the resulting spell point loss]. The victim also loses 1 point of Endurance permanently and gains only one card back.

A nymph's touch makes it impossible for a hero to think anything but good thoughts for the rest of the day.

Water Elementalkin

As Bertram and I talked about elementalkin, I noticed that the ones with human form almost always take the form of women. This is true again of sirines. I wonder why that is.

The author expressed several interesting hypotheses on this subject. Perhaps the most interesting was that the creatures really have no gender whatever. Mortals merely perceive them as they will. However, since many Ansalonian cultures personify Nature as a female figure [most often the goddess Chislev], those seeing these creatures most often assume them to be female as well.

The first time I saw **SIRINES**, the thing that struck me was how human they looked. Oh, they have blue skin and seaweed-green hair, but I had grown so used to elementalkin looking like elves that the broad shoulders and aggressive manner of the sirines made them seem even more exotic.

They can breathe in both air and water, and they live in isolated ocean shallows, sometimes by themselves like underwater hermits, sometimes in small communities of a dozen or so. I guess, just like humans, some sirines like company while others prefer to be left alone with their own thoughts.

Sirines tend the plants and animals that live in their shallow sandbed homes, as well as those creatures who frequent the nearby shoreline. They have no use for other intelligent races, even the sea elves, and try to avoid the notice of passing ships.

If noticed, a sirine defends her territory to her dying breath. They have skills with all manner of melee and missile weapons and possess several magical abilities.

A sirine can create an unnatural fog that surrounds anyone in the immediate area. In the fog, even trained soldiers become dizzy and lose their balance and their way. If this fails, the sirine has a haunting voice that can completely bewitch those who hear it. Anyone who gets by both of these defenses is truly a foe to be feared. Luckily, the sirine can turn invisible for an hour at a time so that she need never enter combat unless she wants to. She can also transform herself into any animal found in the local waters.

People should count themselves lucky that sirines have so many other defenses, because their final one can devastate you. A sirine's touch causes her foe's brains to shrivel. They forget things they've known since childhood—sometimes even their own names.

If you ever see a group of these elusive creatures [or even a lone one], my best advice is to sail on and leave them be.

They have skills with all manner of melee and missile weapons and possess several magical abilities.



SIRINE: *Magical creature.* Co 9, Ph 12–21, In 8, Es 6, Dmg 0, Def –4, also acute sense [vision], alteration [self], charm [song], confuse [fog], drain [Reason], and invisible.

WATER WEIRD: *Magical creature.* Co 6, Ph 12, In 6, Es 7, Dmg 0, Def –3, also camouflage; suffocate; and resistant to fire, heat, and physical attacks.

A sirine's Physique score varies from creature to creature. However, if the heroes meet a lone sirine, she almost certainly has a high Physique score. A large group of sirines all have lower Physique scores.

Any time a sirine touches a hero, she may choose to make a drain attack. The hero must make a successful *average Reason* [Reason] action or his Reason score permanently loses 1 point. Alternatively, the sirine may choose to restore 1 point of Reason previously lost to a sirine [including herself].

When a water weird attacks, it tries to knock its foe off her feet. Once a foe is off balance, the creature uses its suffocate attack to fill up her lungs and drown her. If the victim manages to get out of the water, though, the water weird must release its grip.

Because they are made entirely of water, water weirds take only half damage from physical attacks. However, cryomancy can cause them to slow down their attacks to one counterattack per every two hero attacks. Should a sorcerer purify the water with hydromancy [of at least an action score of 18 points], the water weird dies.

Water weirds live only in fresh water. They never share their homes, no matter how large a body of water they live in, with any other elemental creatures.

Sirines are by far the most aggressive of the elementalkin. With all the magical defenses listed above at their disposal, they seem much more likely to engage intruders in melee combat, according to a plethora of ship's logs.

We should be glad, I think, that more of the elementalkin do not have such human traits.

I see very few differences between **WATER WEIRDS** and full-fledged water elementals. The water weird is a bit smaller and cannot survive away from a body of water, but other than that, they seem exactly the same to me.

You cannot see a water weird until it rises out of the water like a snake from a basket. However, if you wade through the water one lives in, you can likely feel it coiling around your legs trying to trip you.

You just can't argue with a water weird. It has no interest in treasure. Your sharpest blade poses no threat to its watery form. It does not need to eat, but still it will do everything within its powers to kill you. If it trips you, a water weird can climb inside your lungs and choke the life from you.

Your best course of action, should you be forced to fight one of these creatures, is to make for dry land as quickly as possible. The fact that it cannot leave the water is your only advantage—use it well!

A wizardly training tome speaks at length about water weirds. They are presented as a perfect case study of a creature that cares not one whit for anything or anyone on this world. In fact, they do not even understand the basic concepts behind the desires, possessions, and cultures that motivate the people of Krynn.

Any water weirds found in Krynn have been summoned to this world from their watery elemental plane. As a result, they care only about freeing themselves from their Krynnish existences so that they may return to their homes.

In spite of the author's stance, the book claims that "if a wizard can manage to bridge the communication gap between himself and a water weird, he may well strike some kind of bargain with the creature [presuming that he has the power to transport it to its home]."

Chapter Three:

I've said it before, but it bears repeating: I'm no scholar. I could stare at a hen-house all day and never sort out whether the chicken came before the egg. Still, I'm writing this book (with more than a bit of help from Bertrem), and I must not only describe every beastie I've ever heard of, but group and label them as well.

Animals and magical animals were easy. I mean, a bat is a bat, and a gargoyle is a gargoyle. Some critters just don't fit into those groups, though. They're either too smart, too big, or just too darn weird to be called animals of *any* variety. Then again, they're too wild, too furry, or too different for most folks to consider them "people." So what are they?

I don't know. I've decided to group them all together in this chapter, though.

Oddly enough, this passage points out exactly why I chose the author to pen this volume. Scholars gain mastery over categorizing, itemizing, and grouping all sorts of things—even things that we know nothing about. We excel at making things fit exactly where we want, but often at the cost of true flavor and visceral impact of the subject.

A true scholar would avoid categorizing any living thing as a "monster." The word tends toward fanciful, emotional weight. However, as the author points out, what else are these creatures but monsters?

Chimeras

Don't ask me how the chimera came to be—I have no idea. I've heard many a more learned man than I say that the beast must be a creation of the Graystone, and I see no reason to argue. It may be the strangest thing I have ever seen, made up almost equally of different parts of three animals. It has the hindquarters of a goat, the forequarters of a lion, the wings of a dragon, and the heads of all three!

The goat head is always black, the lion head always has a full, brown mane, and the dragon head is a strange orange color. Since it breathes fire, though, I think it safe to say that the



Monsters

dragon head at least partially comes from red dragon stock.

Chimeras can be found in any mountains that house griffins. The two animals do not get along at all. In fact, if you see a pride of griffins circling and swooping around a mountain peak, looking as though they are practicing their swooping technique, they have most likely found a chimera's lair and are attempting to drive the beast off. For every dozen griffins, usually two or three chimera exist nearby.

I asked Alhana about the creatures once. I figured that, since the Silvanesti are renowned for riding griffins, she might have some special knowledge of chimeras as well.

"I know enough about chimeras to stay away from them!" This only fueled my curiosity. "These vicious beasts are cursed with an eternally foul temper. The griffins know them for what they are: death incarnate.

"You never have to guess if a chimera resides in an area, since they attack anyone who passes through their territory. Some say they do this because their lion nature eternally hungers for meat. Others claim that their dragon nature covets every ounce of treasure it sees. I, however, believe that a chimera has so black a heart that it craves the destruction of anything that moves."

Alhana's words made me think. If a chimera truly contains not only the parts of three different beasts, but their instincts as well, it certainly must be the most confused creature on the face of Krynn. In fact, I cannot understand how it resists mauling itself to death. Instinct would tell the lion to slaughter the goat, and dragons have certainly been known to dine on lion flesh. Perhaps this is the real reason chimeras are so violent.

Whatever the reason, they are one of the few beasts that I can say you will encounter *only* in battle. You cannot reason with or calmly bypass a chimera. My best advice for those traveling through chimera hunting grounds is to always keep your sword out and your eyes open.

Most texts agree with the theory that the Graystone created the chimeras [although several sources suggest that Gargath, who captured the stone briefly, purposely used the stone to make them to defend his prize from the Chosen, those who chased it]. Additional circumstantial evidence points to their dragon nature being chromatic, as several texts say that chimera have been seen conversing with red dragons in some mangled version of the dragons' own tongue.

In spite of this, no evidence exists stating that chimera have a higher than normal animal intelligence. By all accounts, they are simple, if cunning, predators.

Some scholars cite instances in which someone has broken a chimera in for riding purposes. I'm not sure I believe this, as I certainly wouldn't want to tame such an ill-tempered beast!

CHIMERA: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 27, In 2, Es 7, Dmg +17, Def -3, also breath attack [pyromancy] and charge.

A chimera has three modes of attack at its disposal. It first attacks with its dragon breath whenever possible. This attack can be used only at near missile range and has a damage rating of +9. Its second attack uses either its front paws or the lion or dragon head. It generally finishes off a victim with this attack or uses it when it has been wounded and cannot flee. Finally, the creature can make a charge attack by flying in and ramming its target with the goat head. It attacks in this fashion only if it wishes to re-engage a foe who has recently driven it off.

- An adventure could center around a refugee who claims his town has recently been destroyed by a group of chimera-riding outlaws. How could anyone manage to tame so wild a creature? What are the goals of these riders? How can anyone stand up to trained warriors with such powerful mounts?

Hellbeasts

Does the name “hellbeasts” sound too superstitious? I want to capture the full impact of these creatures, but I’m a little afraid of sounding like a frightened child.

To begin with, I thought the hellbeasts would go in the section on enchanted or summoned creatures. After all, as my son has explained it to me, they come from some fiery section of the Gray or the Abyss or somewhere so

far away that my understanding can’t encompass it. Powerful sorcerers can sometimes call them to do their bidding

[which is why I thought about that alternative listing], but that’s not the whole story.

Unlike the creatures I chose for the enchanted creatures section, these beasts sometimes visit our world for their own reasons. No one knows quite how or why they do this, but Palin tells me that students of the summoning school at his Academy of Sorcery often argue about them heatedly.

My research indicates that people believe hellbeasts of all varieties portend a terrible evil. Some texts talk of the creatures roaming the darkest alleys of Istar just before the First Cataclysm [after the so-called Water Prophet Fordus Firesoul died in a confrontation with the King-priests], while recent tales say that the vilest dragon overlords keep them as pets.

I wasn’t sure what to say about **HELL CATS**, as I’ve never actually met one myself. So, I asked my son, and he showed me several books that talked about them the way a fish would talk about flying—I

knew right away that the writers had never actually seen a hell cat.

According to his books, a hell cat looks very much like a normal cat, one you might have around your home, except that it stands about as tall as a tiger. The weirdest thing about it is that it remains invisible except when in complete darkness. If so much as a candle sputters in its own wax nearby, you cannot see a hellcat, even if it is tearing your insides out. When

total darkness reigns, though, it appears as a dimly glowing vision. Some books say that you can see the fires of hell in its ghostly eyes.

“The thing is, Dad,” Palin said when I told him how useless I thought his books were, “hell cats come to Krynn to serve only the most Evil of wizards. In fact, they immediately attack anyone they see whose

aura has no taint of Evil.

“Everything we know about hellcats comes from the journals of mad, Evil wizards. We have to . . . umm . . . clean up the information so it makes sense and is palatable to the reader.”

Maybe he’s right. How much use is a book that cuts out useful information just because it’s messy, though? I’d hate to face a creature that I *thought* I understood only to find out that some editor had removed important information just because it was “unpalatable.”

The thrust of this entry is not lost on the editor. I assure you that I have not expurgated the entries you read in this bestiary for propriety’s sake. In fact, I have



Unlike normal dogs, these beasts hunt in an unnervingly quiet fashion, moving with the stealth of a Quaintesti rebel who finds himself standing outside Berry’s fair.

chosen to annotate these entries, rather than rewrite them for the sake of accuracy.

Like hell cats, **HELL HOUNDS** have about the same shape as normal dogs. Unlike the cats, though, you can see them. This might, at first, seem like an advantage, but can you really call it an advantage to see a muscled, snarling hunting dog with flames leaping from its mouth?

According to Palin's books, hell hounds also come from some other place, but they come in packs. Like any other dogs, they tend to run and hunt together. Since they stand two to three feet at the shoulder, they usually need a lot of food.

Unlike normal dogs, these beasts hunt in an unnervingly quiet fashion, moving with the stealth of a Qualinesti rebel who finds himself standing outside Beryl's lair. A pack of hell hounds could be nipping at your heels and you'd never hear a thing—you'd feel their flaming breath, though.

A hell hound breathes flame and can set a target alight from ten feet away. This is, the books say, because their forms consist basically of flame, or come from a place that is made of flame, or some-such. Because of this, they smell of sulfur and brimstone, which at least cancels some of the advantage their silence gives them. Anyway, it also means that they can't be hurt by fire or pyromantic magic.

These creatures live on this plane only if an Evil sorcerer has brought them here on purpose. Hell hounds are, if anything, even more vicious than normal guard dogs, and their howling sounds like a frightful wail, often causing uncontrollable shaking in all but the bravest warriors.

According to tomes provided by Palin Majere, in ages past, only an Evil wizard of sufficiently advanced training could summon a hell hound or cat. However,



HELL CAT: *Monster.* Co 6, Ph 18, In 3, Es 7, Dmg +5, Def -3, also immune to mentalism, immune to nonmagical weapons, and invisible.

HELL HOUND: *Monster.* Co 6, Ph 12-21, In 4, Es 7, Dmg +5, Def -3, also acute sense [hearing], breath attack [fire], and immune to fire/pyromancy.

Hell cats come from another plane. They exist on Krynn only if an Evil sorcerer summons them. After a hell cat has been summoned once, though, it can return any time it chooses.

These creatures abhor anything that does not have the stain of Evil upon its soul, and they attempt to destroy every hero they meet who does not have a nature drawn from a black aura card. If they are invisible, the Narrator should follow the guidelines presented in the section on special abilities. So attacking an invisible hell cat with a sword would become a *challenging Strength [Endurance]* action.

Hell hounds always live and hunt in packs of six or more. If a single beast is left alone, it becomes mad, steaming at the mouth and attacking everything it sees until something kills it.

- After another band of adventurers killed all but one hell hound in a pack [and then left the area for another adventure], the heroes could be left to destroy the remaining ravaging beast.

While assisting a scholar on a mission to find an ancient tome left in the ruins of an Evil wizard's home, the heroes might encounter a hell cat that the wizard had summoned many years ago.

with the potential of modern sorcery, any sorcerer with skill in the schools of summoning and pyromancy could, theoretically, call a dozen or more of these creatures to Krynn. It could even happen, he confided, accidentally.

His instructors impress upon Academy students the danger of wild experiments, but woe be the world if an apprentice with more skill than sense dabbles with the wrong spell!

Ice Beasts

Far to the south, past the Qualinesti Forest and all the lands controlled by Beryl the Green, across the freezing waters of Ice Mountain Bay, lies a land where the snow never melts and the temperature drops so low at night that a man can turn to ice in less than an hour. I have never visited this land, but I have long wanted to.

Many tales about these lands of ice have floated past my ears here behind the bar at the Inn and during my youthful wanderings. I hear that rabbits, owls, weasels, and several other animals have such white fur or feathers that you cannot tell them from the snow they sit on. I've also heard tell of other creatures, similar to ones we know, but with strange powers and abilities. Two of these stand out in my mind.

Normally, in editing texts such as this, I eschew reports based on hearsay and rumor. However, the author has an uncanny gift for sifting through the various rowdy and hyperbolic tales he knows and distilling them down to information that I find wholly accurate. He may never have been to the southern arctic plains, but his description of the region's fauna is, by all known accounts, correct.

As a note to adventurous readers: Intriguing as these icy wastes sound, they have become even more dangerous in recent years. Two white dragons, Cryonisis and Frisindia, have taken control of the region. Between these beasts and the frost-wights known to wander the frozen wastes, the Icewall Glacier is not an area to visit impetuously.

A race of gigantic toads lives in the icy lands of the Icewall Glacier. Rather, they live under the ice. These ice-blue animals grow about as large as a pony and have jaws that can take a man's good sword arm off in one bite.

I'm told that you can tell when you are over a colony of **ICE TOADS** by the man-sized holes dug into the surrounding ice. Also, the creatures supposedly call to one another with a horrible grinding noise. One drunk sailor told me that this is actually the toads' language.

Arctic surveys relate that, though ice toads generally act in a peaceful manner, groups of up to six toads have ambushed parties. The beasts seemed to radiate a numbing cold and attacked viciously, killing most of the group and, oddly enough, removing all the gems the newly dead had carried. Then these creatures burrowed back under the ice again.

Experts believe that the toads may have some rudimentary intelligence and revere or worship gemstones, particularly diamonds, as "immortal ice."

These ice-blue animals grow about as large as a pony and have jaws that can take a man's good sword arm off in one bite.



I'm not certain if I believe the tales I've heard about **WINTER WOLVES**, but they certainly deserve mention [if only because so many travelers repeat the tales].

In most ways, these beasts resemble the wolves you might find in any Ansalonian forest. They live and hunt in packs, eat only freshly killed meat, and howl mournfully at the full moon. All this is believable enough, but the tales also speak of their ability

ICE TOAD: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 15, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +6, Def -3, also aura [cold], and immune to cold/ice.

WINTER WOLF: *Monster.* Co 9, Ph 18, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -3, also breath attack [frost], camouflage, and immune to cold/ice.

The ice toad's cold aura causes any hero who comes within ten feet of the creature to attempt an *average* Endurance action. If this action succeeds, the hero suffers 3 damage points from the intense cold. If the action fails, the supernatural chill overcomes the hero and she can do nothing but shiver uncontrollably until someone moves her outside the ten-foot radius [or the toad wanders away or is killed].

Ice toads are very intelligent creatures, and the croaking described above is a fully-developed, amphibian language similar to that spoken by the reptilian draconians. Because they cannot speak human tongues, the workings of their minds remain mysteries to other species.

They place great value on gems of any sort, particularly diamonds. Heroes who wander across ice toad lands may find themselves under attack by a group of the creatures attempting to extract a "toll." Once they have taken half the heroes' gems, the toads leave them in peace.

The winter wolf can use its cold breath only once every ten minutes, and only at near missile range. Heroes defend against it the same way they would a normal missile attack. If the breath attack hits, it inflicts Dmg +8 and incapacitates its victim with a numbing chill that lasts for one minute.

- Perhaps the heroes can meet up with a pack of winter wolves while the creatures are hunting a pair of human trappers who foolishly wished to trap them.

to unleash a killing blast of cold from their mouths.

Now, I've faced enough dragons and their kin to know that such a thing is possible, but how would a *wolf* have such a power? Still and all, so many folk have told me identical stories that I have to believe there is *some* truth to the existence of this power.

Another thing I've heard about winter wolves is that they fear fire more than other animals. More than one barbarian from the ice plains has told me that if you light a campfire, you can sleep soundly without fear of attack by winter wolves. Perhaps exposure to flame dulls their icy breath? I do not know.

Despite the author's skepticism, I can vouch for the existence of the creature known commonly as the winter wolf [though I cannot comment on the truth regarding their reputed icy breath]. A Solamnic baron of my acquaintance has a trophy room filled with all manner of stuffed beasts, among them a wolf he bagged on an expedition to the arctic fields.

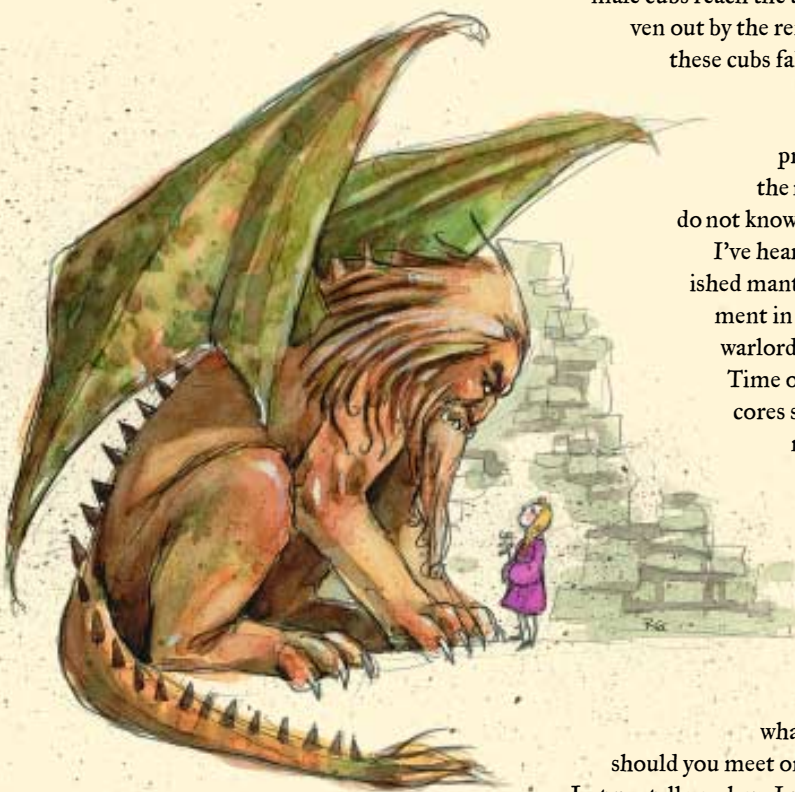
Interestingly enough, cold does not affect winter wolves at all. Of course, fur covers their bodies, but it is not the thick, insulated fur one finds on species such as ice bears and other arctic creatures. Rather, the wolf's fur feels thin and silky to the touch. It glistens metallic silver under the sun and moon, and many ice-barbarian tribes consider clothing made from a winter wolf pelt to have certain magical properties, such as the ability to completely protect the wearer from the elements.



Manticores

I always think of manticores as cousins to the chimera. I know it's not scholarly or poetic, but it is practical.

Like the chimera, a manticore consists of bits and pieces of several different creatures. It has the body of a huge lion, but stands at least two heads taller than any normal lion, and a row of foot-long spikes covers its back and tail. From its broad shoulders sprout long, leathery bat wings that



make a bone-chilling sound as the manticore spreads and retracts them. Most frightening of all, the creature's head has an almost human cast to it, but not quite. It has a thick mane of hair—not fur, mind you, hair!—and its wild, bearded face expresses the look of a crazed mountain hermit. The eyes narrow with suspicion, and the brow fur-

rows with contempt. The most inhuman thing about the face is the mouth, from which jut long, sharp fangs.

Unlike chimeras, though, manticores are at least as smart as a small child. They speak a strange, growling language, and I've even heard tales of one that spoke an ancient Istaran dialect.

For some reason, manticores prefer to live in stone buildings, and they often make their dens in ruined castles or abandoned forts. They stay in family prides of about six to ten adults, and up to twice that many cubs. However, no more than four adult males ever remain with the pride. When

male cubs reach the age of seven, they are driven out by the reigning male. Most of these cubs fall prey to the larger predators in the area, but some survive to form prides of their own [where the new females come from, I do not know].

I've heard that in ages past, banished manticores found employment in the keeps of ogre warlords. Further, before the Time of Light, pairs of manticores stood outside the gates of many an ogre castle and ate any petitioners the lord did not wish to see.

These wonderful stories are great to tell around the campfire, but

what good do they do you should you meet one of these beasts? None! Let me tell you how I survived an attack by a group of manticores.

I was but a boy of fourteen or fifteen, but I already knew that I wanted a life of adventure. I was impatient, as boys that age can be, and decided to set out to find adventure on my own. Two days later [with no meat to speak of in my diet], I was feeling much less adventurous and, as I camped in the ruins of an ancient Solamnuc guardhouse, I decided to return home at first light. The abuse my

brother would undoubtedly lay on me for this failure only sharpened my hunger. Just then, I heard a rustle in some nearby bushes.

Sure that it was a rabbit, squirrel, or some other delicious dinner, I leapt blindly into the bush, my skinning knife in hand. Can you imagine my shock when I tackled the creature only to find I had hold of a manticore cub?

The cub cried piteously, and before I could even think to put it down and run, three adult manticores swooped in and hovered in the air above me. They growled menacingly and brandished their tails [spikes standing straight out], but did not attack for fear that an errant spike might harm their cub, I'm sure.

I was afraid to put the cub down, sure that then nothing would stop the adults from skewering me, but the awful racket it made as it cried for freedom seemed to be driving them into a frenzy. I didn't have a useful thought in my head, but I instinctively began to pet and cuddle the cub. This was not the most comfortable thing to do, for even infant manticores have spikes, but it turned out to be the correct move.

As I stroked and scratched the baby, it calmed down and even began to enjoy the attention. Have you ever heard a manticore purr? I dare say you haven't, but it sounds raucous and as frightening in its own way as its roar would sound later in life. Still, I kept up my petting until suddenly four more cubs came tumbling out of the bushes, anxious to see what wonderful reward their brother was getting. Before the adults could react, the cubs bounded toward my feet, yipping for me to scratch their ears and necks too.

I bent down and began playing with all the cubs who, if anything, enjoyed the attention even more because everyone was involved. All the while, I kept my eyes on the adults, who settled onto the ground and watched more curiously and less menacingly than before.

After fifteen minutes of this, all five cubs were purring, and the adults were convinced that I posed them no threat. The largest one roared deafeningly, and the cubs knew that play time had ended. They ran back toward the guard-house. The adults looked at me with an expression that, if they were human, would have been compassion. In that

MANTICORE: *Monster.* Co 9, Ph 2I, In 3, Es 7, Dmg +7, Def -3, also missile weapons [tail spikes].

Manticores attack from the air whenever possible. They go into melee combat only if they run out of tail spikes or the spikes prove to be ineffective.

The creatures can launch their tail spikes as missile weapons at either near missile or melee range. Every time they do, though, the Narrator should flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If the aura is white, the manticore has used all its fully-developed spikes and may not attack with them again for a number of days equal to the card's value.

- While passing through dragon-controlled terrain with a ruin or small town nearby, the heroes may come upon a wounded female manticore guarded fiercely by her mate. The Narrator can impress upon the group that the female looks mangled as if by something larger than she was and that she is close to birthing young. If the party figures out a way to help the female without causing the male to attack, the Narrator can reward them with one of the manticore's items [newly found before the female got attacked] or manticore aid against a large predator in the same twenty-mile radius.

moment I knew they understood exactly what had just happened. Then the largest glared at me and roared again, as if to say "don't let it happen again!"

I had to fight, and kill, a manticore or two in my days of adventuring. Every time I did, though, I prayed afterward that it was not one of the cubs I played with on that long ago day.

The origin of the manticore is uncertain at best. Perhaps the Graystone generated its form, but the author's tale of a manticore speaking ancient Istaran lends weight to another theory.

Several historical texts say the Kingpriest created them in the final days of his rule to prove his divine providence. If he could create life, he claimed, then surely the true gods endorsed his reign and his rule.

Remorhaz

What do you know about a remorhaz, eh? Well, you probably know that they're also called "ice worms," and that they make a hideous howling noise that sounds like the southern wind turned Evil. Do you know how many legs they have, though? Do you know for sure whether they have legs at all? Do you know how to tell when one is in the area and how to avoid it?

Don't feel so bad. For a long time neither did I, since I never visited the frozen southern plains where they live. Then, one day last summer, an old man came into the inn dragging behind him enough dust to cover the road from here to New Ports. I could tell by his bearing that he was a man of adventure.

We got to talking, trading stories about our various scars [no one lives a life like mine without receiving scars of one sort or another]. After a bit, I found myself staring at the scar that ran from the tip of his nose back over his left ear and under his sparse gray hair. It was a beauty, one that should have a story so magnificent that it topped all others.

"What about that scar?" I asked bluntly, stabbing a finger at his face. "You *must* have a story for that one."

His back went stiff, and he squirmed in his seat. Perhaps he got the scar in some unsavory way, performing an act he was ashamed of. Perhaps it resulted from plain sloppiness, a lack of focus that allowed a lesser foe to get too close. I was immediately sorry I had asked the question.

"This one," he said running his finger lightly along the scar, as though it still pained him to touch it, "is where a remorhaz nearly took my fool head off."

I swallowed hard. "A re-remorhaz? You've seen a remorhaz?"

"Aye, I seen a remorhaz. But truth be told, he saw *more* of me!"

"I signed on as a guard for a merchant ship carrying cargo across Ice Mountain Bay to Rigitt. A simple enough job, really. Nothing exciting ever happens that far south, as the temperature's too

cold for a man's blood to boil enough for fighting. In the end, though, the weather attacked our ship, not pirates.

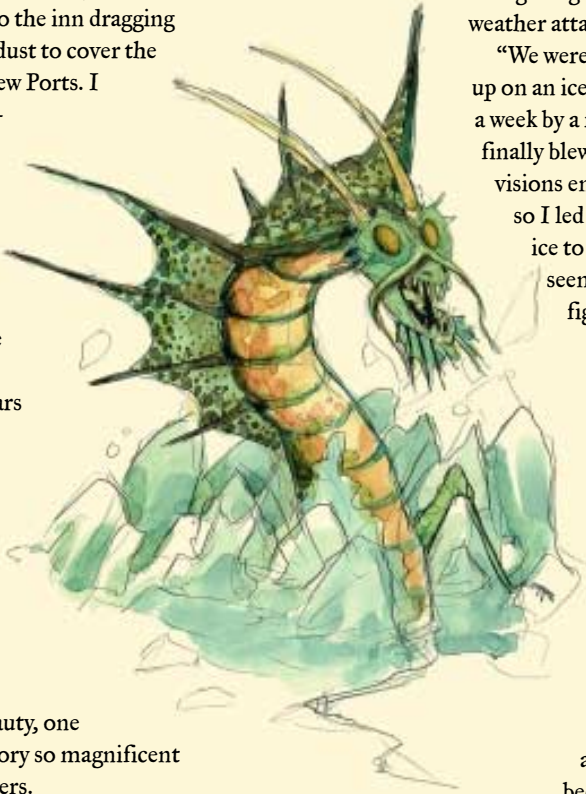
"We were blown off course, forced up on an ice floe and pinned there for a week by a raging gale. When it finally blew over, we didn't have provisions enough to finish our voyage, so I led a group of sailors onto the ice to hunt up some game. We'd seen ice bears pass nearby, so I figured there had to be some meat to be found.

"Out on the floe, we quickly picked up the tracks of a herd of elk or some snowbound flavor of deer. We never thought to question why the tracks all grouped together so closely.

Turns out that's what remorhaz feet look like when they're prancing above ground. Would have been nice to know.

"Suddenly the snow got a lot softer. We started sinking in up to our knees instead of walking on top of hard-pack. And the deer tracks up and disappeared. Just stopped there without a trace.

"The men got spooked and, truth to tell, so did I. Despite the cold, I was sweating like an ice bear in Sanction. One of the sailors noticed that the ground we stood on was warm, warm enough for steam to





be rising off the ice. We found out too late that this meant that the remorhaz skulking below us was about to strike.

“It exploded through the ice, a bug-eyed face on a long serpentine neck, teeth clacking and thrashing, and those little wings flapping about like a kender who thinks he can fly. The dang thing came out right under my feet, and took a bite at my face—that’s how I got the scar. Turns out I was lucky. The force of the blow of this huge, thirty-foot creature knocked me off my feet and kept me dazed for the rest of the fight, which mustn’t have lasted long.

“When I gathered my wits, all the sailors were dead, chewed up and spat out by the monster. I saw it drag them one by one under the ice, to save for dinner, I suppose. It had dozens of thin hairy legs, and looked more like a mantis than a worm. Ridges that glowed red-hot covered its back. I could feel the heat where I lay.

“I got to my feet and ran. The remorhaz raised its head and screeched a long, high, wailing warning at me, but didn’t give chase, thank the gods. The doc aboard ship sewed my wound closed, but none too well. This scar reminds me daily of the fate of those men—and that beast!”

The remorhaz has defied categorization for ages. Some call it a giant insect, others a distant relation to the dragonkin, such as nagas. Whatever its classification, it is universally feared and reviled, except by a very few tribes of thanoi who, according to an ancient Ergothian text, worship the remorhaz as a child of the gods.

By far the most interesting feature of a remorhaz is its ability to radiate heat. Why a creature that has immunity to the effects of cold would develop such an ability flies in the face of scientific reasoning. Research indicates that an involuntary glandular secretion causes this effect, which occurs when a remorhaz prepares to attack. The resulting heat generates temperatures hot enough to set clothing afire and shatter metal that has grown too stiff and brittle from the cold.

REMORHAZ: *Monster.* Co 6, Ph 21–41, In 1, Es 7, Dmg +12 to +18, Def –5, also acute sense [infravision], immune to cold, resistant to cryomancy, and swallow whole.

Although as many as a dozen remorhaz may hunt the same immediate area, they are solitary creatures. Heroes should never face more than one at a time [although they may witness two or more remorhaz battling one another for supremacy of a hunting ground].

Since this creature ranges between twenty-one to forty-one feet in length, the Narrator should decide ahead of time how big a creature the heroes will face. The smallest remorhaz has a Physique of 21 points, and this number increases by 1 point for every foot of length the Narrator gives the creature, up to a maximum of 41 points [or feet]. At the same time, for every three feet of length [or points of Physique] above 21 feet, the remorhaz gains another point on its damage rating. For example, a remorhaz with a Physique of 28 would have a damage rating of +15 [28–21=7; 7÷3=2.3 [round up to 3]; 12+3=15].

When a hero successfully attacks a remorhaz, the Narrator should flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If the aura is white, he has hit the creature’s soft underbelly and inflicts double the normal damage points. If, however, the card is from the Suit of Dragons, he has hit one of the creature’s super-heated ridges. His attack does normal damage, but his weapon breaks and must immediately be discarded.

- While traveling across an arctic plain, the heroes could easily stumble across a battle between a huge remorhaz and a young white dragon. The heroes can choose to intervene in some fashion, watch and learn the tactics that the foes use [it might be helpful later], or simply flee the scene before a victor emerges.

Umbur Hulks

Many years ago, Jasper Fireforge [Flint's nephew] and I were trading stories in the Inn. The talk turned to Thorbardin and what a shame it was that the dwarves have chosen to seal off the realm. The wonders that I saw there are unmatched on the surface of Ansalon. Jasper agreed with this, for although he was a hill dwarf, he too had visited Thorbardin and found it to be a place of wonder and beauty.

An umber hulk is a subterranean behemoth, ten feet tall and seven feet wide!



I asked him what was the strangest thing he'd seen on his visit. "For eye-popping oddity" he said, "I'd have to say the umber-chimes get my vote."

The look of utter confusion on my face, while not an unusual sight, told Jasper that I had no idea what "umber-chimes" were.

"You mean to tell me that you never saw the chimes? Little stone statues carved into the walls, each resting precariously on a silver bell?"

I had seen no such thing, but the description was fascinating. "If the statues are stone, and the bells are silver, why are they called 'umber' chimes?"

"Why, because they're to warn of the approach of umber hulks, of course! . . . You don't know what an umber hulk is, do you? Didn't you ever visit the Daergar in their deep world of smithies and mine-shafts?"

When it became clear to Jasper that the answers to these and several other questions was "no," he explained the whole lot to me.

"In the deepest sections of the Thorbardin, the walls all bear such remarkable chimes as I have described. Every dwarf knows of them and dreads the day that he should ever hear one ring.

"The chimes, you see, ring only when a great shuddering of the earth causes the statues to break from their moorings and fall upon the bell—a shuddering such as that caused by an umber hulk burrowing through the nearby stone.

"An umber hulk is a subterranean behemoth, ten feet tall and seven feet wide! A richly iridescent brown shell harder than the best dwarf-forged armor covers it, and a large set of mandibles juts out from its tiny head. An umber hulk has two sets of eyes, one large outer set that senses heat, and a smaller segmented inner set that senses motion. Wispy antennae, which serve as the creature's ears, rise directly above the larger set of eyes. Its massive arms end in talons so sharp that it can move through solid stone the way you move through water.

"Umbur hulks are creatures of the earth. They

UMBER HULK: *Monster.* Co 3, Ph 32, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +17, Def -4, also confuse [gaze], acute sense [infravision], and pounce.

Any hero facing an umber hulk must succeed at an *average Presence* [*Presence*] action or fall victim to the creature's confuse attack.

In combat, an umber hulk fixes on a particular target, ignoring all other creatures in the area and attempting to kill and make off with only its intended meal. Once it has suffered 20 damage points, though, the creature breaks off its attack and flees.

- UMBER HULKS are solitary creatures. They spend their whole lives moving through the earth looking for enough food to sustain their massive bodies. When two meet, they most likely ignore one another. Their enormous nutritional requirements leave them little time to worry about such things as territoriality. As a result, heroes who wish to assist the Qualinesti effort to escort refugees out of the forest might find themselves called upon to help the dwarves slay a few umber hulks who currently frequent the tunnels under the Qualinesti Forest.

never live any less than five hundred feet below the surface, and they have more fear of light than anything else, including your strong sword-arm.

Those who look directly into an umber hulk's eyes find their sense of balance and direction become muddled. Try as they might, they cannot gather their wits enough to escape the beast and, thus, they become its dinner.

“Although nothing the dwarves have or make interests an umber hulk——what use have they for things civilized and fine? what would they do with weapons or armor?——the people of Thorbardin must ever be alert for umber hulk attacks. Well, perhaps ‘attack’ is not the right word. ‘Stampede’ is more like it.

“You see, to an umber hulk, the finely-crafted tunnels of Daerforge are no different than any cavern or cave. These hollow spaces provide good grounds to hunt for their favorite meal——Urkhan worms. The dwarves have domesticated these worms and use them to pull giant sledges and carts full of ore.

“When an umber hulk finds its way into a Daergar warren, it causes unimaginable damage, knocking holes in the stone walls and occasionally even causing massive cave-ins in its mindless search for food. Sadly, though they prefer worms and giant insects, umber hulks see dwarves and other humanoids as another source of nourishment.

“You’d think that staying out of the way of such ponderous creatures would be easy, but they have a bizarre power to confuse their victims. Those who look directly into an umber hulk’s eyes find their sense of balance and direction become muddled. Try as they might, they cannot gather their wits enough to escape the beast and, thus, they become its dinner.

“Luckily, umber hulks do not have a vicious nature. They have no taste for battle, and if you can score one or two damaging blows, they often turn tail and run, burrowing back into the bowels of the earth. Unfortunately, with their thickly armored hides, doing any damage at all to them is quite difficult.”

When Jasper began this tale, I felt the old tug to adventure pulling at my heart. I wished to find and face one of these magnificent umber hulks. By this time in my life, though, I realized that it was perhaps best that they remain a legend rather than a fact in my life.

Nowhere in any text, tome, or scroll I know is a creature of the above description discussed or even hinted at. I would begin to question the veracity of the existence of such a creature, but Caramon’s ability to glean the truth from bar stories often amazes me. He has told me some of the stories that he wouldn’t even think of writing for this tome, and I find myself unable to assail this particular tale.

Unicorns

Are unicorns monsters? Certainly not. I've met only one in all my travels, but I can tell you with complete certainty that a creature as graceful and pure as a unicorn could never inspire anything but awe and wonder in the hearts of mortals.

I remember the very moment I first saw a unicorn. My companions and I had barely begun our adventures together when we found ourselves passing through the Darken Wood. When we began to regret our choice of route, the Forestmaster appeared on a ridge above us. I had never thought to see beauty in an animal. Power, yes. Courage, certainly. Never before beauty, however.



This unicorn represented all that was best in humanity. Her coat shone like the silver of moonlight, and her horn gleamed like pearl.

One part of me scoffed at this glorified horse with a horn. Aye, this horse stood strongly and proudly, to be certain, but all the fairy tales in the world didn't change the fact that a horse with a horn growing from its forehead posed dramatically before us.

Another part of me, a deeper part of me that I've only just come to fully understand within the last few years, was awestruck. This unicorn represented

all that was best in humanity. Her coat shone like the silver of moonlight, and her horn gleamed like pearl. The lightest breeze whipped her mane in flowing, graceful waves about her large, emotional eyes. She was no mere beast—she was a vision.

The Forestmaster spoke to us—another thing that no ordinary animal could do. Although dirt from the road and ichor from draconians covered us, she bade us welcome and prepared for us a most excellent meal.

Now, I don't suppose all unicorns are like the Forestmaster, but I do believe that all other unicorns were shaped from her mold. First of all, it seems unlikely that all unicorns can talk [the Forestmaster spoke to us in a beautifully rich, deep voice], but from all the tales I have heard, all unicorns help anyone whose cause is true and whose heart is just.

The Forestmaster not only welcomed us into her home, but also helped us in our quest. She gave our wanderings a goal, Xak Tsaroth, and convinced one of her subjects, a mighty pegasus, to carry us there so that nothing stood between us and our destiny.

I have heard similar tales about other unicorns.

One tells of a girl whose parents were deathly ill. She went into the woods to gather the herbs neces-

sary to cure them but, being a small child, she lost her way and walked unknowingly into the midst of a wolf pack. As the wolves moved in for the kill, though, a unicorn leapt into the fray. Its hooves stamped and its horn flashed, beating back the wolves until the girl was safe. It then hoisted her onto its back and carried her, swift as the wind, back to her cottage where she mixed the herbs not a moment too soon.

UNICORN: *Monster.* Co 12, Ph 16, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +12, Def -4, also charge, kick, and immune to mysticism and poison.

Although they are peaceful creatures by nature, unicorns prove fearsome in battle. They can make two attacks per exchange of blows. The first attack must be at a foe in front of the creature, either a bite or a gore attack [using its horn]. The second is a kick at a foe behind the unicorn. If the unicorn wishes to charge into battle, it must start the charge from near missile range.

Mystic magic has no effect on unicorns. Their life force has so much focus and control that they cannot receive even beneficial effects from an outside mystical source. However, they have a natural understanding of mysticism and can teach the proper use of any sphere should they find a worthy pupil.

Unicorns are magical creatures and exist solely to protect either their land or a particular ideal or emotion, which they defend with deadly force if necessary. If something destroys its land [or reshapes it, in the case of the dragon overlords], the unicorn weakens and dies.

Do not let anyone tell you that such tales are fables. Unicorns do exist. For, though they remain as invisible as Nuitari was to most folk, they always appear to those who truly need them. We need only believe in them and their magic.

The preponderance of evidence certainly points to unicorns having been factual creatures, although whether they became extinct is a matter of much discussion.

According to legend, unicorns are guardian animals, each born with a land, creature, or emotion that it is bound to protect. The author's Forestmaster obviously was the protector of the Darken Wood. Tradition holds that every woods of sufficient size has a similar guardian [though the tradition says nothing about these guardians being unicorns in every case]. Other ideals and places that tales claim unicorns protect include innocence, true love, the Elian Wilds, and one of the smallest of the fabled Dragon Isles. The veracity of these claims, however, cannot be confirmed.

An ancient Silvanesti text provides more practical information on unicorns. It states that they mate for life.

A mated pair produces a foal about once every twenty years. If something kills one of the pair, the other will die of loneliness in less than a fortnight. However, several Kagonesti folk tales state that a widowed unicorn can survive if it finds a new mate during that mourning period [in most of these tales, the new mate is a virtuous elf maiden].

Several plains barbarian tribes have legends that speak of exceptionally pure and honorable chieftains being befriended by unicorns [although none of them speak of the matter of where the beasts came from or where they went after the chief's death]. The tales tell that unicorns are more than pure spirits—they are also mighty warriors. In battle, tales state, one unicorn can defeat well over a score of the finest warriors a tribe has to offer.

More modern information comes from Schallsea Island. A student at the Citadel of Light claims to have received her first lessons in mysticism from a unicorn in the Woods of Labue. Jewel Nightstone, who made the trip from the Estrwilde to Schallsea on her own, says the unicorn gave her instruction in the spheres of animism and mentalism. Although the Citadel mystics confirm that Jewel possesses skills in these spheres, they offer no comment on other aspects of her tale. Jewel further maintains that all unicorns have an immunity to mystic magic and that they are beings of pure spirit, which gives them complete control over their own life forces.

Wyndlass

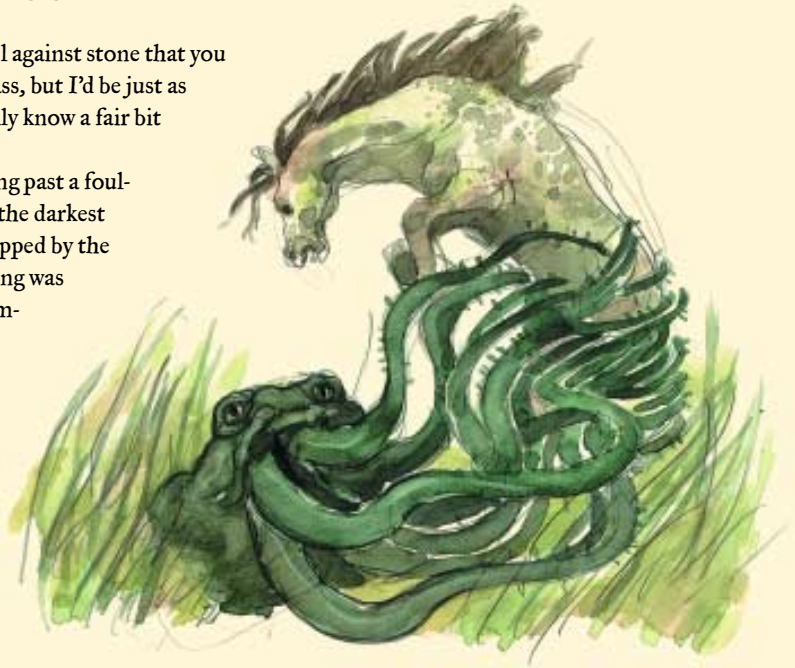
I would be willing to bet steel against stone that you have never heard of a wyndlass, but I'd be just as willing to bet that you actually know a fair bit about them!

Have you ever been walking past a foul-smelling swamp or through the darkest parts of a forest and been gripped by the paralyzing fear that something was watching you? Do you remember *knowing* that at any moment a great purple tentacle would rise from the bog or a copse of trees, wrap itself around your flailing body, and drag you screaming to your death? In the end, you chided yourself for being skittish and walked on. You probably never knew how close you were to being right—and dead!

What you would call a “swamp monster” or “the devil in the woods” is really the rare creature called a wyndlass.

The wyndlass is a solitary animal that spends most of its life at the bottom of a murky pit filled with a mixture of dirty water and an oil the creature oozes. The liquid has the consistency of quicksand, but it looks like normal dirt. When the wyndlass senses the vibrations of large animals such as deer, boar, or humanoids approaching its lair, the wyndlass swims just below the surface of the quicksand. As an animal draws near, a nameless dread often grips it. The wyndlass, you see, gives off an aura of fear. Its intended victims have an inkling that something awful is about to happen, but they have no idea what.

Why would a creature that relies on surprise attacks give off such an aura? Who knows. My thought is that most animals [humans included] always look for danger to strike from in front or



Usually, a wyndlass attacks using only one or two of its tentacles, hoping to grab and drag off its victim before any defense can be mounted.

behind, rarely from above or below. The nameless sense of dread causes the target to scan the trees or the horizon, but the victim usually pays little attention to the ground beneath its feet—where the attack will actually come from.

Though I've been on the wrong end of a wyndlass arm, I've never seen the whole creature. It attacks by snaking out some of its tentacles, trying to snag its target and drag it into the quicksand. The tentacles are sickly purple or black in color, and barbs cover them. These barbs bite into the flesh of the wyndlass's target, helping the creature to secure its meal.

Usually a wyndlass attacks using only one or two of its tentacles, hoping to grab and drag off its victim before any defense can be mounted. However, I've heard tales of the creatures attacking larger groups using seven or more tentacles at once. Such was my experience.

WYNDLASS: *Monster.* Co 2, Ph 36, In 3, Es 8, Dmg +52, Def -4, also aura [fear], entangle, pounce, and suffocate.

A wyndlass has ten tentacles that vary in length from twenty-five to forty feet. When attacking, it first allows its fear aura to affect its victims, then it strikes quickly to entangle and drown them before they can react. Because the tentacles grow in two clusters, a wyndlass cannot attack more than two victims at a time.

A wyndlass camouflages its pit, and any hero failing a *challenging Perception* action may inadvertently walk into one, saving the creature the effort of hunting. [Heroes with acute vision may perform an *average Perception* action instead.]

- Narrators should use wyndlasses sparingly since they are very powerful creatures. However, introducing heroes to the nameless dread that wyndlasses engender without giving them an encounter might give the heroes and players something to think about. Perhaps they'll come back to the "mystery in the forest" when they have more experience from questing!

I've never been what you would call a hunter, but after I gave up my life of adventure, I began to join some of my neighbors on their occasional trips into the woods to bag game.

I remember one trip where game was so scarce that none of us could find any meat at all. We were ready to return to Solace empty-handed, but Arun the blacksmith didn't have that option. If he failed to bring back meat, his family would have several lean meals ahead of them.

I sympathized with Arun. So, instead of heading home with the others, the blacksmith and I moved into the deep woods to an area where none of us had ever hunted. Still, we found no game.

Around a small campfire that night, Arun spoke to me of his fears. The area seemed unnatural, as if some monster had wiped out every creature larger than a hare. The hair on the back of my neck was standing and, in spite of the fire, I was shivering. Every time an owl hooted, I jumped, and every squirrel leaping from branch to branch seemed to me a giant hand reaching out to grab me.

A few minutes later, when I saw a gigantic arm reaching for Arun, I tried mightily to gain control

over the waves of dread washing over me. However, moments later I scrambled back in fright when the tentacle snaked around the blacksmith and dragged him screaming into the brush.

That spurred me into action. Leaping to my feet, I drew my sword and flew after my friend. Past my fighting prime I may have been, but I swung once only and cleaved the tentacle in half. The slimy thing still clung to the terrified Arun, spikes sticking painfully into his arms and chest, but he was free. When I was sure he was relatively unhurt, we reached for our packs, ready to run into the moonless night.

The forest then fairly exploded with tentacles. They seemed to come from everywhere. Fear gripped Arun so badly that he stood as still as a cockatrice's stony victim. I had to sling him over my shoulder as I hacked and slashed a path to freedom. I must have cut at least a dozen tentacles before the creature withdrew into the dark, taking with it the fear that gripped my very soul.

I've survived wars, dragon attacks, and all manner of monsters living and dead, but nothing ever frightened me as much as the snaking arms of that wyndlass. I pray nothing ever frightens me that much again.

According to the few reputable sources of information regarding wyndlass monsters, the creatures have incredibly long lifespans. One scholar estimated that her specimen had lived a thousand years before it made the mistake of trying to feed off a wing of Dark Knights.

A wondrous thing about this creature is that it can go for up to two years without feeding. It hibernates in its pool, waking only when it senses food approaching. If, however, the creature goes several seasons without feeding, it leaves its den and laboriously drags itself to a more heavily trafficked location. There, it uses its barbed tentacles to dig a new pit and begin the process all over again.

Chapter Four:

By this time, you should know that Bertrem and I argue about something in every part of this book. When it came to ghosts, zombies, and other creatures, he wanted to group them as monsters. This makes no sense to me because, unlike any other creatures on the face of Krynn, most of the undead in this chapter once possessed mortal souls. Something about their deaths prevents them from going on into the afterlife. They may be monstrous, but they are still our brothers and sisters.

In ages past, priests could often invoke the powers of the gods to set these souls to rest [or at least prevent them from attacking friends and family]. Sadly, when the gods left, they took this power with them.

I pointed out to the author that his perspective is quite compassionate, particularly given the fact that he banished, dispelled, or outright killed many of these creatures in his youth. I asked him how he could countenance such a massacre if indeed the undead are our brethren?

"The kindest thing we can do for those poor souls," he said, "is to put them out of their misery."

Chaos Creatures

Of course, having won that argument with Bertrem, our alphabetical listings cause the first grouping I deal with to be those that *never* lived. In fact, until thirty-three years ago, chaos creatures didn't even exist on Krynn.

All the beasts in this section came into the world during the Summer of Chaos by invitation of the Chaos god himself. These minions and servants of Chaos plagued all the lands of Ansalon and brought misery to people. I don't know why they remain even after Chaos himself was defeated, but it seems certain that they threaten every adventurer going

out into the world, and those brave few who venture forth must prepare themselves to deal with these monsters.

Perhaps Chaos merely attempted to permanently influence Krynn. After all, though they have left our realm, all the gods have left some mark on the world, be it great works of art, philosophical tenets, or living beings themselves. Chaos may merely, in his own, unfathomable way, have wanted his own efforts noted on the pages of the neverending book we call the Tobril, the book of all knowledge and the divine plan.

Daemon Warriors

Daemon warriors acted as the foot-soldiers in Chaos's assault on Ansalon. I've never actually seen one myself, and the reports I've heard all tell very different stories. In fact, Stefan and Deni, the miller's sons who fought against the armies of Chaos, almost came to blows when I asked about their experiences.

"The daemon warriors were worse than anything I could have imagined," Stefan said. "They swarmed across the battlefield, some riding fire dragons that left a trail of fire in their wakes, others simply striding through the mayhem with looks of contentment on their faces. The loved the confusion of war."

Deni chuckled mirthlessly. "Oh, I could imagine worse—there could have been *more* of them! Just the sight of the things froze my soul. They were leering, green-skinned fiends, with long needle-sharp teeth, and glowing yellow eyes."

Stefan rolled his eyes. "They looked nothing like that! Your brain is addled with ale! They were hulk-

A Note on the Undead

The creatures found in this section have all passed beyond death's dark veil and, for one reason or another, returned to the mortal world. Although many of them keep the same form they wore in life, they clearly are not the same.

Unnatural & Undead

ing skeletal knights, dressed in armor fashioned of steel-coated bones. Their helms were carved from dragon skulls, and their swords writhed with a life of their own, like snakes with hilts.”

“Oho! Who has been drinking too much?” Deni growled, throwing his mug to the ground. He stood and loomed menacingly over his older brother. “You just described the knight who haunted your dreams in the years following the War of the Lance. Your fear mastered your wits, and so you saw the thing you dread the most! Carvings of snakes, spiders, and bats decorated their weapons, but they were natural weapons. Also, the creatures were whole, not skeletal——though I could see no life in them.”

The argument continued, getting louder and louder until I showed the lads the door. Still, no two people describe the creatures the same way. Palin and Usha, who saw them in the battle in the Rift, have the same problem pinpointing their appearance. Palin says that these creatures change their appearance to suit their viewer’s fears, but if I were a younger man, I might ride out to see for myself what a daemon warrior looked like, and perhaps carry its head back to stop all the arguments.

Though they remain active in Ansalon today, I don’t know where you might find a daemon warrior. I’ve heard that they prefer to stay close to the places that Chaos touched when he walked the world. Any so-called “chaos mark” is a good place to start look-



ing. Also, don’t be surprised if the beasts just show up somewhere that strife and misery wrack the people.

Daemon warriors can seek chaos out like a fly seeks manure.

Baker Whitegranite’s journals describing the dark-dwarf uprising in Thorbardin during the Chaos War confirm several of the author’s suppositions. A daemon warrior named Xarak-Thul entered the city just as tensions threatened to turn to outright violence. This daemon warrior and his men [if men you can call them] fought at first for the rebellious dark dwarves, later turning on their allies to prolong the conflict and wanton destruction.

Daemon warriors are drawn to impending discord, particularly the strife arising from bloody conflict. They come from miles away to fan the flames of confusion, anarchy, and death, heedless of any political or moral underpinnings the conflict may have. They care only about causing suffering to all living things in Ansalon.

DAEMON WARRIOR: *Undead.* Co 9, Ph 12, In 9, Es 9, Dmg +12, Def -8, also aura [fear], immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

A daemon warrior appears different to everyone who sees it. Although they almost always look like some kind of undead warrior with glowing red eyes, their magical nature causes people to see them as their own worst nightmare. Because of this, the action to avoid its fear aura is *challenging* rather than *average*.

- Since chaos attracts daemon warriors, and since most adventures cause at least some chaos, daemon warriors are a good choice for Narrators who want to add an extra encounter to a scenario.

Fire Dragons

You might wonder why I don't talk about these creatures in the dragons section. I had planned to until my son told me that they aren't dragons at all.

"They're magical constructs" he explained. "Chaos reached down and breathed life into boiling magma. Just in case that wasn't terrifying enough, he gave it the form of a dragon."

I have to agree that if anything would make a creature of living lava even more frightening, it would be to see the thing raise a dragon head and fire off a blast of scalding gas from the depths of the earth. I've never seen one of these beasts myself, but I've heard the description often enough from Palin and just about anyone who fought during the Chaos War.

Still, you'd do well to remember that these beasts are *not* dragons. All real Evil dragons have great cunning, cruelty, and wisdom, while fire dragons have only a basic intelligence. Why Chaos would go to the trouble to make a creature so dragonlike in form but without a dragon's most important weapon—its cunning mind—is a complete mystery. With real dragons, my friends and I have proven over and over again that if you can out-think it, you can usually find a way to slay it. I believe that with fire dragons, on the other hand, you need only come up with a passable plan to destroy it.

Oddly enough, even though they have inferior intelligence, fire dragons still go through most of the rituals of mating and social rank that normal dragons use. If you ask me, I think that Chaos really *was* trying to make a new breed of dragon, but he was afraid that if he gave them complete freedom of thought, these children would eventually turn on him, just as the gods did.

A fire dragon consists entirely of lava. The air cools its skin slightly, covering it with crusty obsid-

A fire dragon consists entirely of lava. The air cools its skin slightly, covering it with crusty, obsidian patches that look very much like a dragon's scales.

ian patches that look very much like a dragon's scales. You can still see the molten rock surging and flowing behind the scales, though. I'm told it's very unsettling to see the creatures in twilight or darkness. The beast's eyes glow like red-hot embers, and its skin seems to be in constant motion.

Since they're creations of the god called Chaos, brought to Ansalon only thirty-three years ago, fire dragons don't really have a place in the natural order. Since they could *force* their way into just about any place they like, though, it's pretty lucky for the other beasts of the land that fire dragons

prefer to live in and around active volcanoes. If you have to pass through such areas, keep a sharp eye out for these beasts frolicking in the lava pits.

If you don't live near a volcano, though you're more likely to see a fire dragon serving as a daemon

FIRE DRAGON: *Monster.* Co 12, Ph 70, In 4, Es 4, Dmg +65, Def -40, also dragon-awe*, dragon breath*, dive*, immune to normal weapons.

*These abilities are fully described on page 167.

Like all other chaos creatures, fire dragons live to scour Krynn of all life. Luckily, they lack organization and spend as much or more time fighting among themselves as they do fulfilling their mission in the world. However, whenever a fire dragon notices a living creature, particularly an intelligent one, it attacks until one or the other of them is dead. Nobody can argue with a fire dragon when it wishes to kill.

- They line the inner ledges of their lava pit homes with treasure taken from vanquished foes. However, due to the extreme temperatures, any metal in the horde tends to soften and become at least partially melted, often fusing into one misshapen glob. Heroes could attempt to scavenge these treasures, but can they come up with a way to do so that won't harm them?

warrior's mount. If you ask me, this must be the real reason Chaos brought them to Krynn in the first place. Because as terrifying as they are on their own, I'm given to believe that the sight of one actually being mastered and made to commit mayhem in focused attacks causes a completely new level of fear.

Anyone who remembers the War of the Lance knows the terrifying sight of a dragon and rider sailing across the skies overhead. You knew that they weren't going to attack you [not that day, anyway], or they'd be lower in the sky, but the sight reminded you that they could come back tomorrow, or the next day. Well, during the Chaos War we learned that the sight of a fire dragon bodes far worse things. The beast's chaotic temperament can easily cause it to suddenly decide to make a snack of you and your neighbors, even when it's miles away in the sky.

The fact that fire dragons choose to live at sites of pyroclastic activity hardly surprises me, given their physical consistency. However, several scholars and

theologists postulate that the beasts enjoy the natural chaos and upheaval associated with volcanoes more than the geologic comforts the area might provide.

While initial reports from researchers in Sanction told us that fire dragons playfully swam about in the lava rivers north of the city, more recent reports dispute this interpretation. The beasts certainly spend great periods of time in the lava, but this activity does not appear to do anything to calm their aggressive spirits. If anything, it makes them more violent, and what was previously thought to be "playful" activity turns out in fact to be groups of fire dragons biting and gouging one another.

We don't have proven theories why the beasts engage in this behavior. Perhaps these periodic baths in the molten rock heal their wounds and refresh their vitality. If in fact they do draw strength from such immersion, this newfound energy might cause them to behave in such an aggressive manner.



Frost-Wights and Shadow-Wights

The most monstrous of Chaos's creations are the frost-wights and their cousins the shadow-wights. First of all, they possess the qualities you'd expect in an undead creature: ghostly, ghastly, and in every way a creature not of this world.

As the wights swirl around you, trying desperately to grab, touch, or claw your exposed skin, they sing in voices that sound like the wind blowing across the loneliest stretch of land on Rarym.

Remember, though, these creatures are *not* like other undead. As the spawn of Chaos, they must be as deadly as daemon warriors and fire dragons. Don't make the mistake of treating them like any other menace that has returned from the world beyond; these wights are more than you can handle. Only magical and god-blessed weapons cause them any harm.

Though these wights seem to have no tangible evidence to support their existence, the strange holes left in the lives of many since Chaos walked Ansalon must have some explanation. Every time I bear someone ponder why they have an extra room filled with a child's belongings in a home with no child, for example, I wonder.



Strangely, this also makes them the easiest of the chaos creatures to underestimate. I mean, any adventurers worth the title have faced enough undead creatures to know that their best course of action involves simply wading into battle; since undead things rarely worry about such things as sleep, rest, or physical exhaustion, running away often wastes good energy.

At a distance, a **FROST-WIGHT** looks like swirling cloud of ice and snow, not unlike a little miniature blizzard just large enough to surround a man. The wights usually travel in packs that range in size anywhere from three or four to several dozen,

blowing their way across the wastes of the Icewall Glacier and the Southern Plains of Dust. If you find yourself in these areas and see a small patch of fog or an unusually white sandstorm heading your way, *run!* Chances are, though, if you see the frost-wights, it's already too late, so be prepared for battle.

The very second an attack begins, the temperature in the area drops below freezing. My son insists that the frost-wights have some natural skill in cryomancy, but most folks say the cold comes from the touch of the grave the beasts wrap themselves in. As the frost-wights move closer, they lose their wispy look and take of the appearance of their intended

FROST-WIGHT: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 15, In 5, Es 7, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also cryomancy, delude, incorporeal, nullify, and immune to cold/ice, mentalism, normal weapons and poison.

SHADOW-WIGHT: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 15, In 5, Es 9, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also, delude, despair, incorporeal, nullify, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

At first the chaos wights use their despair ability to convince their victims of the futility of resistance. Frost-wights may also attack using their skill in cryomancy. Should that fail, though, they enter physical combat with their victims.

Any successful physical attack causes the victim to attempt an action to avoid the effects of its nullify ability. If this action fails, the victim simply vanishes from existence, leaving behind only clothes and other items. Any victims of a nullify attack are lost forever; nothing can reverse this attack. The nullification is so complete that no living memory remains of the victim, hence no records exist of specific people being killed by a chaos wight.

Chaos wights dislike sunlight and hate fire. Though the sun's rays cause them no damage, they avoid the light when at all possible. This won't prevent them from attacking if some other force guides them, but they prefer to take their prey at night. Both types of chaos wights take twice the normal damage from attacks using ordinary or magical fire.

- Because of the tremendous impact of the nullify attack, Narrators should use these creatures sparingly in their campaigns. Nothing hurts a hero more than losing his or her life and any memory of his or her existence at the same time! Narrators can certainly introduce them into a campaign by having the creatures attack a caravan that the heroes come across or join.

victim [a handy way to tell just how much trouble you're in].

As the wights swirl around you, trying desperately to grab, touch, or claw your exposed skin, they sing in voices that sound like the wind blowing across the loneliest stretch of land on Krynn. Some soldiers say that the sad tones of the song nearly

caused them to lay down their weapons and give up all hope. Luckily, their spirits were made of stern stuff.

No normal weapon can harm frost-wights, but they are deathly afraid of fire. If you have so much as a candle burning beside you, the wights cannot assume your form and do not approach closer than ten feet. They do, however, swirl around you howling and moaning in such a frenzy that it may drive you mad. Close your eyes and plug your ears, though, and wait patiently; after an hour or so the wights will move on, looking for easier prey. Just pray that your flame lasts that long.

SHADOW-WIGHTS resemble their cold cousins. Their forms look nearly identical, except for the fact that they appear as dark, smoky clouds rather than white. However, since they prefer to attack only at night [or sometimes at dusk], their color makes it easy for them to approach unnoticed.

They begin by speaking to you in indistinct voices, hypnotically telling you how little your life is worth, that life goes on without you, and should you fall in battle, the rest of Krynn will go on, no better or worse for your passing. I'm not sure why they do this or what they gain from their victims' misery, but everyone I know who has faced one of these beasts has come away a shattered man, questioning his own worth and often even contemplating self-slaughter.

Again, normal weapons do you no good against these beasts, but they intensely dislike one thing—fire. If you travel through an area that you suspect is haunted by shadow-wights, be sure to build your campfire as high and bright as possible and keep it that way throughout the night. If the fire blazes brightly enough, you can keep the creatures at bay, though they'll continue to taunt you from a distance. Be stout of heart. With the first rays of dawn, the wights might just withdraw.

Corporeal Undead

Of course, Chaos is not responsible for every type of undead you're likely to meet in your journeys. If you know anything about history, you'll know that in troubled times the dead have a tough time staying in their graves. Just for the sake of organization [in other words, so I don't accidentally forget some important beast], I've decided to split the rest of this chapter into two sections: undead creatures you can touch and those that have the same lack of substance as mist.

Let's look at the solid beasts, what Bertrem calls "corporeal undead." [I swear that scholars must spend their days thinking up new ways to make simple ideas sound complicated].

For the record, scholars spend their days cataloging information and preserving it for the eternal betterment of all Ansalonians. However, at dinner parties and other formal functions, we do enjoy inventing imaginatively intricate idioms.

Death Knights

All the creatures in this chapter are unnatural in one way or another. What I mean is, all other things being normal, a dead person does not suddenly decide to sit up and plague the living. Some creatures live on due to their own efforts, others are brought back at the will of a necromancer, but only the death knight walks the world because the gods wish him to.

All Knights of Solamnia devote their bodies and souls to the Order, swearing to uphold their Measure with their dying breaths. Now, many people swear stronger oaths than that never meaning one word of what they say, but the Solamnics are different. They do their work in the name of Paladine, and they take their commitments deadly seriously. If a Solamnic Knight breaks his or her oath, the Knight's life may be forfeit. How severe would the penalty be, then, if the knight not only broke his or her word but put the entire world in danger by doing so?

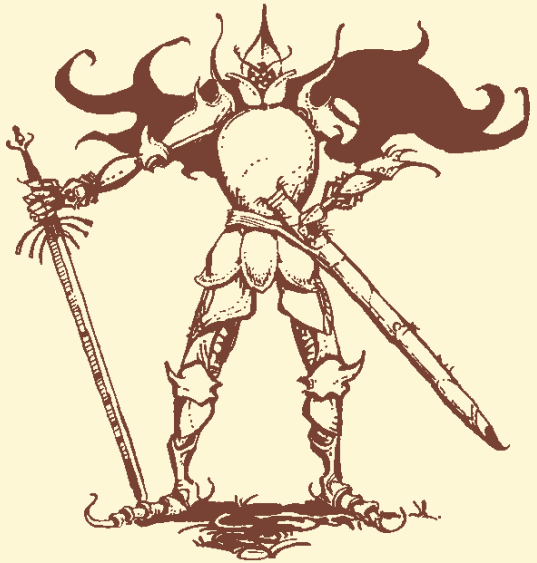
When a Solamnic Knight betrays not only his or her word and fellows, but also his or her god,

Paladine metes out severe punishment—he curses the Knight to eternal life. The Knight's flesh rots and falls away, leaving nothing more than a walking skeleton encased in knightly armor. Its eyes are glowing points of light set deep in its empty eye sockets, and its deep, chilling voice rises echoingly from its hollow rib cage.

The death knight must remain in its castle for all eternity. On the night of the full moon, it sings a wailing dirge retelling the tale of its treachery. I'm told that no sadder, more heart-breaking song exists than that sung by a death knight. Truth be told, though, I don't really care.

Only one death knight exists on all of Krynn—Lord Soth—and no matter how painful this foul being's memories are, no matter how complete its sorrow and regret, I cannot find it in me to feel anything but joy at the death knight's misery. I may not know everything, but I do know that Soth allowed the deaths of thousands and the near destruction of all life in Ansalon to occur. What's more, I know that in her final moments, my sister's worst fear was that she would have to spend eternity with Soth.

I've heard dozens of bards sing songs about Soth. Mostly, they describe their former Solamnic as the monster it is. A few, though, say that it should be pitied and that it suffers greater than any being.



These bards preach that we should look to Soth as an example of the fact that “things could always be worse.” I usually throw these bards out on their ears.

Soth as a subject of pity. Ha! The only pity Soth ever gets is from Soth. Perhaps, *perhaps* I could soften my heart to the death knight’s plight if Soth did something, *anything* to begin to atone for those horrid crimes. But the accursed being doesn’t. Do you know what Soth does? Soth sits in a castle bemoaning the fate it brought upon itself and waiting for some poor innocent to wander in so that Soth can use the poor soul in another attempt to escape fair punishment!

No, I have no room in my heart to pity the eternally damned Lord Soth. As far as I’m concerned, Soth deserves every moment of pain the evil knight has suffered these past four hundred years—— every moment and more.

No one, I’m sure, who knows the author’s tale [and that of his family and friends] will judge him harshly for being less than objective in his report on death knights. However, as the editor, I feel responsible for seeing that all the available facts are laid out in this tome.

The first issue that needs to be dealt with is Lord Soth’s particular affliction. Though bards and scholars have spread his tale throughout the lands of Krynn and the annals of history, he is by no means unique. All of the information the author draws on to describe the qualities of the curse placed upon Soth speak of the terms in a generic sense, indicating that they might be placed on any knight the gods see as particularly offensive. Simply because the author knows of no more such individuals does not guarantee that none exist. Texts tell us of another Solamnic Knight who brought the curse of the gods upon his head—— Renard the Oath-breaker.

Renard was uncle to Huma Dragonbane and a Solamnic Knight of extremely high regard. However, the only god he ever worshiped was Morgion, dark lord of disease and decay. Morgion saved Renard from the Scarlet Plague, and in return the man murdered whomever Morgion bid. This included, among many others, a Solamnic Grand Master. In the end, Huma discovered his uncle’s sins and confronted him. Faced with the awful truth of his life, the hypocrisy of his knighthood, Renard chose to take his own life, as he had taken so many others.

DEATH KNIGHT: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 27,

In 9, Es 9, Dmg +8, Def –5, also fear [aura], necromancy, immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Any hero coming within melee range of a death knight must try to resist the creature’s fear aura.

Death knights wear the same armor they did in life and always act according to the principles they espoused in life.

Death knights are extremely rare on Krynn. If indeed, existing as a death knight is the ultimate curse the gods can visit upon their knightly worshipers, one would have to do something completely unredeemable in order to merit such punishment. At the very least, no more death knights can come into existence now that the gods have withdrawn.

However, Renard’s actions displeased Morgion, and he chose to punish him eternally. We have the report of a Knight of the Rose named Erik Dornay, who claims to have been visited by Renard hundreds of years later——visited, and redeemed by the cursed soul. “I cannot help but think that Renard sought not only my redemption, but his own salvation,” Erik wrote late in his life. “I can only hope that his actions earned him some measure of reprieve. And, given ample opportunities, he wins his soul’s release.”

This begs an interesting question: Can a death knight, cursed for all time, redeem himself and free his soul from eternal torment? No answer seems readily apparent. While we can study the case of Lord Soth, as the author points out, the death knight does nothing but take his petty revenge on the poor, unlucky mortals who cross his path. Worse yet, he seems to have learned naught from his past transgressions as he again wallows in covetous desire.

Can a death knight be redeemed? Perhaps.

Can Lord Soth be redeemed? Certainly not, at least until he asks for redemption.

Dracoliches

If the dragon is the greatest of all living creatures, then the dracolich must be the king of the undead. The skeleton of a long-dead dragon forms its shape; if you look carefully, you can usually even tell which type of dragon it came from.

The first question I asked when I learned about this creature was, “What in the world could bring a dragon back from the dead?” This was followed very shortly thereafter by, “Why?!” No one has ever answered either question to my liking.

Whatever the reason behind its existence, a dracolich is a terrible foe to face. I mean, imagine how you would feel when hearing the sound of awful clicking bones every time this dragon moved. Also, its unnaturally lit eyes reside in a bleached skull, and its voice resounds as a powerful dragon roar warped by echoes from beyond the grave. Don’t ask me how the dracolich does things like fire its deadly breath [the same type it had in life] or even fly—I don’t know how it does these things. All I know is

that it does them and more.

Somehow, unlife gives the beast a power similar to one it had before its death; the gaze of a dracolich causes all mortal hearts to fill with such dread that they stand stock still, like a bird mesmerized by a snake. This power is similar to dragonawe, but the victim must look at the dracolich for it to work.

The beasts live close to their original lairs, but never in exactly the same place. In fact, they leave behind just about every tie to their living past. They carry only the most precious and magical items from one lair to another. After death,

dragons no longer seem to care as much for building hoards of treasure. Instead of gold and steel, they gather collections of sacred religious items, particularly those made out of or portraying bones and skeletons.

What’s more, a dracolich tries to control every undead creature it sees. A dracolich destroys any undead that resists its command, grinding them into a dust. Why it cares so much about raising

an army is a mystery, because the dracoliches never lead their troops into battle. They simply order their thralls to scour their lands, killing every living thing they find.



You cannot kill a dracolich easily, and the beasts have enough intelligence to know when to fake their own demises in order to free themselves from troublesome mortals.

I've heard tales that several dracoliches fly above Nightlund's mountainous eastern border. Also, I have heard something destroyed one recently, along with the entire army of zombies it had gathered on a deserted island in the rocky waters off the Northern Wastes. Still, if I were the captain of a ship sailing those waters, I'd keep a very wary eye out. You cannot kill a dracolich easily, and the beasts have enough intelligence to know when to fake their own demises in order to free themselves from troublesome mortals.

Should you have no recourse but to fight one of these creatures, you have my pity. They are every bit as tough and dangerous as a living dragon, plus they resist many kinds of magic. Unlike other dragons, they have no use at all for living mortals. They want you dead for no reason other than the fact that you live. If they have any skill at necromancy at all, they will then raise your broken body and add you to their undead army.

Naturally, several theories as to the origin and purpose of the dracolich exist. Some texts hold that a dracolich, like many other powerful types of undead, results when a dragon of uncommon power and presence dies before it feels its work on Krynn is done. [Scholars who support this theory insist, despite any corroborating evidence, that all known specimens come from the Dark Queen's dragonarmies.]

Others believe that only a powerful dragon necromancer can create a dracolich. They say that the Evil Chromatics do this partly to build their armies of followers, but mostly to completely shock and offend the metallic dragons.

Still others insist that the queen and mother of wyrms, Takhisis, reserves the fate of becoming a dracolich for dragons who somehow displease her. The goddess brooks no disobedience or betrayal from any of her children and punishes the worst offenders by refusing them a place in the heavens at her side.

The most disturbing theory comes from a group of powerful mystics who say that someone creates a dracolich with necromantic spells just like those used to make any other undead servant. To prove the point, though, they are attempting to create a dracolich of their own [they managed to retrieve a nearly complete black dragon skeleton from the ruins of Xak Tsaroth]. Apparently, these scholars feel that they must prove their theory, but they have given no thought to the destruction

DRACOLICH: *Undead.* Co *, Ph *, In *, Es *, Dmg *, Def *, also dragonawe, paralyze [gaze], immune to electricity, mentalism, necromancy, and poison.

*Determined using the dragon age chart on page 167.

A dracolich possesses all the abilities it had in life. However, heroes find it one degree more difficult than normal to resist its dragonawe attack. Plus, the great beast gains the ability to paralyze foes using its gaze. Any hero within far missile range who looks the dracolich in the eye must succeed at an *average Endurance* [Strength] action or remain motionless until the dracolich moves beyond far missile range.

A dracolich can control and command a number of lesser undead [anything from the "Restless Dead" or "Restless Spirits" categories within this tome] equal to twice its Essence score.

- A Narrator can neatly veil an adventure featuring a dracolich villain by starting it as a simple haunting or attack of the restless dead. For example, the heroes visit a town being victimized by zombies or skeletons. One of the more lucid undead can mumble something about "the master," whom the heroes will likely expect to be a necromancer [to add another layer of mystery, the dracolich could *have* such a pawn, as well]. Imagine their faces when they finally battle their way to the heart of the mystery to find a scheming dracolich!

the dracolich will wreak should they succeed.

The Citadel of Light on Schallsea Island, a conclave that abhors the use of necromancy in any circumstance, has sworn to oppose these mystics in every possible way. However, the misguided scholars working on creating a dracolich recently escaped with their dragon bones, and no one knows quite where they have gone. First Master Goldmoon asks anyone who sees or hears of these renegades and their experiment to contact the Citadel as quickly as possible.

Ghouls and Ghosts

For the longest time, I thought that **GHOULS** were just sick, twisted humans who *liked* eating the flesh of the dead. Goldmoon set me straight on that matter, though.

“Certainly they once lived,” she told me with the saddest look in her eye. “But these creatures are no more living than their victims are. They are pure Evil transplanted into the body of what was once a good and kind person. These unliving beasts exist only to defile the bodies and memories of our ancestors.

“My people tell a story about Chemosh, the god of death. They say that he visited a good man, a worshiper of Paladine, who found himself trapped and starving in the desert. The man had a friend who entered the desert with him, but died from exposure to the elements.

“The man begged Chemosh for help, but the Evil god only laughed. ‘Your friend is dead,’ he said, ‘now you have the food you need.’ The man was shocked and refused to defile his friend in such a way.

One touch from the creature can freeze a man in his tracks, leaving him helpless before the hungry jaws of his enemy.

Chemosh merely laughed. ‘Paladine has taken your friend’s soul away to the afterworld. The empty shell before you is nothing but meat and bones.’

“The man yet refused, and walked on, but he did not go far. He collapsed and lay there, his body wracked with pain. Again, he begged Chemosh for help. ‘I will not help a man who will not help himself,’ the god

sneered. ‘But if you show you have the strength to do what you must to survive, I promise you will walk out of the desert.’

“The man’s stomach rumbled louder than the thunder. He no longer had enough water in him to cry even a single tear. And Chemosh continued to laugh at him. Finally the man could take no more.

“You promise that if I take but a single bite, I will walk out of this desert on my own feet?”

“Chemosh promised. And the man, insane with hunger, ate one bite, then fell dead next to his friend. But he did not stay dead. Rather, Chemosh filled him with Evil energies, warping his body and changing his looks. The man’s skin turned a sickly gray, and his tongue grew long and sticky. His teeth and nails became sharp and he got a wild look in his now-yellow eyes.

“Go! Walk out of the desert!’ Chemosh laughed. ‘You will worship me for the rest of your days, and everything you eat will come from my table.’”



I asked Goldmoon if that story meant that I should feel sorry for the ghouls rather than kill them, and she looked at me in complete and utter shock.

“Of course not! You must kill them. The point was not to make you pity the creatures, but to see that they are weak and honorless beasts. If the man had done what he *knew* was right, he would have followed his friend into Paladine’s care. Instead, he gave in to his fear and pain and released a plague of flesh-eating monsters into the world. The point is that you must do what is right—*because* it is right—no matter how difficult or painful it is.”

Sometimes I forget exactly how much strength of character Goldmoon has, and how much power resides within her spirit. Thinking of this story always reminds me of these facts. Actually, so does killing ghouls.

When you fight a ghoul, remember that the power of an Evil god flows through its veins. One touch from the creature can freeze a man in his tracks, leaving him helpless before the hungry jaws of his enemy. For some reason, though, elves resist this power.

Occasionally, I fear that the bucolic charm of the author’s tales will be lost in translation to the printed page.

In most packs of ghouls, a few are a little tougher and more cunning than all the others. In fact, their bite affects elves the way a normal ghoul’s affects any other race. Some unknown adventurer or bard called these hardy monsters **GHOSTS** long ago, and though you can’t tell them apart from ghouls just by looking, you can always identify them by how they smell.

Now, ghouls don’t smell like a rose garden themselves, but ghosts carry the terrible stink of rotting flesh wherever they go. It can completely overwhelm you if you’re not ready for it. Also, being jumped by a ghost can make you so sick to your stomach that you don’t have the strength left to properly defend yourself.

Ghouls and ghosts are among the more lucid, if criminally insane, of the undead. They have an animal cunning

GHOUL: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +6, Def -2, also paralyze and immune to mentalism and poison.

GHOST: *Undead.* Co 8, Ph 12, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +8, Def -3, also musk, paralyze, immune to mentalism and poison.

Ghouls and ghosts live in large, intermixed packs. They stay as close as they can to cemeteries, crypts, and other burial grounds, where their food is in ready supply. They sometimes dog the trails of conquering armies, raiding the battlefields for choice morsels.

Any successful attack by a ghoul or ghost requires the victim to attempt an action to avoid being paralyzed [elf heroes need only attempt this action when attacked by ghosts]. Once a victim fails, all ghouls and ghosts not involved in combat fall upon her in a feeding frenzy.

The incredible stench of death that clings to ghosts reeks strongly enough to distract many foes. Any hero attempting melee or personal combat with a ghost must evade the ghost’s musk attack to avoid retching at the noisome smell. If she fails, then she cannot perform an action for several minutes [equal to the value of a card drawn from the Fate Deck].

- Aside from coming across them in cemeteries and the like, heroes who have constantly been leaving behind dead foes might attract a following of a small group of ghouls or ghosts. The Narrator should first determine whether this happens by decision or aura reading [black indicates that ghosts follow them, red means ghouls trail them, and white means that the heroes are safe]. If something follows the heroes, the Narrator can determine how many by drawing a card and using the number or simply by deciding how many of the creatures the heroes face.

ning that most other reanimated creatures do not. According to the journals of several warrior priests, one should carry a blessed sword into battle against them and keep them in sight at all times.

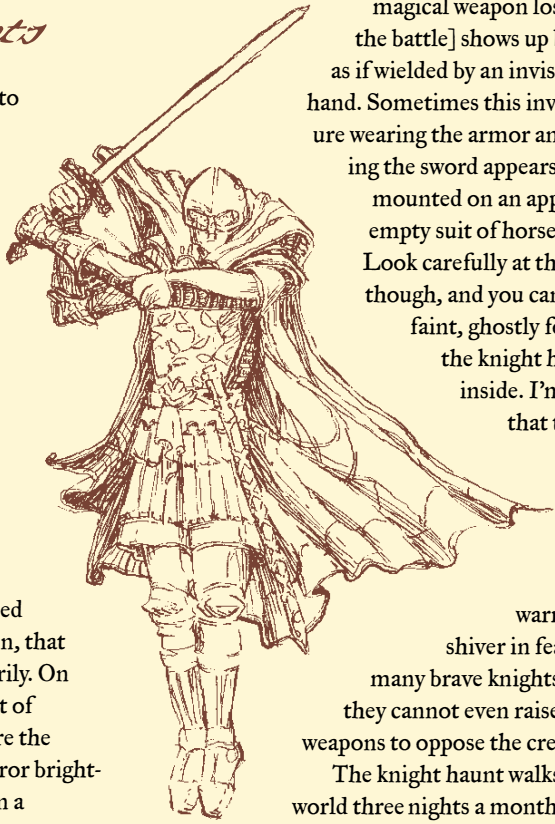
The pack mentality of these creatures, combined with their vestige of mortal intelligence, makes them about as dangerous a foe one could face.

Knight Haunts

Sometimes, the best intentions can lead to disastrous results. My wife sometimes says I'm a living example of that! The knight haunt, however, is an undead example.

I've known a lot of Solamnic Knights in my time, and let me tell you, even the best of them have trouble telling when enough is enough in matters of honor and duty. I mean, I believe in doing the right thing and keeping your word—I've lived my life by those ideals—but there comes a time when the world or the gods force you to make compromises. The Knights, though, don't believe in compromises.

Sometimes a Knight feels so committed to his cause, so much a part of the mission, that death only inconveniences him temporarily. On the nights of the full moon, an empty suit of Solamnic armor appears at the spot where the Knight died. This armor shines with mirror brightness, and a perfectly honed weapon [often a



magical weapon lost during the battle] shows up beside it, as if wielded by an invisible hand. Sometimes this invisible figure wearing the armor and wielding the sword appears mounted on an apparently empty suit of horse barding. Look carefully at the armor, though, and you can see the faint, ghostly form of the knight haunt inside. I'm told that the sight causes

even the bravest warriors to shiver in fear, and many brave knights find they cannot even raise their weapons to oppose the creature. The knight haunt walks the world three nights a month, looking for enemies to battle. Unfortunately,

this state of "undeath" changes a knight

haunt's definition of who it considers an enemy. The creature will challenge and attack any living person it meets, as long as that person has a weapon; the knight haunt still abides by all the Solamnic principles, after all. It never ambushes foes, attacks a defenseless opponent, or fights those who defend their homes. What's more, it avoids combat with women if at all possible.

In times past, the creation and appearance of a knight haunt was tied to the phases of Solinari. Since that moon disappeared when the gods withdrew, however, the creatures function in conjunction with the single moon that now lights our nights.

Although they do not speak of it in public, young Solamnic Knights often seek out and battle knight haunts. Apparently they consider laying the spirit to rest an auspicious act that gains a young knight honor and standing in the Order.

KNIGHT HAUNT: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 24, In 4, Es 8, Dmg +8, Def -4, also fear [aura], sensitivity, immune to cryomancy, mentalism, paralyze, and poison.

A knight haunt uses its skill in sensitivity to gauge a potential foe's character. When faced with a group of foes, it chooses a target based on what card the foe's nature comes from. It first attacks anyone who used a card from the Suit of Dragons for the hero's nature. After that, it picks the hero or character whose nature comes from the numerically highest card. The knight haunt *never* attacks a living Knight of Solamnia nor anyone with a nature drawn from a card with a white aura; it will, however, defend itself against such foes.

- Heroes who visit areas that once saw great loss of Solamnic life might encounter a knight haunt. If a reformed Dark Knight is in the party, the hero might find the knight haunt's attention focused on him or her.

Liches

Now, I know very little about magic. I've always left such things up to my brother and, later, my son and grandson. Not every Majere has the gift for spell-casting. Still, I've spent enough time around magicians to have learned a thing or two [mostly that when spells start flying, diving under a table and waiting for the faerie dust to settle is a good idea].

A lich is a powerful mage who used his magic to cheat death. I'm not sure exactly how he or she did it, though I asked Palin to explain it several times before I sat down to write this section. The mage puts his or her life force, or life energy, or life something into a magical container and then uses insanely powerful spells to preserve the body. Of course, I wouldn't really call it "preserved." The spell shrivels and dries the mage until it looks like a mummy or a wight, but the spell prevents its body from decaying any further. It ends up a frail, horrifying version of its former self with only wispy dry patches of hair and eyes that become nothing more than pinpoints of yellow flame set deep in empty sockets. Don't let its spindly form fool you, though. The spells fill its body with the strength of a dozen men, and a lich

can easily crush bones in its bare hands. The magic also focus its spellcasting abilities, making it an even more powerful wizard. As long as it keeps the vessel with its spirit safe, the lich can live forever. If you destroy the vessel, though, the lich dies.

Once the mage completes his or her transformation, nothing in this world can harm the new lich. You must use magic or enchanted weapons to hurt it. The problem with this is that a lich is, by its very nature, an expert in magic. So

you'd have to be either very lucky, or very, very good to actually cause damage.

I wonder what it is that a lich does with its eternal life. I mean, once you've become a lich, you can't go out drinking with your buddies. No, you must hide yourself away from the rest of the world. At first, I suppose, these monsters dive deeper into their spell-casting, trying to master bigger and

more powerful magics. If you ever have the misfortune to visit a lich's laboratory [they have no use for homes, but they always have magical labs], be careful what you touch. Almost everything there has



The mage puts his or her life force, or life energy, or life something into a magical container and then uses insanely powerful spells to preserve the body.

LICH: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 33–60, In 10, Es 9, Dmg +5, Def –5, also aura [cold and fear] sorcery* and immune to cryomancy, electromancy, mentalism, nonmagical weapons, necromancy, and poison.

*A lich has two schools of sorcery for every 10 full points of Physique. In other words, a lich with a Physique of 33 points knows six schools, while one with a Ph 53 would know ten schools.

Liches have the same personality as they possessed in life: greedy, power hungry, and completely unconcerned with the lives of those around them. They do anything to gather more personal power, particularly in the form of magical knowledge or artifacts.

Whenever a lich touches a hero, the hero suffers 5 damage points from cold and must make a successful *average Endurance* [*Strength*] action or become paralyzed. The paralyzation lasts until someone dispels it with mysticism.

- The heroes may encounter a lich who has been in seclusion for so long that it has no idea of the changes wrought upon Ansalon by the Second Cataclysm. A lich who never managed to learn the new magic might kidnap a spellcaster [or a whole school of them] and force her to teach it the secrets of sorcery.

one or another spell cast on it. Seemingly, one of the advantages to being deathless is that you don't mind wasting time casting powerful magic on insignificant items.

In the end that can't be enough, though, not for all of eternity. For what good is power if you don't have someone to wield it over? So, liches almost always end up raising an army [often literally *raising* it] to try to take over some or other parcel of land. What's the point, really?

I often say that I don't understand the minds of mages, and that learning the secrets of spellcasting changes a person's thoughts forever. Maybe the lich is my proof that I'm right. I mean, even with the tremendous power that comes with this transfor-

mation, how could anyone give up life and loved ones and all that is good in the world? What is it that makes a person think that any amount of power is worth an eternity of lonely, inhuman life? This question, especially in relation to my brother, eludes me still.

I accept all the things he did in his life, and I know that I am too simple a man to understand all his needs and desires. Where in his youth did he get the idea that any amount of worldly power was more important than the love of his family, though?

In the Tower of High Sorcery, when I saw my own brother kill me [don't ask me to explain it, just accept that I saw it], I knew for certain that Raistlin saw something he wanted that this world would never give him. Raist would never stop trying for it, though. He'd have kept on going until he found a way to force the world to hand him what he wanted.

In a way, I guess I'm thankful that he didn't live long enough to find that way. The idea of Raist ending up as a disgusting, shriveled lich is more than I think I could bear.

Many scholars consider liches to be the ultimate embodiment of self-absorption, hedonism, and nihilism. In fact, the surviving art and literature of the Istaran Empire contains frequent references to liches. An age-long debate rages among historians and literary scholars as to whether to interpret these images literally. The literalists point out that powerful magics filled Istar, while symbolists argue that, given the Istaran views of "right" and "wrong," such magical perversions would never be socially acceptable.

Scholars argue that Fistandantilus, one of the greatest magical minds in history, was in fact a lich, which seems both obvious and repugnant. Many tales feature this great sorcerer, and people both revere and revile this figure. It seems only logical, given the length of time which he purportedly lived, that some supernatural force extended his life. However, most historians and folklorists do not want to make the assertion that Fistandantilus was a lich [perhaps for fear that we have not seen the last of the ancient wizard].

Nightmares

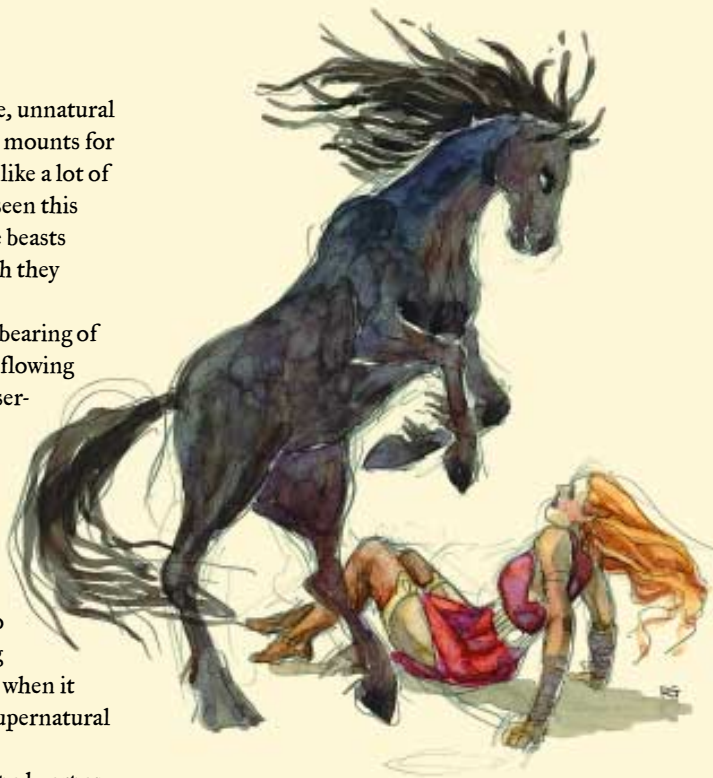
As a lad I heard many tales about strange, unnatural steeds called nightmares. They served as mounts for the most Evil creatures in the world. Unlike a lot of the other stories I heard as a child, I've seen this one proven absolutely true. Where these beasts come from, I have no idea—but I wish they would all go back there.

A nightmare has the strong body and bearing of noble war horse. Its sleek black coat and flowing gray mane and tail might cause an unobservant person to mistake it for one of the pure-bred steeds favored by knights of all orders. When you look closely, though, you'll see the differences. Sharp fangs and an orange glow fill its mouth, making one think that an inferno rages inside its belly. Its eyes also flicker with an odd red color, like searing embers. Finally, if you look at its hooves when it moves, you'll see that they burn with a supernatural flame that cannot be put out.

In combat, the nightmare has as stout a heart as any rider could hope for. They do not shy away from noises or attacks [not even when battling dragons]. A nightmare bites its master's enemies, and tramples anyone or anything that gets too close to its flaming hooves. What's more, as the bloodlust builds in it, a nightmare's breath comes out in great billowing clouds. This gas smells of brimstone and creates such a strong sense of impending doom that even battle-hardened soldiers stand frozen like frightened children.

It takes powerful magics to bring a nightmare to Krynn, and an even more powerful personality to control one. Stories say that the beasts allow Evil knights to ride them, and those knights must rule through the absolute terror that they inspire in their followers. The only creature I've ever seen capable of riding a nightmare was the death knight, Lord Soth.

Reports filtering through the Legion of Steel say that great herds of nightmares have been seen running the plains of Nightlund. In the past, nightmares have always appeared individually, serving only a particular master. If, in fact, large numbers of the beasts now exist



on the continent, several questions must be answered. Who brought the beasts here, and for what purpose? Are there really enough utterly Evil knights at work in Ansalon to saddle an entire herd of nightmares? And, given the only known nightmare rider in recent history, are things as quiet as they seem at Dargaard Keep?

NIGHTMARE: *Undead.* Co 18, Ph 24, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +14, Def -7, also fly, paralyze [breath], and immune to fire, heat, mentalism, and poison.

When a hero enters melee combat with a nightmare [or any rider seated on one], she must attempt an *average Endurance* [*Strength*] action. If this action fails, the noxious fumes from the beast's snorting breath paralyze the hero. This effect lasts until he can breathe clean, untainted air for at least five minutes.

- Should the heroes meet a lich, they might also come across a nightmare, since liches often use nightmares to travel [if they wish to leave their laboratory]. If the lich isn't out and about, it might have the nightmare "stabled" outside its laboratory.

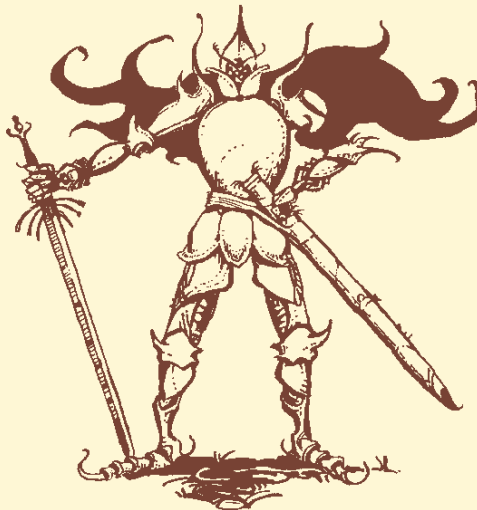
Restless Dead

As an adventurer and a soldier, I've faced death on more occasions than I can possibly remember. Sometimes, the possibility of death seemed so close and so certain that I assumed that I would not live to see the next morn. Death always remained just a thought, though—a weird idea that I carried around in my head, but figured I'd never really have to face until it took me. That fantasy lasted until the first time a skeleton reached out and tried to drag me into the after-world.

I don't know why that experience changed my way of thinking. I mean, by that time I'd already fought and beaten many more powerful creatures than that skeleton. Somehow, though, I feared that pile of bones more than any other thing I'd ever faced. It was, for me, like fighting death itself, and even at that young age I knew that we all eventually lose that particular fight. No matter how strong my sword arm or how keen my eye, death would dog my heels until I made a mistake or grew tired. No matter how many battles I managed to escape, only one mistake would allow death to win the war.

Like death itself, that skeleton just kept coming for me. I sliced it with my sword. It kept coming. I smashed it with my shield. It kept coming. I . . . well, let's just say that *eventually* my muscles overcame its bones. It must have known that it had no real chance to beat me, not without several of its mates,

No matter how many battles I managed to escape, only one mistake would allow death to win the war.



but it never stopped trying.

Sometimes, when my friends and I faced the toughest of situations, when all seemed bleak and hopeless, when even the gods themselves seemed to turn their backs on us, I felt like that skeleton. We just kept fighting even after it was too late. Luckily for all of us, we always found a way to win. Somehow, that scared me.

I mean, we never gave up. *Never!* What if the time came when no way could take us out of our predicament? What if we actually died battling the forces of Evil? Would we be smart enough, aware

enough to know that we no longer needed to fight? Would we have the sense to stay in the ground? Or would we heed the call of our mission, follow the Good and true message so blindly that we became monsters ourselves?

This thought frightened me. I feared that our devotion to the path of Good might be a little too keen. Many educated people say that blind devotion is a dangerous thing. When I think of the possibility of denying myself a well-

deserved rest in the hereafter solely because I felt my “job” on Krynn had not yet ended, I understand what they mean.

That's what scares me about the restless dead: You never know who they are or what Good motives may have kept them from staying behind death's door. They could be your teacher or your priest or your uncle—and if you're not careful, they could be you!

Mummies

Death never looks pretty. If you ask me, the best way to honor a fallen comrade is to put him on a funeral pyre and let the smoke lead his spirit off to the hereafter. Some people, though, think that laying their friends to rest in the earth, making them forever a part of the world that they loved, honor their memories in the best possible way. Fair enough. Some folks preserve their dead as completely as possible, though. They take out some of the body's inner organs, wrap the body in rags soaked with some mix of herbs and oils that keep it from rotting, dress it in fine clothing or battle armor, and lay it out where they can visit it from time to time.

Besides being disgusting, I think this method is dangerous. It gives the dead soul the idea that it has some reason to stay in this world and not go on to the next stage of its journey. More dangerous, though, it leaves a perfect vessel for Evil spirits to inhabit and use for their own terrible purposes. I've never seen one of these preserved bodies and *not* had the feeling it was about to grab for my throat. So far, this hasn't ever happened.

I remember a time when we found one of these tombs, Tasslehoff became even more excited than usual. One by one, he picked up every item he could find and walked just outside the door with it. A second later he peered back in, got a dejected look on his face, then went to pick up the next item.

When we asked what he was doing, he said, "If you take something important out of the tomb, the mummy will get up and make you put it back! I'd really like to see that body get up and walk around. I

wonder if it'd be fast enough to catch me——what do you think?"

Everyone else assured Tas that the body would *not* get up no matter how many things he took from the tomb. All the same, we made sure that he didn't accidentally leave with any of the items.

Besides being disgusting, I think mummification is dangerous. It gives the dead soul the idea that it has some reason to stay in this world and not go on to the next stage of its journey.



Normally, scholars chalk up tales like this as mere superstition. However, given the number of other seemingly impossible things he himself has experienced, if the author lends credence to the tales of the vengeful dead, I would not suggest dismissing them out of hand.

MUMMY: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 2I, In 3, Es 8, Dmg +6, Def -4, also fear [aura], infect, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

A hero must overcome the effects of a mummy's fear aura before he can enter melee combat with the creature.

Any time a mummy inflicts wounds in melee combat, the target must attempt an *average Endurance* action to resist its infect attack. Should this action fail, the wounds can be healed only by magic. Mummy rot is a slow disease, though, and the hero's player loses one card from his hand per *week* that passes [rather than one per day].

- Imagine what would happen if a hero bought an item from a disreputable merchant who was not above expanding his stock through tomb raiding. Mummies move notoriously slowly, and it might be a while before the offended spirit caught up with the group. Will they link the undead attack to a seemingly ordinary purchase made days or even weeks earlier?

Revenants

“The best kind of enemies are dead ones,” or so I’ve heard rogues of all sorts say. I’m not so sure.

A creature called a revenant is nothing more than the reanimated body of a murder victim. The person’s will or outrage at dying remained so strong that even after death he seeks revenge on his killer.

The truly amazing thing about a revenant is that you can’t get rid of it permanently. Oh, the creature’s intended foe can beat, slash, or break the revenant’s body. He can even burn it to a cinder. But the force that seeks revenge is the dead person’s spirit, not his body, and the spirit will simply occupy the nearest available corpse and use it to get around. No, a revenant acts like the will of the gods: You can avoid it for a time, but in the end it *will* catch up with you.

When it does, the creature stares its killer dead in the eye, chilling his blood like a midwinter storm. It then clasps its hands, which are deformed into claw-like shapes, around its victim’s throat and chokes him slowly to death. All the while it stares into his eyes, savoring every moment of its unnatural revenge.



Once the deed is done, the revenant simply collapses, never to move again. The spirit that guided the creature has no reason to remain on Krynn once its murderer receives justice.

Taking a life is always a serious affair. Unlike a lot of other actions a man can make, it can never be taken back. Anyone who kills lightly is just asking for some kind of retribution. A revenant expresses this repayment in the most obvious fashion.

It seems unlikely that anyone can be certain of the motives of a revenant [or any other form of undead creature for that matter]. They remain notoriously untalkative and often attack potential allies as readily as their enemies. However, the fear of supernatural retribution can oft times serve as a passable substitute for moral fiber.

On another note, some works mention that people can destroy a revenant by completely and utterly burning its body. Not one bit must remain whole, however, so the person burning the body must be sure to incinerate all of the bones in a very hot flame.

REVENANT: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 24, In 1, Es 10, Dmg +8, Def 0, also crush, paralyze [gaze], and immune to acid, gas, mentalism, and poison.

When a revenant looks directly into the eyes of its murderer, it initiates a paralyze attack. If the subject fails her action to avoid the attack, she freezes with fear, and the revenant can begin to strangle her. This choke acts as a crush attack, and the victim must break free or the revenant will kill her. After a number of exchanges equal to the value of a card drawn from the Fate Deck, the victim can attempt an *average Presence* [*Spirit*] action to break out of the paralysis. If she succeeds, then the victim can attempt to break out of the crush attack.

- In any campaign that deals with a war, the heroes will certainly do their share of killing. If their foes passionately believe in the country, leader, or ideal they fight for, they might rise as revenants to avenge themselves on their killers. Imagine the look on the players’ faces when, after finishing an arduous battle, their heroes turn around to see one of their fallen foes rising with undead vengeance in its glassy eyes.

Skeletons

Unlike the other creatures we've talked about, I've never heard of a pile of bones that decided to get up out of its grave and walk around for a little while. No, if you see a skeleton you *know* that some sorcerer guides its steps.

In my day, the controller of skeletons almost always wore the black robes of a mage revering Nuitari. Today, my son tells me that only mystics can master the "art" of necromancy, which I find funny in a twisted way. I think it strange that this dark skill, which most folk consider Evil, fits into magic associated with healing. I know that Goldmoon forbids the use of necromancy at the Citadel, but I'm not sure if I would do the same. After all, how can you fight a necromancer if you don't understand his magic?

Anyway, I think of skeletons as the peasants of the undead—you can find them just about everywhere, they have decent skills at only a few things,

I think of skeletons as the peasants of the undead—you can find them just about everywhere, they have decent skills at only a few things, and their masters don't seem horribly concerned when one of them falls.

and their masters don't seem horribly concerned when one of them falls. Also, no matter where a spellcaster goes, he can usually find more.

I guess I told you how I feel about skeletons at the beginning of this section. To this day they send a chill down my spine. It seems pretty silly, really. I mean, I've fought and beaten more skeletons than I can count, and I have no trouble thinking of dozens of creatures with better skills and more cunning than these piles of bones. Still, they terrify me.

What I usually do when I have to battle a skeleton is to fight defensively until I see a huge opening, then swing at the thing with all my might. Skeletons don't fight terribly well, and you can bet that it won't be very long before

one gives you an opening. Also, remember that the only way to damage a skeleton is to smash its bones; the normal jabs, cuts, and slices that wear down a living opponent have no effect on these monsters. So I wait for an opening and try to break it into a million pieces. That usually does a lot to lessen my fears, too.

The author is not alone in feeling undue anxiety in the presence of skeletons. Several tomes postulate that the reason these creatures cause such distress is that they literally reflect "the monster within us." Unlike other creatures, which require spells or potions to warp a person into a monster, the skeleton always remains, simply waiting to be released.

One of the most common nightmares among soldiers who have faced undead concerns having to fight their own skeletons. Oddly enough, the image most often identified as the power controlling the skeleton is the author's own brother, Raistlin Majere. I attribute this to the tales about his dubious magic that have spread throughout Ansalon since the War of the Lance.

SKELETON: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 4, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +3, Def -2, immune to mentalism and poison, and resistant to edged weapons.

Because they have no skin, muscles, or internal organs to harm, skeletons resist attacks from weapons that cut or slice [like swords, daggers, and spears], and suffer only half the weapon's normal damage. Smashing weapons [like hammers, maces, and even shields] cause damage as usual.

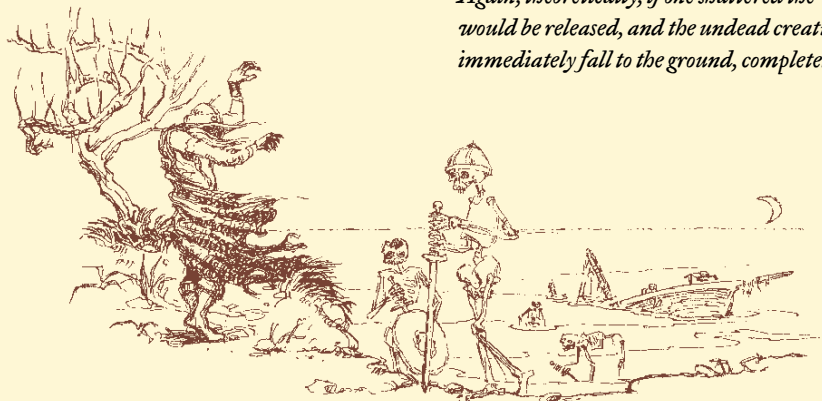
- Narrators can bring skeletons into play by introducing a person with wild mystic talents in the necromancy sphere. Not only would the heroes need to go to the Citadel of Light to see if the mystics there could help control it [see *Citadel of Light* for more on wild talents], but along the way they might have to face down hordes of skeletons that the character inadvertently animates.

Skeleton Warriors

You may not be able to tell by looking at them, but the difference between a normal skeleton and a skeleton warrior is huge. To use a convenient example from earlier in this section, a skeleton is like a peasant—you can give it a sword and send it to war, but you need twenty or more of them to equal one well-trained soldier. [Keep in mind that I'm not insulting peasants. They're just a convenient example for me.] The skeleton warrior is the undead equivalent of that well-trained soldier.

First of all, the necromancer has to start with the skeleton of a highly skilled fighter. Then, he must cast a spell much more complicated and dangerous than the one used on normal skeletons. Should something go wrong, I'm told, the spell could kill the necromancer. When he's done, though, the monster he controls will not only have fighting skill, but a military brain as well.

In the field, you can tell a skeletal warrior from its lesser cousins in that it uses the armor and weapons it did in life. While an ordinary skeleton is content to use a rusted scimitar, the skeleton warrior wields the finest sword available—and wields it well! Weapons aside, though, skeleton warriors have a faint, red pinpoint of light floating in their empty eye sockets, and they move about the battlefield with more certainty than lesser undead. In fact, you'll often see them motioning silently to the skeletons, zombies, and other troops, trying even in death to rally and lead them.



SKELETON WARRIOR: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 29, In 8, Es 8, Dmg +6, Def -4, also immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison, and resistant to edged weapons.

In order to create a skeleton warrior, the necromancer must trap the victim's soul in a circlet. This circlet must be worn about the spellcaster's head to control the monster.

The magic animating a skeleton warrior is so strong that the creature is immune to any non-magical or nonenchanted weapon.

Because they have no skin, muscles, or internal organs to be harmed, skeleton warriors resist attacks from magical weapons that cut or slice [like swords, daggers, and spears], and they suffer only half the weapon's normal damage. Magical smashing weapons [like hammers, maces, and even shields] cause damage as usual.

- If no one is wearing the circlet containing its soul, a skeleton warrior seeks out the person holding the charm. If it kills this person, the soul goes free and the warrior and circlet both crumble to dust. Consider the poor hero who inadvertently buys one of these charms from a merchant or picks one up from among otherwise innocuous treasure.

Texts written for practitioners of High Sorcery indicate that some relationship exists between the spell used to animate skeleton warriors and the one cast by mages attempting to transform themselves into lichens.

If so, then the key to controlling a skeleton warrior might be possession of the vessel that contains its soul. Again, theoretically, if one shattered the vessel, the soul would be released, and the undead creature would immediately fall to the ground, completely lifeless.

Vampires

Of all the undead, I think that vampires are the most terrible. Not because of their toughness [though they're plenty tough, and I hope I never have to fight one again], but because they walk among us and act as though they are alive while feeding off the living as if we were cattle. Vampires lie, seduce, act arrogantly, and thieve for self-serving needs. Of all the creatures that I wish the gods had never formed, the vampire heads my list.

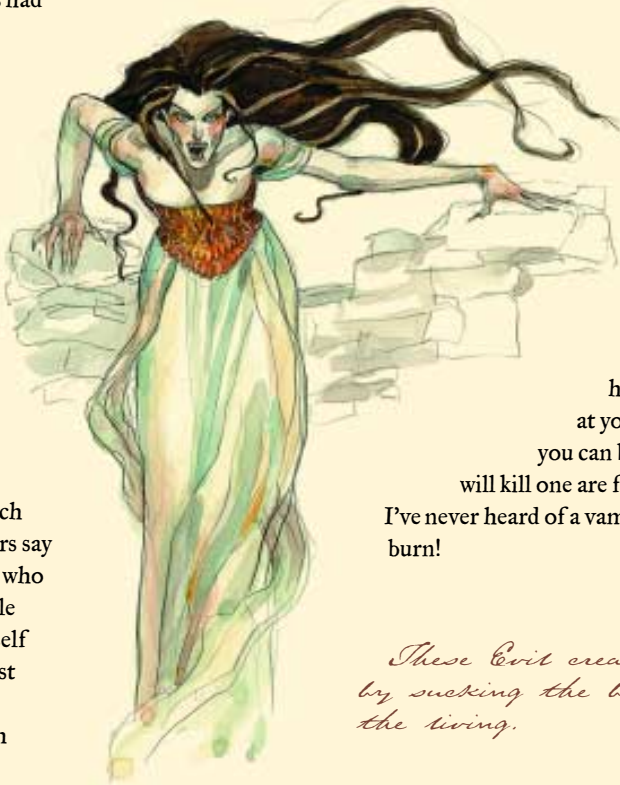
Before I fly into a rage, though, let me calm down and make sure you have all your facts right about these blood-sucking fiends. No one seems to know for sure where vampires came from. Some say Chemosh set them as a blight upon Krynyn [much like the ghouls], but others say that a Black-Robed mage who made a terrible error while trying to transform himself into a lich became the first vampire. Whatever their source, we know the truth about a vampire's powers and vulnerabilities.

These Evil creatures live by sucking the blood from the living. While they can drink from anyone, they draw much more strength from a member of their own race [so elf vampires prefer to drink elf blood]. Victims of a vampire attack feel weak and confused for anywhere up to a week afterward.

A vampire has immunity to most forms of attack. Only blessed or magical weapons can harm them. However, the vampire always has a weakness to one item which, if driven straight through its

heart, immediately kills the fiend. In most cases, this substance is wood, but I've heard of vampires vulnerable to anything from steel to ivory.

The sight of holy symbols, particularly those of Paladine or other gods of Good, cause them great pain, and touching them causes a vampire's skin to burst into flame. Plus, the creature just cannot stand to have certain items in its presence. Most often these include garlic, running water, or one of several wild herbs.



That's the thing about a vampire — you think you've got it figured out, and then you put a wooden stake through its heart and it laughs at you. The only things you can be absolutely sure will kill one are fire and sunlight.

I've never heard of a vampire that wouldn't burn!

These Evil creatures live by sucking the blood from the living.

I remember when my friends and I accidentally wandered into a vampire's lair. The stink of death permeated every inch of the area. These beasts may look like people [and always beautiful people at that], but they act more like animals.

When we first discovered the thing, it had nothing but contempt for all living things — most of all us. It sneered and sent mobats to attack us [vampires have bats and rats as minions]. When we beat them, it sneered some more and insulted us.

VAMPIRE: *Undead.* Co 9, Ph 27, In 8, Es 8, Dmg +5, Def -5, also alteration [self], animism, charm [gaze], drain [cards], entangle, invisible, pounce, regenerate, resistant to cold/ice, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

If the vampire succeeds with a weaponless melee attack, it has bitten and now clings to its victim using its entangle ability. Until the hero breaks the grip, the vampire drains one card from the player's hand per exchange. If the hero dies this way, he rises three nights later as a vampire.

A vampire can use its alteration [self] power to change into mist and two different animal forms. One form flies [often this is a bat] and the other is an animal of prey [often this is a wolf].

Its animism power allows it to control all kinds of bats, wolves, rats, and other creatures that strike fear into mortal hearts. They can also control the lesser undead creatures ["Restless Dead" and "Restless Spirits"].

When the fiend is in human form, it can use its charm [gaze] ability to try to master anyone within near missile range who looks it directly in the eyes.

Every vampire suffers 5 damage points whenever it touches a holy symbol. In addition, it has three other items which it must avoid at all costs; they don't inflict any damage, but they do prevent the creature from defending itself or counterattacking. Also, another specific material acts as its bane. If someone drives that material through its heart, the creature immediately dies.

- Perhaps, while the heroes visit a city such as Sanction or Palanthas, they stumble across a strange, weakening sickness that seems to plague a certain inn. Upon investigation, they discover that a vampire has been feasting on the blood of travelers. The vampire can be a nearby neighbor, or even a new barmaid or barkeeper.

Then it called a dozen wraiths to drain our lives away, and it even made one or two tries to bite Raist's neck. I guess, bravado aside, it saw my brother as a possible threat. We had been through too much together to fall before that lot, though.

After we dispatched the wraiths, the vampire sang a different tune. It scrambled up the wall, hissing and spitting at us. It tried to escape by turning into a mist, but my brother stopped that. In the end, we trapped it, and Tanis and I held it down so Sturm could drive a stake through its heart.

Oh, the squealing it made! The high and mighty monster turned into a whining, frightened child. It begged. It pleaded. It cursed us. In the end, it shut up only when it died.

I guess that's the thing I hate most about vampires: They act like powerful warriors, but when they meet someone who can actually fight them, they run crying. They're nothing more than undead bullies, and I *absolutely* cannot abide bullies.

The author is quite eloquent [and adamant] about his feeling regarding vampires. While no one would argue with his assessment that these creatures possess vast, destructive Evil, I find it interesting to note that people attach an odd romance to vampires.

Most bards have a number of heart-wrenching ballads that tell of doomed love between a virtuous maiden [often a priest's daughter] and a remorseful vampire. They also, I'm told, have one or two ribald tales about strapping young men and lascivious female vampires.

What is the source of this romantic view of a deadly monster? I believe the author correctly theorizes that the creature's apparent humanity coupled with its supernatural beauty combine to blind many superficial folk to its true nature. After all, mortals fear death above all else. The possibility of everlasting life, particularly in such a pleasing form, certainly seems like a positive thing, at least until the loss of one's soul enters into the equation.

Wichtlins

By this point, you've probably figured out that undead are on the whole pretty weird. Well, let me tell you, if you want *really* weird, you have to look at the type of creatures elves can turn into when they rise from the grave.

A wichtlin is the undead spirit of an Evil elf. It looks like a pair of floating eyeballs and a pair of float-



ing skeletal hands, both of which glow a sickly green. While they appear ghostly and unreal, their substantial forms give you no trouble in touching or, more likely, hitting them. Still, unless you have a blessed or enchanted weapon, you can't damage the wichtlin.

You'll never see more than one wichtlin at a time. They walk the world alone, not caring at all where they go. When I was in Silvanost, I met a sea elf who said a wichtlin passed through his village, walking off into the deepest regions of the sea; it was strange enough seeing a sea elf on land, but this story was truly strange. Wichtlins have only one purpose in the world: to kill any living thing they come across. According to legend, they serve Chemosh and kill so that he may have the opportunity to trap the souls as they escape into the Gray.

Avoid wichtlins if you can, for they have deadly attacks. Their touch paralyzes elves, leaving them helpless as they take control of their victims' minds. A member of any other race that receives a wichtlin touch finds her blood poisoned. Unless she receives a powerful healing spell, her body withers and she

dies a painful death in a few days.

When a wichtlin claims a victim, the creature becomes fully visible. It forms a blackened skeleton with bits of gore hanging off in odd places. Don't let this fool you into attacking the body, though. The eyes and hands still remain the only solid parts.

According to Silvanesti legend, a curse on the ancient court of Queen Sylviana [usually referred to as "the Ghoul Queen"] created the wichtlin. Any elf killed by one, the legend says, will rise seven days later as a wichtlin himself. The Silvanesti destroyed all records of her reign, and only the stories pertaining to wichtlins remain.

Since I can find no evidence to the contrary, it appears that wichtlins can create more of their kind, and Evil elves can become wichtlin when they die.

WICHTLIN: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 16, In 2, Es 6, Dmg +6, Def -4, also mysticism*, paralyze, poison, sorcery*, immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

*If the wichtlin was a spellcaster in life, it retains the use of one school and/or one sphere.

A wichtlin can use only one of its special abilities in any single counterattack [although its immunity is always in place]. Depending on which hand it uses, it gets a different result.

The right hand causes a poison attack when it successfully hits. Victims who fail the *average Endurance* [*Strength*] action to resist lose one card per day [instead of one per minute] until they die.

When the left hand hits, it initiates a paralyze attack. If an elf hero falls prey to a successful paralyze attack, the wichtlin can implant a simple suggestion in the elf's mind. If the elf fails an *average Reason* [*Presence*] action, he must follow the suggestion.

- A Narrator can have the heroes meet up with a beleaguered band of Qualinesti fugitives who tell tales of a strange undead being killing some of their number. Once the heroes begin to help, they can realize that they face a wichtlin.

Wights

Have you ever walked past a graveyard in the dead of night, looked up and noticed a hooded figure walking among the headstones? You probably wondered what that person was doing and what could possibly bring someone to visit such an awful place at that wretched hour. You probably also figured it didn't concern you and moved on to wherever you were heading—a very smart decision.



Chances are pretty good that you saw a wight, and you really don't want to mess with wights unless you have no other choice. They can be harmed only by magical weapons or those forged from pure silver.

A wight is probably one of the few undead creatures that can pass for a living one. Their skin has a sickly gray hue, and they hate bright light of all types but with a hood and cloak pulled tight around their head and shoulders, they can walk beside you and you would never know the difference.

Like ghouls, wights live in catacombs, tombs, and barrow mounds, but unlike those eaters of the dead, they feed off the living. They don't eat people, though. Instead they feed off your soul, draining away your will and heart. I don't know exactly *how* they do this, but let me tell you, once a wight attacks a man, the victim is never the same again. The attack may not leave bruises or scars, but you can see

a permanent change in the victim's eyes and posture. He's just not the man he once was.

Wights usually travel in groups of three or more, walking along deserted roads or through the poorest, most overpopulated parts of a city looking for prey. They always use some kind of cloth to hide their faces, which, though mortal in shape, have burning eyes and mouths filled with pointed teeth.

If a wight feeds too deeply, it can kill a man. Should that happen, the man rises as a wight himself.

The Great Library contains an interesting journal, unearthed in Nordmaar a few years ago. The author of the tome claims to be a wight and spells out in fascinating detail the particulars of his existence.

If the text is authentic [scholars remain undecided on that matter], then a wight remains slavishly bound to the wight who created him. These creatures spend the better part of their existences simply hoping for their sires to be slain. At that point, the wight can follow its own course, which generally includes creating a group of slaves of its own.

WIGHT: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 12, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -2, also drain [Presence], and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Every time a wight scores a successful melee attack, the victim must succeed at an *average Presence* [Presence] action or the wight will permanently drain 1 point of the victim's Presence score.

Wights can be harmed only by enchanted or silver weapons. However, they are quite vulnerable to necromancy, taking twice the normal damage from these spells. Although they stay out of the sun and avoid all bright lights, the light does not cause them any actual damage.

- While traveling through or near Sable's realm, the heroes could come upon a band of wights in a small, deserted town. These wights could be all that remains of the town's populace, and they use the empty buildings much like they could use catacombs or graveyards.

Zombies

I guess it wouldn't exactly be right to say that zombies are skeletons with the skin still on, but that's how I've always thought about them. Like skeletons, zombies walk the earth again because of a necromancer's spell. They have no will of their own, but if put in a situation where they don't have specific orders, they act a little more clever than a skeleton [I think this is because they have some brains left in their rotting heads]. On the other hand, though, skeletons definitely move more quickly than zombies, who plod along like . . . well . . . like dead things.

Necromancers hardly ever use zombies in undead armies. They move too slowly to use weapons of any sort. Instead, they just reach out and grab at their prey, clawing and tearing, and relying on sheer weight of numbers to bring the victim down. However, this makes them perfect for terrorizing farmers and nonmilitary folk. Undead are frightening enough, but when the reanimated thing trying to kill you has the face of your Uncle Jeof or your neighbor Lorren who died last year—well, let's just say that most people get too upset to even defend themselves.

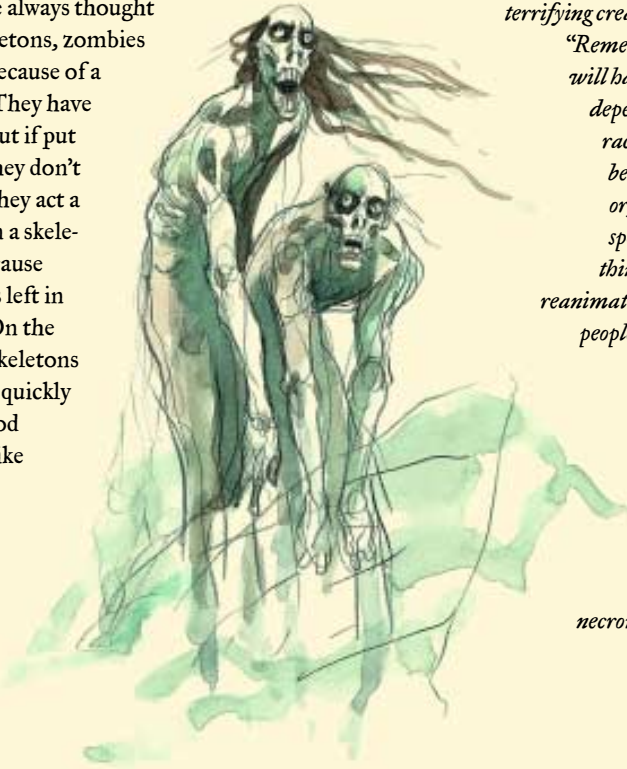
On the plus side, though, if you can keep your wits about you, just about any weapon works against a zombie. They don't defend themselves very well and are very easy to outmaneuver. Also, I haven't seen the zombie yet that can overcome even the simplest strategies.

Be careful when using a sword, though. Sometimes when you cut off a zombie's arm or head it just keeps coming after you.

Necromantic tomes imply that while the creation of zombies is the most basic ability a necromancer must master, spellcasters should not take it for granted. They implore the reader to use the spell in an innovative fashion to make unusual and even more terrifying creatures.

“Remember that a zombie will have different abilities depending on the corpse's race. A slain naga may be useful for vivisection or for distillation into spell components, but think how much more its reanimated corpse could terrify people.”

Thankfully, the information in these volumes aids practitioners of High Sorcery, so the details have little or no practical use for today's necromancers.



ZOMBIE: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 8, In 1, Es 1, Dmg +3, Def -1, also immunity to mentalism and poison.

- If, while approaching a small town, the heroes find themselves attacked by a pack of zombies, they can certainly defend themselves. What will they do, though, when the villagers come running out and stand between them and the zombies? When the villagers explain that the village elder, who recently died, creates these zombies, how do the heroes react? The elder always protected the village using his necromantic powers. Before he died, he made the zombies to guard the town, but he ordered them not to attack anyone wearing a specific charm [worn by everyone in the village]. The villagers give the heroes each a charm and beg them not to destroy their only protectors.

Undead Beasts

Undead beasts come in all shapes and sizes in Ansalon. Since Bertrem told me that I couldn't possibly have enough room for all of the variations of undead beasts, I chose to discuss three of them: stahnks, gholors, and anhkolox.

In the most remote places in Ansalon, far away from any town or even from nomadic settlements, lives a beast called a **STAHNK**. This name fits well, if you ask me, because the thing stinks worse than a gully dwarf warren. Anyway, no one really knows where the cursed things come from—no *living* creature wanders around Ansalon looking like that. It's about the size of a small dragon with splotchy, gray skin that hangs off its bones in tatters. Bony spikes cover it, and its ribs form a thorny cage that often holds pieces of its recent victims.

Wherever they come from, stahnks "live" only to destroy every living thing in their territory [which usually covers an acre or two]. If you see one, the best thing you can do is run as fast as you can and hope that you pass outside its hunting ground before it catches up with you. Unlike many other physical undead, the stahnk moves amazingly quickly.

In battle, the stahnk charges its prey and tries to trample it to death. If this doesn't work, it swings its mighty paws and sends the victim flying through

the air, usually into a copse of trees or against an outcropping of rocks. It keeps this up even after its prey dies [perhaps the beast doesn't understand the idea of life and death] and won't stop until it crushes the prey into dust.

As the beast has no interest whatever in inanimate objects, a stahnk's territory often contains the partially crushed [but otherwise unharmed] belongings of its victims.



Undead beasts come in all shapes and sizes in Ansalon.

GHOLORS are just like stahnks except that they have no ribs or hind legs. Maybe they're stahnks that died in a terrible battle.

Whatever the reason, gholors cannot charge, chase, or crush their victims. In fact, they can't leave their lairs, deep funnels dug into the ground [and sometimes even underwater]. They wait

ANHKOLOX: *Undead.* All abilities and special abilities as per type of undead beast, also aura [heat], breath attack [cold], and immune to mentalism and poison.

GHOLOR: *Undead.* Co 1, Ph 48, In 1, Es 7, Dmg +2I, Def -2, also acid [bite], aura [charm], and immune to fire, mentalism, poison, and sharp weapons.

STAHNK: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 48, In 1, Es 7, Dmg +2I, Def -2, also charge, crush, trample, and immune to fire, mentalism, poison, and sharp weapons.

Anhkolox have all the normal attributes of a normal stahnk or gholor, but they also have a heat aura. Any combustible objects touching the beast automatically burst into flame. Victims of a successful bite attack from an anhkolox must succeed at an *average Endurance* [Strength] action or suffer twice the normal damage.

Any hero passing within five miles of a gholor funnel must attempt to resist its charm aura. Should the action fail, the hero feels compelled to visit and investigate the funnel. This compulsion lasts for one hour. If by that time the hero has not found the funnel, he may attempt to shake off the charm effect [*average* difficulty].

Any victim of a successful melee attack from a stahnk must attempt to avoid its crush attack. Should this action fail, the stahnk flings the victim to near missile range, and the victim suffers twice the normal damage for the attack. The beast can then charge again.

patiently for prey to come to them and, oddly enough, they never seem to lack for victims. I've heard of otherwise sane men who suddenly feel a call to search for a hidden burrow. They somehow know that the burrow contains treasure beyond their wildest dreams. While this belief often holds truth, the hole also contains a gholor!

Since they can't charge, trample, or swat their victims, gholors prefer to chew on them, with the help of a powerful acid that covers their teeth. This acid not only eats through just about any armor, but its burn causes searing pain that drives a man insane — at least for the few moments he has left before the gholor chews him to death.

Wherever they come from, stahnks "live" only to destroy every living thing in their territory (which usually covers an acre or two).

An **ANHKOLOX** is a strange type of undead beast. It can be any type of undead beast [including stahnks, gholors, deer, cats, and so on]. However, its bones glow an unnatural green, and it gives off blistering heat. Just brushing against it can set your clothes or hair aflame.

The beast has another weapon, though. It can shoot a spray of green flame from its mouth at a target up to thirty feet away. Strangely, the flame possesses the cold of the pits of the Abyss. I've heard that anhkolox like to use this icy flame to freeze their victims solid, making their corpses brittle and easily crushed.

Scholars believe that all three of these creatures originate from somewhere beyond Krynn. Theologists agree, and several have postulated that, wherever they live, it may be that at death the beasts come to this world [in the same fashion that our souls proceed to the Gray after we expire].

While no evidence supports this theory, neither do any of the known facts contradict it.



Incorporeal Undead

Of course, you can't fight all undead with strong arms and sharp swords. In fact, most folks'll probably run into an "incorporeal undead" creature before they meet one of rotting flesh and bone.

I asked the author if one really is more likely to run into a bodiless creature? In reply, he asked me how many haunted houses or ruins I knew of. I answered that I knew of many, and that some comrades of mine claim that a spirit, which occasionally moves a tome from one stack to another, haunts one wing of the Great Library itself. The author smiled knowingly. "How many libraries do you know of that have zombies rearranging books?"

Life Feeders

Several formless undead survive by draining the body of its natural energy, the way a vampire drains it of blood. Be very careful of these, for unlike the vampire, who works to protect its illusion of mortality, these undead have no reason to allow a victim to live.

Shadows

A shadow looks and moves exactly the way a normal shadow might, slinking along walls and floors. It drains living creatures of their life energy and forces them to join it in dark undeath.

It's almost impossible to see a shadow; they blend so completely with their surroundings that only bright light makes them stand out [oddly enough, they often seem to be the shadows of armored knights]. That does not help much, because they usually lie in dark caves or dungeons in groups of six or more, waiting for a living thing to pass by. When one does, the shadows fall upon it, grabbing and clutching.

These attacks don't cause terrible wounds, but each one chills your body and steals a little piece of

your soul. Once a shadow sees a victim, it follows him until he or it is dead. You might outrun the thing, but even if you do, it can catch up to you eventually. For this reason, I think it's best to fight them right away.



In spite of the fact that shadows consist of nothing more than cold darkness, most weapons can hurt them. So start swinging your sword and hope that your arm is stronger than its chilling touch.

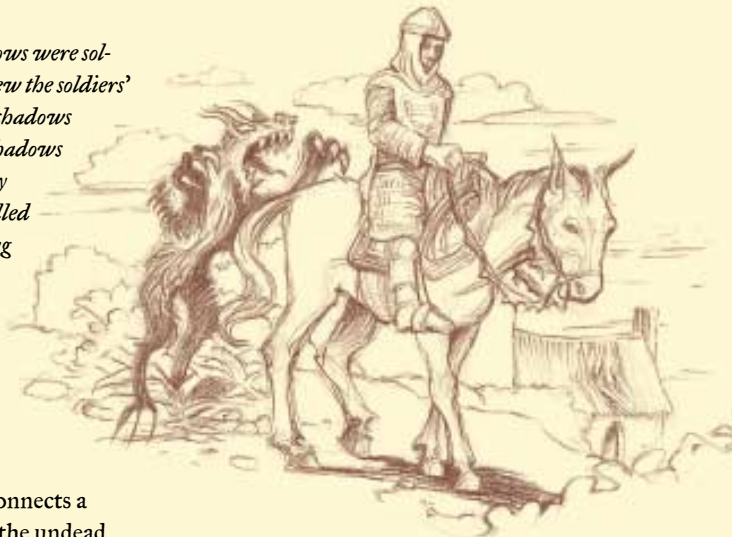
SHADOW: *Undead.* Co 6, Ph 10, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +3, Def -3, also drain [Strength], and immune to cold, mentalism, and poison.

Every successful attack by a shadow carries with it an automatic drain attack. If a shadow drains a victim of all his Strength points, the poor soul turns into a shadow.

- The heroes may meet a crazed hermit who warns them away, saying that anyone who visits him dies within hours. The truth is that a shadow has attached itself to him, pretending to be his real shadow and killing every living thing it meets. Why? Perhaps the shadow is the hermit's brother and can't bring itself to kill its kin.

Istaran legends say that the first shadows were soldiers who opposed the Kingspriest. He threw the soldiers' bodies into a nether-realm and left their shadows tied to Krynn. According to this legend, shadows do not intentionally attack the living, they merely reach out to them, hoping to be pulled back into the world. Sadly, they only bring others into banishment with them.

Shadow Mastiffs



Don't let the names fool you. Little connects a shadow and a shadow mastiff. Unlike the undead knights, shadow mastiffs are real, physical creatures—at least part of the time. The rest of the time they blend so completely with the darkness that you can't hurt them at all.

In many ways, though, these creatures act just like normal dogs. They live and hunt in packs, and are very territorial. You can stand within ten yards of a shadow mastiff, but if you don't cross into its territory, it simply stares and growls at you.

If you wander too far into their realms, you might not escape. Shadow mastiffs never come out during daylight, or even dusk. They wait until the night firmly settles on the land.

When they first awaken, if any strangers set up camp in shadow mastiff land, the entire pack begins to howl and circle the intruders. This is a terrible sound, and one elf I know swears that he got his snow-white hair from the fear he felt while being circled by a pack of these beasts.

I don't know if they're solid while they circle and howl, but it doesn't really matter. You usually can't see them clearly enough to aim a bow. When they begin to attack, though, their forms solidify.

Each dog comes flying out of the darkness, teeth bared and hackles raised. Its powerful jaws can bite through most forms of armor. A strange thing happens once it bites, though. Instead of clamping on and shaking, the way a normal dog will, the shadow mastiff becomes incorporeal and moves within the shadows so that it can leap at its victim again.

When fighting these beasts, stand in pairs, back to back. This won't prevent them from attacking,

but it will keep them from shifting through the shadows to attack from where you can't see.

Unlike the case of the shadow, scholars have a very clear idea of how shadow mastiffs came to be. In fact, no fewer than eight sources confirm that powerful spellcasters summon them from the Abyss.

Apparently, the creatures become much less aggressive [and lose their supernatural abilities] if exposed to direct sunlight. It is unclear whether magically created light can serve the same function.

SHADOW MASTIFF: *Undead.* Co 9, Ph 12, In 2, Es 9, Dmg +4, Def -2, also camouflage, and fear [howl].

When a pack of shadow mastiffs begins to howl, all heroes who can hear the sound must fend off a fear attack.

After a successful counterattack, a shadow mastiff briefly becomes one with the darkness and moves to another location near its target. In order to attack the beast in the next exchange, a hero must succeed at an *average Perception [Reason]* action. If this action fails, the hero cannot find the shadow mastiff in the dark and so may not attack. This power does not work if daylight or a strong spectramantic spell lights the battlefield.

- In a land as transformed as those held by the dragon overlords, landmarks and buildings often get lost, destroyed, or simply hidden. While traveling through Gellidus's realm, the heroes might come across a shattered tower whose guardian, a shadow mastiff, continues to watch over the area.

Spectres



Before we started this section, I sat down and talked with my son and several of his best students from the Academy. I told them that I was a little confused as to what exactly the difference was between some of the undead creatures. I mean, I never really understood how a spectre differs from a ghost or a haunt [or several other distinct creatures]. I hope I didn't misunderstand them.

Spectres are spirits who have been brought back to Krynn and bound here by a powerful spell. Often a spellcaster did this either to torture his enemies even after death or just to create supernatural guardians for an area [with the lucky side effect of causing another soul misery at the same time].

You can find spectres only in hidden, lifeless areas, usually guarding some treasure they care nothing about. They hate light almost as much as they hate the living. Every spectre's greatest desire is to return to the peace of the grave.

A spectre looks just like it did in life, clothing and all, and friends and relations [or even those who have seen a well-done portrait] can instantly recognize it. It sometimes even remembers and speaks to old friends or family. The only visible difference is that as a spirit, it has no feet—it simply floats in the air, its legs fading out around the calves.

When they see living creatures, spectres immediately attack. They try to pass their ghostly hands through their foe's body. This does no physical damage, but the shock of touching a creature from beyond the grave so overwhelms the victim that he

or she immediately weakens. What's more, the spectre then drains off some of the victim's life. I've seen strapping soldiers reduced to panting invalids by just one spectre's touch.

Normal weapons have no effect on spectres. You must hit them with enchanted or blessed weapons in order to do them any harm. If you don't happen to be carrying around magical weapons, remember that sunlight steals a spectre's power. Use mirrors or break through a wall to light a spectre's dark lair

While necromancy created spectres in the past, according to current terminology, such a spell would have to come from the mystic sphere of spiritualism rather than necromancy.

Also, according to several well-known journals, while sunlight makes a spectre completely powerless, magical light has no such effect. So far, no one has found a suitable explanation for this phenomenon.

SPECTRE: *Undead.* Co 15, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg +4, Def -4, also drain [Endurance], incorporeal, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Every successful attack by a spectre carries with it an automatic drain attack. If a spectre drains a victim of all his Endurance points, the victim dies and becomes a spectre controlled by the spirit that killed him.

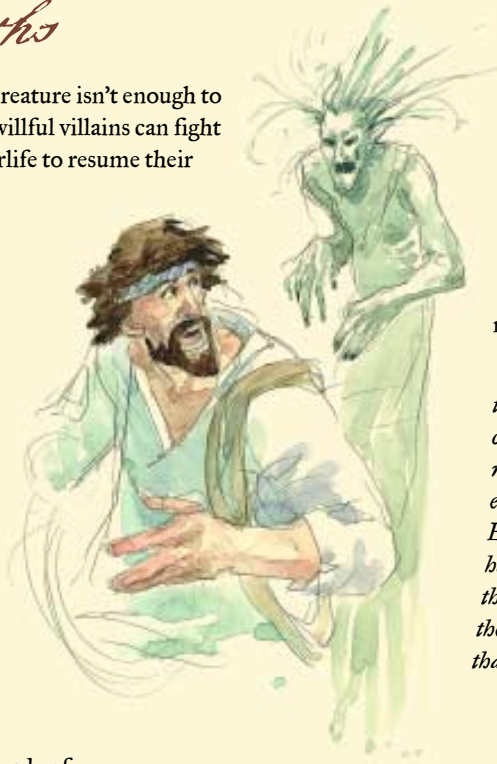
When exposed to direct sunlight, a spectre can do nothing but writhe in pain. This does not destroy the creature, but it does prevent it from performing any other actions.

- Heroes might encounter a spectre while trying to foil a Dark Knight plan. A Skull Knight might have set a spectre sentry to guard a cache of supplies in the Qualinesti Forest. Of course, the heroes don't discover until it's too late that the cache they're trying to take for the Qualinesti rebels has such an unearthly guardian.

Wraiths

Sometimes, killing an Evil creature isn't enough to end its reign of terror. Very willful villains can fight their way back from the afterlife to resume their Evil ways as wraiths.

A wraith is a black cloud made of pure Evil. No matter what its goals during life, a wraith exists only to create terror and pain.



It usually remains in its grave during the day and rises only after darkness has fallen. If you can find it while the sun still shines, you may be able to banish it to eternal rest without a fight. Once you force the Evil spirit back into the Gray, it can never come out again.

It seems utterly likely that the wraith is the source of the colloquial notion that Evil men have "black souls." However, given the number of other Evil undead creatures who have white auras surrounding them, this notion must fall into the category of folklore rather than fact.

A wraith is a black cloud made of pure Evil. It has a vaguely manlike shape, but almost always has two arms and a skull-like face with glowing red eyes. In spite of this, a wraith cannot talk at all. No way short of magic can allow you to know *which* Evil soul has returned to continue wreaking havoc on the peoples' lives.

No matter what its goals during life, a wraith exists only to create terror and pain. It usually haunts an area surrounding the place where its body is buried [the stronger the Evil it did in life, the wider the area it haunts], and often commands a pack of other wraiths [usually the spirits of people who served it before death]. Given the fact that wraiths cannot speak, I have no idea how they give orders to one another, but they certainly do.

Unlike other undead things, wraiths seem to create not only workable, but truly inventive and dangerous battle strategies. If a group of wraiths seems to be acting in a straightforward and predictable pattern, look behind you; some of their brothers might be trying to take you unawares.

Only blessed or enchanted weapons can harm a wraith, but sunlight makes it completely powerless.

WRAITH: *Undead.* Co 12, Ph 8, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +6, Def -3, also drain [Spirit], incorporeal, resistant to silver weapons, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Every successful attack by a wraith carries with it an automatic drain attack. If a wraith drains a victim of all his Strength points, the poor soul turns into a wraith under the control of the monster that slew him.

Normal weapons do no harm to a wraith, but silver weapons inflict half their usual damage [round down].

- A Narrator can set an adventure in a place where the heroes once overthrew and slew a villainous ruler. When they return, instead of being treated as heroes, they are nearly stoned by the frightened populace. The former despot now terrorizes the town even more completely as a wraith. The wraith has killed fully half the town, and now it has an army of wraiths at its command. Can the heroes defeat their old foe again?

Restless Spirits

Now, I'm no scholar by anyone's measure, but sometimes even an old soldier like me starts to wonder about life's big questions. What happens when I die, for instance? For a soldier, that question's pretty key. I mean, back when you live your life by the sword, death is a daily possibility. Now, of course, I'm getting on in years and, though I do nothing more dangerous than give my honest opinion to my wife, death again becomes a daily possibility. So after years of wondering, I just sit here and wonder some more.

When I was little, my father told me that when I died, a beautiful maiden would lead my soul to the next world. Once there, I could eat all the molasses drops I wanted to, and no one would ever yell at me for accidentally breaking something. I believed him.

When I was older, I believed just as strongly that as the blackness of death closed around me, I would see a glowing light in the distance. This light would be a campfire, built and stoked by the spirits of all the people in the afterlife who cared for me, like Flint, Sturm, my boys, and others, who wanted me to join them around their campfire for all eternity. If enough of them were present, the light would be bright and I could find my way to their sides. If the number fell too short, though, the light would flicker so faintly that I'd never see it, and I'd be stuck where I was, a ghost in the world of the living.

Worse yet, I could be so distracted by the happenings in the living world that, when I die, I forget to

look for my friends' campfire until too late. After stoking the fire for so long, they could give up hope and leave, causing the light to grow too dim for me to follow. I would then be forced to spend all of time haunting the place that I died, searching for the faintest glimmer of the campfire, anything to lead me into the Gray.

Now I know that when my time comes, as much as I've loved this life, I'll be ready to go on. My

fears, though, center on being forced to remain attached to Krynn. In my time, I've faced some of the most powerful spell-casters who ever lived, not to mention the fact that I was, in my own small way, part of thwarting the plans of several Evil gods.

Throughout my life, I've defended myself

against anyone who might want to take revenge against me or my family. Once I die, though, my spirit will be at the mercy of any necromancer or spiritualist who feels I wronged him or his family.

It's a funny thought, being afraid that I'll be vulnerable *after* I die. I suppose that's what I get for living such a wild life.

Though many of the tomes, journals, and scrolls in the Great Library speak at great length about the nature of life and death, an almost equal number of sources purport to have definitive explanations of where a soul goes after death. In the end, though, for all the great minds who have written down great thoughts, we have absolutely no certain knowledge on the subject. Indeed, most of the theologists argue that the gods desire this state of ignorance.

Once I die, though, my spirit will be at the mercy of any necromancer or spiritualist who feels I wronged him or his family.



Artifact Spirits

There was a swordsmith I knew during my youth. His name, oddly enough, was Smithy.

One day, I saw Smithy staring intently at several blocks of steel, eyeing them the way a jeweler might gaze at a handful of diamonds. Smithy saw my confused look and said “This sword I’m about to make, it’s going to be my last one. I’m too old to make any more. So I want to be sure that this is my finest sword, and for that I need the most perfect block of steel.” I thought he was a bit daft, but I left him to his work.

Over the following months, I sometimes stopped in to see Smithy, and each time I did he was struggling with another step in the creation of his perfect sword. I hear that he paid village lads to haul pure spring water in to use in the tempering process.

Smithy died the day he finished that sword.

At his funeral, several important soldiers began to argue over who would keep the sword. They all grabbed at it, squabbling like children over candy. Then, suddenly, they turned to me and, with one voice, said that I should take the sword.

I was certainly shocked by this, but when I picked up the sword, I understood. Smithy’s laughter filled my mind. Somehow, he had managed to forge a piece of his soul into the sword! He spoke to me in my head. “Caramon, this sword is my greatest work. Please, present it to Lord Gunthar. I never had the brawn or the brains to join the Order myself, but I always did my best to supply his knights with sturdy steel. Tell him that I forged this good sword with the best part of my soul, and I would be honored if he would find a place for it in Castle Uth Wistan.”

Well, I did as he asked, and Lord Gunthar was so moved by the story that he had the sword hung over the hearth in the Uth Wistan’s main hall, where it hangs to this day.

Legends similar to that of Smithy abound. While many revolve around weapons and armor, almost as many focus on more mundane items. Why, at the library we have a quill which I know to have been used by my master Astinus to pen some of his greatest histories. Whenever I feel my writing growing stale or tiresome, I pick up that quill, and suddenly I am inspired as though my old master watched over my shoulder.



ARTIFACT SPIRIT: *Undead.* Co N/A, Ph N/A, In *, Es *, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also mentalism, necromancy.

*The spirit has the same Intellect and Essence scores it had in life.

Artifact spirits are always magical in nature. In most cases, they fall into the categories of items of distinction or renown, but those containing very powerful spirits can be the equal of items of fame or glory.

An artifact spirit uses its abilities to either help or hinder anyone who uses the item it is bound to. Every artifact spirit is unique and has personal ideals, goals, and aversions. It uses its mentalism ability to communicate with the user and to convince him to advance the spirit’s goals. Any user who refuses, though, will find himself the victim of necromancy attacks [sapping his life energy] every time he uses the item. If the spirit had any other magical abilities in life, it retains them in undeath.

Banshees

Like wichtlins, banshees are a kind of undead creature found only among the elves. These spirits of dead elf women find themselves painfully tied to the world even after their lives have ended.

A banshee is a floating, misty image that looks very much as the elf did during life. However, you can see her clearly only at night, when her body has an eerie white glow. During the day, the banshee remains almost totally invisible, seeming to be a shadow or a bit of very delicate mist.

The spirit usually wears tattered clothing, has wild, unkempt hair, and has an expression of never-ending agony. She grimaces as she waves her arms about, seeming as though her entire body endures eternal pain. However, the creature's eyes are clear, and blind rage often fills them.

The only sound a banshee can make is a horrible, keening groan [though some say that Lord Soth's banshees can mock him]. This frightful wail pierces your ears and heart with astounding pain. It calls out to your spirit, telling it of the misery and terror that await it in this mortal life. If you are not of stout heart, the cry of a banshee can even kill you.

You can hear this cry a very long way, some say for several miles. Unfortunately, at such a dis-

tance, you can't tell the difference between a banshee's wail and the cry of a terrified human or elf maiden. Many knights have followed the sound, intent upon rescuing an innocent from harm, only to end up fighting for their lives against an enraged banshee.

Unless a group of elves all died in the same place at the same time, you will never find more than one banshee living in a particular area. Their existence is solitary and pitiful, and they do not tolerate any living thing walking upon their lands.

As night falls, a banshee takes to the air, wailing like . . . well, like a banshee . . . and flies off toward any people that fall within five miles of its home. According to elf legend, living things—particularly members of the mortal races—cause a banshee pain. When she finds the living intruders, the banshee swoops down in their midst, flying in and around them, shrieking the whole while.

Anyone the banshee touches finds his body wracked by a painful chill. The banshee doesn't seem to use this power as an attack. Rather she uses it to urge the living to leave her realm.

Most tales I hear say that a banshee is always the spirit of an Evil elf, and its undeath is a punishment



These spirits of dead elf women find themselves painfully tied to the world even after their lives have ended.

for squandering its life tormenting others. That doesn't always seem to be the case, though. After all, a plague of banshees haunt Dargaard Keep, adding misery to Lord Soth's already horrible existence. While this certainly is not the afterlife I would choose, it seems as much a self-determined act of vengeance as a curse visited upon the elf spirits. And knowing just how single-minded and honor-bound that race can be, it certainly seems possible that some elves killed in the Cataclysm [which Soth might have prevented] might, out of principle, choose to torment their murderer rather than go on to an eternal rest.

This frightful wail calls out to your spirit, telling it of the misery and terror that await it in this mortal life.

Perhaps because meeting them is so often a deadly experience, we too quickly assumed that they all have base motivations. I mean, think about it. Do banshees ever come swooping down on unsuspecting villages? No. They mostly stay within a few miles of the place they died, and they only come after the living if they pass too close to the banshee's territory.

Evil banshees find themselves cursed because of their wicked ways during life. Yet, it seems to me that many banshees are a kind of vengeful spirit. They plague an individual or group tied to their deaths, then pass from this world, never to be seen again.

While the author makes an interesting case for banshees not necessarily being Evil creatures, the editor feels obliged to draw attention to the fact that no other reputable source accepts this proposition.

However, even if evidence could back this theory up, the elf community would likely be unmoved by it. Elves, being a race so directly tied to nature and the world of the living, consider all undead [particularly elf undead] to be abominations. From the elf perspective, a banshee must be Evil simply because it exists. Elves allow no room in their world-view for undead who are in the least bit sympathetic.

BANSHEE: *Undead.* Co 7, Ph 6, In 8, Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -5, also death [aura], fear [aura], incorporeal, and immune to mentalism and poison.

Just seeing a banshee causes the viewer to defend herself against a fear attack. Those who fail must flee from the creature as quickly as possible.

Anyone within near missile range of a wailing banshee must resist a death attack if they can hear the surreal wail. Those who fail an *average Endurance* [Spirit] action simply fall dead on the spot.

- A banshee can be used in an adventure as an indicator of some greater Evil. If the heroes come upon an elf village beset by a banshee, they will likely investigate. While looking around, they discover the creature's earthly body, a young elf maiden battered and bruised, in the corner of the home of an important member of House Advocate. Obviously, someone beat this poor child to death. The most immediate suspect will be the advocate in whose house the body lies. However, the advocate has a reputation as a fair and gentle elf. The political turmoil that this will wreak may lead some heroes to suspect that he has been framed. What is the secret behind this banshee? If only the creature could speak!

In the greater hierarchy of undead beings, banshees fill one of the lowest ranks. They often end up being dominated and controlled by more powerful creatures such as vampires, wights, or liches. The banshees that the author cites as plagues on Lord Soth's unliving head, at times seem to be under the death knight's control. The author himself witnessed this during the Blue Lady's War. When Soth stormed the city of Palantbas, the banshees formed part of the contingent of undead thralls he threw against the city's guardians.

Ghosts

When I started the section on undead, I thought that every “incorporeal undead creature” was a ghost. Now, while you might find that most ordinary folk think that way, the scholars have things much more organized. To them, a ghost is a specific type of bodiless thing and has distinctly different characteristics from a wraith or a spectre or a haunt. You know, not that I think everyone should be a scholar, but it would be much simpler if everyone knew this scholarly speak. I can’t tell you the number of times I’ve been called on to deal with a “ghost” and wondered “what type of ghost will this be?”

Ghosts often form from people who died violently and without warning, though many of them also come from people who died leaving some great task unfinished. They look as they did in life, only sadder. A ghost, no matter how stout its body is, always has a haggard, drawn face, and intense, bulging eyes. Dressed in flowing white robes, which always flutter as if blown in a strong wind, ghosts also usually seem to be chilled, as they pull their robe’s hood tightly around their faces.

A ghost haunts the area where it died, or sometimes the home of someone responsible for its death. It comes out only at night, and though sunlight does it no harm, a ghost fades into nothingness as the first rays of dawn paint the morning sky.

Each ghost seeks to complete its unfinished mission from life. The trick is to find out what mission it had. Ghosts can speak, although in a faint, whispering voice that seems lost on a distant wind. The problem is, they don’t talk to the living. Instead, ghosts play out the final moments of their lives over and over. Often, you’ll find these scenes terrible to behold, but they do provide some clue as to what needs to be done in order to put the ghost’s soul to rest.

For example, I know of a house haunted by the ghost of a little boy. Every night, the ghost would climb up on the window ledge next to a large bookcase and, while reaching for something on one of the shelves, lose its balance and fall out the open window to a grisly death on the rocks below. We found out that the little boy had fallen while trying to pull his favorite toy off that shelf. After his death,

If you know what a ghost wants, you can easily (though not always conveniently) set the spirit to rest.



GHOST: *Undead.* Co 5, Ph 6, In 7, Es 8, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also drain [Spirit]*, fear [aura], incorporeal, invisible, mentalism*, resistant to silver weapons, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

*Only vengeful ghosts have these abilities.

While invisible, a ghost may try once per night to use its mentalism power to take control of a living hero. The ghost must be within near missile range of the hero, who then must attempt an *average Presence* [Spirit] action. If this action fails, the ghost gains complete control of the hero's actions. This control lasts until the sun rises, or the ghost willingly gives it up. Should the attack succeed, the ghost becomes visible.

Anyone seeing a ghost is subject to a fear attack. If the action to resist this attack is a mishap, the hero must not only run away, but the fright ages him ten years instantly.

Every successful attack by a ghost carries with it an automatic drain attack. If a ghost drains a victim of all his Spirit points, the poor soul immediately dies.

Ghosts have immunity to damage from normal weapons, but they take half the normal damage [round down] from weapons forged of silver.

- One hook to hang adventures on is the fact that most common folk do not know the difference between a ghost and any other incorporeal undead creature. If the Narrator has peasants referring to everything from a banshee to a wraith as a "ghost," the heroes will have to approach *all* undead things more carefully.

the parents packed the toy away with all the child's other belongings. The ghost came back every night because he wanted his toy. We placed the item, a wooden dragon with wheels, I believe, on the shelf. The next night the ghost reached up, grabbed the toy, smiled at us, and faded from view, never to be seen again.

If you know what a ghost wants, you can easily [though not always conveniently] set the spirit to rest.

Another kind of ghost—a vengeful spirit—exists only to plague the living. It attacks anyone who comes near its haunting ground.

These ghosts spend much of their time as invisible forms, watching the world of the living. They begin an attack by trying to take over the body of a living person. If they succeed, they usually make their puppet attack his friends or do some terrible harm to himself. The person has absolutely no control over his actions, and the ghost often causes him to do something that is not only dangerous, but humiliating as well. However, ghosts have a tough time possessing people with strong wills.

Should this attack fail, the ghost becomes visible [a terrible sight that will turn your hair gray] and tries to chase living creatures away by touching them and stealing bits of their souls. The spirit will not stop attacking until all living creatures leave its haunting ground.

I know of no easy way to dispel ghosts such as this. They want only to annoy the living. Your only choices with such a creature are to destroy it or abandon the site entirely. Because ghosts have no corporeal form, they cannot be hurt by normal weapons. However, silver weapons have some effect on them, and if you pass a magical or blessed weapon through a ghost, it reacts the same way a living foe would.

The work we scholars do is so often overlooked and so rarely appreciated by the masses that I find it indescribably agreeable to see the author take note of it. While he would point out, correctly, that we often overcomplicate matters for the sake of completeness, here at least is a case where our obsessive organizational and cataloguing skills can be of use to everyone.

I will say no more on the subject, for fear of being branded a gloater.

Haunts

A haunt is like a ghost in many ways. In fact, you probably can't tell the difference between a haunt and a spectre, ghost, or sometimes even a banshee. The difference lies in how the haunt goes about its business.

Like a ghost, a haunt is a spirit that remains on Krynn in order to perform a specific task. However, a haunt knows of only one way to perform its task: by taking control of a mortal's body. Unlike a ghost, though, a haunt gains this control by beating its victim in combat, which is hardly fair. You can't hit the haunt with normal weapons [though silver or magical weapons will do the trick]. Meanwhile, the haunt merely has to touch you to do you harm.

A haunt's touch numbs the body, leaving its victim unsteady on her feet and unable to defend herself. When it reduces a target to near collapse, the haunt slips inside—it's disgusting—and takes control of the body. Once there, it mercilessly kills anyone who tries to stop it from going where it needs to.

One thing you should know is that a haunt cannot go more than a few dozen yards from the spot that it was killed. Once it takes a living host, though, it can go wherever it likes. Chances are pretty good



HAUNT: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 15, In 1, Es 8, Dmg +5, Def -5, also drain [Dexterity], incorporeal, resistant to silver weapons, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Every successful attack by a haunt carries with it an automatic drain attack. If a haunt drains a victim of all his Dexterity points, the creature takes complete control of its victim's body. This control lasts until the haunt completes its mission, the sun rises, the host dies, or the haunt willingly gives up control.

If the haunt finds its host's mind particularly offensive [for example, an Evil haunt in a Knight of Solamnia], it causes the host to strangle himself.

- Heroes might meet a haunt that has taken over a body while traveling. The haunt might be on its way to kill someone or take back something that once belonged to it.

that the haunt heads straight toward its objective [which could be anything from digging up a buried treasure to exacting revenge on its murderer].

The second the haunt takes control of the body, all effects of its numbing touch seem to vanish. In fact, I hear that after the haunt leaves the body, the host feels perfectly well. Any damage done to the host body while the haunt is in it, though, lingers afterward. Should the host body be killed, the haunt must again stray no more than a few dozen yards from where the body falls. Then, the whole process starts over again.

According to occult experts, the main difference between a haunt and other body-snatching spirits is that the task a haunt lingers to perform almost always involves some sort of personal gain. This provides a gross example of pointless avarice as, once the haunt attains its goal, it vanishes into the afterworld.

Apparently, some haunts take the form of a floating ball of incandescent light [indistinguishable from a will o'wisp]. Perhaps the creature's greatest gift is that of being able to disguise its nature until the victim is too close to escape.

Poltergeists

I take it on faith that poltergeists exist. According to my son, this monster is *always* invisible. It seems that only strong spectramantic spells can make a poltergeist visible, and then only for a very short time.

Like many of the other restless spirits, a poltergeist haunts only the area near where it died. This spiteful type of spirit hates the living. Unlike other ghosts, though, it can attack only by picking up and throwing objects at people. This may sound pretty useless when compared to some of the powers other spirits have, but let me tell you, it's very upsetting to have an invisible foe throwing large hunks of wood, pottery, and even daggers at you. Some of the bravest people I ever knew, soldiers who had faced down dragons, ran screaming like frightened children when we walked into a room with one simple poltergeist.

The biggest problem with a poltergeist is that, since it's invisible, fighting the thing is damned near impossible. First of all, you need a silver or magical weapon in order to hurt it. Then you need to be painfully lucky!

If you ask me, the best thing you can do if you happen into an area haunted by a poltergeist is to just turn around and walk out. The creature can't follow you [though I'd watch my back as I left—they're hateful things and don't take well to being ignored], and leaving it alone only adds to its misery.

Occult documents agree that, if we could see a poltergeist, it would appear as a normal human with a look of terrified shock on his face. If seen via spectramancy, they often appear dressed in rags and wrapped in lengths of iron chains that drag ponderously behind them.

Poltergeists arise from the spirits of humans who, in their lifetimes, committed heinous crimes against humanity and blasphemed against the gods. Transformation into a poltergeist is a curse of some sort, though exactly which god imposed it and for exactly what offenses is unevident.

Whatever the source, it seems clear that since the withdrawal of the gods, no matter how depraved the populace becomes, Krynn never needs to worry about being overrun by poltergeists.



POLTERGEIST: *Undead.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 3, Es 5, Dmg N/A, Def N/A, also fear, incorporeal, invisible, resistant to silver, immune to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

Poltergeists attack by throwing objects at people in their general vicinity. When a poltergeist begins this activity, everyone present finds themselves the target of a fear attack. After this, anyone who gets hit with an object thrown by the poltergeist suffers another fear attack.

The damage caused by a successful poltergeist attack depends entirely on the damage rating of the object thrown.

Poltergeists can be hit only by magical, blessed, or silver weapons, though silver weapons do only half their normal damage [round down].

- Should the heroes ever stay in a city or large town, they might encounter a poltergeist in their room. The poltergeist might have died recently at the hands of some creditor, leaving behind a hidden cache of steel, as well as a widow and children in a nearby village.

Spectral Minions

Okay, here's a riddle for you: What looks like a ghost, acts like a ghost, but isn't a ghost? Give up? A spectral minion!

Well, it's not much of a riddle, but at least it got your attention. Anyway, the idea behind the riddle holds true. A spectral minion is the spirit of a person who died without fulfilling a vow or quest. Strangely enough, the person didn't even need to have any sort of dedication to the vow or quest. Instead, the people he made the vow with control his fate.

If the task has vital importance, and the surviving person has an iron will—as well as a natural connection to the mystic powers of the heart [even if he hasn't practiced the spellcasting arts at all]—he can hold the dead man's spirit to this world. The only possible release for such a bound spirit is to fulfill the vow he made.

A spectral minion looks exactly as he did at the moment of his death, including the equipment he was holding or carrying. The only difference is that you can see straight through the creature as though you looked through colored glass.

The spirit knows exactly why it is bound to the world, and it immediately sets about doing what it can to gain its release. However, since it can do



A spectral minion is the spirit of a person who died without fulfilling a vow or quest.

SPECTRAL MINION: *Undead.* Co 15, Ph 12–30, In 5, Es 7, Dmg 0–3, Def –4, also incorporeal and immunity to mentalism, normal weapons, and poison.

*The minion's damage rating depends on what, if any, weapons the figure was holding at the moment of death.

Nothing other than a magical or blessed weapon can harm a spectral minion.

- An additional level of complication can be added to just about any adventure by introducing a spectral minion that follows the heroes throughout their journeys. The creature can either work toward the same end as the heroes, or oppose them. In either case, the minion will likely draw unwanted attention to the group and, if the minion was well known in life, it may give adversaries a clue as to what the heroes are up to.

nothing to affect the world, other than attack the living [assuming it had some kind of weapon when it died], it must usually find a way to get the living to perform its promised task. That's pretty hard, though, because spectral minions can't make any noise. All in all, it's a terrible fate.

The worst thing about a spectral minion is that, unlike many of the other undead creatures, the spectral minion

has done nothing wrong other than leave an important bit of work unfinished. I don't know if you can learn anything from these facts—other than to be very careful about what sorts of vows you allow yourself to be party to.

Spectral minions are among the least understood of undead creatures. While some experts insist that the surviving swearers of the vow must consciously work to keep the minion's soul bound to Krynn, others insist that it is a wholly subconscious activity. Equal evidence exists for both positions.

The only way to test either theory, though, is both impractical and immoral.

Will O' Wisps

A will o'wisp is one of the strangest creatures you're likely to encounter in your travels. In fact, you've probably seen one in your lifetime, but you may not have recognized it *as* a creature. The will o'wisp is a glowing ball of light that lives in swamps, bogs, and moors. No one knows for certain where it comes from, but I've heard stories saying that it is the undead spirit of a person who drowned in the local waters.

Usually a will o'wisp is round and yellow. However, they can change both shape and color to suit their needs.

The will o'wisp floats around its home, often mistaken for a lantern or torch, which is just as the creature prefers. You see, it eats by luring people to their deaths [by leading them into quicksand pits or other lonely places where the victim will die a slow and terrifying death] and then feeding off their panic as they realize that certain death awaits them. As the victim becomes more panicked, they say, the will o'wisp glows brighter and brighter.

If discovered, these beasts tend to run away—they have no taste for battle. However, if you insist on attacking one, a will o'wisp can easily defend itself. You'll know when it's ready to fight back, too, because it changes color to a blue that looks very much like the color of a blue dragon's scales. All the will o'wisp has to do is brush up against you to sear your body with electricity.

Although any place that is home to will o'wisps may harbor a dozen or more of the creatures, they hardly ever seem to work as teams. Maybe one person doesn't have enough panic to feed more than one will o'wisp. Whatever the reason, if you come to a deserted stretch of land and suddenly see two lanterns off in the distance, each one moving away from the other, it's a pretty safe bet that you're looking at

WILL O'WISP: *Undead.* Co 9, Ph 27, In 8, Es 9, Dmg +8, Def -9, also invisible, lightning, and immune to mentalism, normal weapons, poison, and sorcery.

Every successful attack by a will o'wisp carries with it an automatic lightning attack. This is, in fact, the only real damage that the will o'wisp does. Those who are struck by the will o'wisp suffer damage equal to the creature's Strength score.

- Heroes affiliated with the Citadel of Light or the Great Library of Palanthis could be sent by mystics or scholars to find the truth about will o'wisps. Do they in fact congregate around mystic reservoirs?

competing will o'wisps—or really stupid woodsmen.

Scholars have no real clue as to the origin of the will o'wisp. Although the rumor the author suggests prevails throughout what little text I can find on this subject, no empirical evidence backs it up. In fact, will o'wisps seem most numerous in areas that civilized people rarely visit.

Interestingly, will o'wisps seem to be very common in areas filled with uncommon amounts of life energy [what the mystics refer to as mystic reservoirs]. This has led some scholars to speculate that the creatures are bits of magical energy that have somehow gained sentience.



Chapter Five:

I haven't been everywhere in Ansalon, but I've been enough places to know that dragons are the one constant among all the territories, countries, and wildernesses, particularly in the wake of the Second Cataclysm. No valley, dale, or hamlet remains completely untouched by dragons or their kin. In many ways, this chapter holds the key to survival for most adventurers—more so than the other chapters.

The author has hit on a piece of irony that staggers scholars across the continent. Although the gods themselves declared this Fifth Age of Krynn the Age of Mortals, it so far is most clearly defined by the actions and machinations of dragons. In order to effect any change and take control of this, our age, the intelligent races of Ansalon must learn all they can about the draconic forces at work in our lands.

Dragons

You have no idea how long Bertrem and I argued about this section [even longer than we did over the “Peoples” chapter that closes the book]. I wanted to leave dragons out of this book entirely, while he wanted me to give them a chapter all to themselves and squeeze the various dragonkin into other sections.

“If dragons are the most important animals in the world,” he’d say, “then any decent bestiary *must* devote a significant number of pages to them.”

Dragons can rain death down on your head without even slowing down their flight.

I still don't buy into that argument, though. Maybe it's because I grew up in a time when we thought dragons were myths. Maybe it's because the beasts have grown so large and powerful in recent years. Whatever the reason, I think that anyone who simply happens upon a dragon during his travels and does *anything* other than run away as fast as his feet can carry him is a fool!

It seems to me that the more details you read about dragons, the more likely you are to think that that this knowledge will protect you or give you some kind of advantage over a dragon. Knowing a dragon's eating, nesting, or mating habits can't help you at all. The *only* thing you need to know is that dragons are too tough for you to fight and too smart for you to trick.

I myself have seen a dozen different dragons, and let me assure you, repetition does nothing to make the sight less awesome or frightful. Seeing a dragon can freeze the bravest man in his tracks, and that hesitation can kill.

Dragons can rain death down on your head without even slowing down their flight. Each type of dragon has a particular type [or types] of breath attack—everything from flames to poison gas to searing light—all equally deadly.

In the end, Bertrem and I had to agree to disagree. Since I'm the one writing this book, though, I get to decide how much to say about any creature. I guess I win the argument.

The author has made his point quite eloquently. To define the great beasts is to trivialize the danger they represent. However, I convinced him that it might prove useful to warn readers about where they might encounter dragons, and what precautions might aid them in surviving such meetings.

Dragons & Dragonkin

A Dragon Reference

The table below provides details about dragon characteristics. If you need to reference further information about dragons, see *Wings of Fury*.

DRAGON AGE	Co	PH	IN	Es	DMG	DEF
Wyrmling	8	15-30	4	4	+7	-4
Very Young	8	21-36	6	6	+10	-6
Young	9	27-42	8	8	+12	-8
Juvenile	9	33-48	10	10	+14	-10
Young Adult	10	36-54	11	11	+16	-12
Adult	10	39-54	12	12	+18	-14
Mature Adult	11	42-57	13	13	+20	-16
Old	11	45-60	14	14	+25	-18
Very Old	12	48-63	15	15	+30	-20
Venerable	12	51-66	16	16	+35	-25
Wyrm	13	54-69	17	17	+40	-30
Great Wyrm	13	57-72	18	18	+50	-35
Ancient Wyrm	14	60-75	19	19	+60	-40
Legendary Wyrm	14	63-78	20	20	+70	-45

DRAGONAWE

Whenever a hero first sees a dragon, she must attempt an *easy Spirit* [*Presence*] action. Should she fail, she becomes so overwhelmed by the dragon, she forfeits her next action. She comes to her senses after that.

If the dragon is moving toward the hero when it comes into view, the action becomes *average* instead of *easy*. In this case, failure results in an overwhelming fear that causes the victim to flee or seek shelter at once. Only after getting out of sight of the dragon does the awed hero come to her senses.

DRAGON BREATH

A dragon can use its dragon breath attack at near missile, far missile, or artillery range [although younger dragons cannot breathe as far as adults]. The attack may affect a number of closely-grouped targets equal to the beast's Coordination score. To avoid injury, the targets must each succeed at an *average Agility* [*Dexterity*] action. Anyone who fails this action suffers a number of damage points equal to the dragon's Physique score.

MELEE COMBAT

Dragons may engage in normal melee combat *or* use their wings to buffet enemies with great gusts of air. Targets of such an attack must succeed at a *challenging Agility* [*Strength*] action or be swept off their feet. While the heroes regain their footing, the dragon gets one unresisted counterattack.

DIVE ATTACKS

Any target of a diving dragon must first attempt a *daunting Spirit* [*Presence*] action to resist dragonawe. Failure leaves the target unable to resist the following counterattacks. Then the beast unleashes its dragon breath on any targets within range. Finally, it lands amid the targets and makes a melee or magical counterattack. Any targets who survive this recover from dragonawe and can continue normally.

Chromatic Dragons

I've heard many stories about where chromatic dragons come from. Most say they are the Evil descendants of the original five dragons, but I have heard other legends, one of which claims that each color of dragon embodies a single mortal vice.

The first dragon I ever saw was a small **BLACK DRAGON**, and I won't forget that day if I live an elf's lifetime! These beasts live in swamps, marshes, and other dank places. They're small [as dragons go], but savage and sadistic. Black dragons breathe swamp water so acidic that it burns anyone it touches. Most of these beasts practice hydro-mantic sorcery.

BLUE DRAGONS probably pose the most danger of all the chromatic dragons, not because of their size [though they are gigantic], but because they are manipulative and cunning. Just think, Skie survived and kept his power base through the War of the Lance, the Second Cataclysm, and the Dragon Purge—not an easy feat. You find blues in deserts, badlands, and other desolate, barren regions. They all know electromantic sorcery, and many practice spectramancy as well.

In deep, lush forests like the Qualinesti Forest, you can often find **GREEN DRAGONS** making lairs in overgrown ruins. Their natural greed amplifies the

greens' need to control everything in their realms, and they love magical artifacts more than anything else in the world. As a result, it should come as no surprise that they all specialize in the school of enchantment. In battle, they use magic before any other option, including their chlorine breath.

Of all the Evil wyrms, **RED DRAGONS** are the vilest. They make lairs in mountains, preferably vol-



canoes, and destroy anyone, anything, or any place that opposes them. They have always been the largest dragons, though Malys still looms larger than any red ever seen in Ansalon. Reds are proud, emotional beasts. In combat, they breathe blasts of impossibly hot flames, and they are master pyromancers.

Finally we have the **WHITE DRAGONS**: cold, cruel masters of the icy wastes. Unlike other dragons, they prefer to live away from the “lesser races”—a term which seems to include other dragons. They hoard jewels and crystals of all sorts, and protect their treasures with an icy blast of breath that can freeze a man solid. All whites know the sorcerous school of cryomancy.

The empirical and anecdotal evidence clearly indicates that chromatic dragons descend directly from the first five dragons born. As to the claim that the beasts are Evil incarnate, their actions speak for themselves.

CHROMATIC DRAGON: *Dragon.* A dragon's attributes are determined by its age rather than its color. * All chromatic dragons have the following special abilities: buffet*, charge, dive*, dragonawe*, dragon breath*, mysticism [one sphere], sorcery [three schools], swallow whole, and swoop.

*See page 167.

Metallic Dragons

Just as the chromatic dragons are creatures of pure Evil, metallic dragons are shining beings of Good. All dragons absented themselves from the world, hiding and living secret lives until the War of the Lance, and now the metallics seem to have returned to their secret homes just when the people of Ansalon need them most. No one knows for certain why this has happened, not even my grandson Ulin, who works with a gold dragon.

BRASS DRAGONS prefer to live in sandy deserts or barren badlands. They believe in the warrior's code that the strong should survive while the weak fall by the way, and they revel in telling of heroic tales. Before they use their superheated dragon breath, they attack with their claws and teeth. If they feel their foe has earned the right to try to improve herself, though, they use the mystic sphere of channeling and a soothingly warm flow of breath to weaken her until she falls over sleepily.

Any area near the sea attracts a **BRONZE DRAGON's** attention. They love to watch passing boats, hovering gulls, and waves that roll over the blue water. Their breath forms a beam of sunlight so powerful that many mistake it for lightning. If they feel merciful, they use their skill at mentalism to make foes leave quietly.

The small **COPPER DRAGON** lives atop mountains in warmer regions. They're big jokesters, and love setting puzzles or riddles for peaceful visitors. Their breath is a terribly destructive acid that mists in a way to reflect light in a beautiful display, but it utterly destroys everything it touches. While all copper dragons practice the sphere of sensitivity, a lot of them use channeling to slow victims to half their normal speed.

GOLD DRAGONS have long, snakelike bodies and act as nobly and compassionately as any person you will ever meet. They have a fondness for scrolls, tomes, and other ancient records, so I know Bertrem respects them. They have a breath that can shock and shatter victims and items, but they prefer to cast spells from the sphere of meditation to enfeeble the foe's mind [in best-case scenarios] or to



help them create fiery blasts and caustic clouds with other forms of magic [in worst-case scenarios].

No dragon is friendlier to men than the **SILVER DRAGON**. A silver's breath is a frigid blast of quicksilver that can kill by freezing or poisoning its victim. Silvers know the sphere of alteration and often use it to walk disguised through the cities of the world. Sometimes, if they wish to let a foe live, they use mentalism to paralyze her.

Are the metallic dragons still here among us or have they retreated to the mysterious Dragon Isles? No one knows, but if you see one, impress on him the dire straits our lands face and beg him to return to the fight.

METALLIC DRAGON: *Dragon.* A dragon's attributes are determined by its age rather than its color.* All metallic dragons have the following special abilities: buffet*, charge, dive*, dragonawe*, dragon breath*, mysticism [three spheres], sorcery [one school], swallow whole, and swoop.

*See page 167.

Draconians

I'd rather ignore draconians altogether, soulless monsters that they are, but the fact of the matter is, if you wander through any of the dragon-controlled lands, you'll need to know about these beasts.

Bertrem argued that I should group draconians in the "Peoples" chapter, but I absolutely refuse. They are not a true race, and if they fit anywhere else in the book, they would go under magically animated creatures.



During the War of the Lance, or probably the years just before, the minions of the Dark Queen discovered a way to make vicious creatures to swell the ranks of their armies. Draconians do not, you see, spring from the loins of another beast. Rather, the foul magic of Black-Robe wizards and Evil clerics pervert a metallic dragon's egg, though I've heard stories that the Evil dragons discovered this process. I never saw the terrible ceremony performed, thank the gods. Hearing Gilthanas describe

it was painful enough.

He and Silvara snuck into the catacombs beneath the city of Sanction and happened upon the ritual by luck. "The mages and clerics joined hands and began to chant a song so dark that we thought our minds might be forfeit simply for having heard it. The shining, golden egg on the altar turned a hideous green, then darkened to black, as though it had died. Then it cracked, releasing a disgusting larvalike creature, the sight of which made me retch. From this worm, whose skin immediately began to crack and split open, came draconians."

Through a very tangled set of circumstances, the forces of Evil came to possess the majority of metallic dragon eggs. They used these as leverage to keep the Good dragons from opposing the dragon-armies, and then turned around and one by one destroyed the eggs in the draconian spawning process.

Each type of egg produces a different type of draconian, but they are all stout-bodied creatures with snouts, scaly skin, and thick

lizard tails. Each type looks vaguely like the metallic dragon whose egg they spawned from, their scales reflecting a slight gold, brass, bronze, or silver tone. Most of them have wings, but only those formed from silver dragon eggs, the Sivak draconians, can actually fly. The rest can only glide over short distances.

Most of them have wings, but only those formed from silver dragon eggs, the Sivak draconians, can actually fly. The rest can only glide over short distances.

The very first time I met draconians, they were Baaz dressed in long priest's robes with the hoods drawn tightly about their heads. We knew something was strange about these clerics, since they smelled more like goblins than holy men, but they took us completely by surprise when they threw off their hoods to reveal their reptilian features. Never before had we seen their like, though in the coming years we would see far too many of their brethren.

During that first battle, we discovered a few important things about draconians. First, my brother found that they could not be harmed by magic, much to his dismay. Second, we learned that when you kill a draconian, the magic that binds it to the world explodes in a death throe that can be more dangerous than the living beast ever was [this throe differs for each type of draconian and allows you to tell the beasts apart if you didn't figure it out already].

The shining, golden egg on the altar turned a hideous green, then darkened to black, as though it had died. Then it cracked, releasing a disgusting larva-like creature.

Draconians are intelligent creatures, though not terribly bright. Their mean-spirited, crude, and perverse natures cause them to live solely for battle and military conquest. To top it all off, draconians all side with Evil. They come from the soiling of a symbol of purity and Good, and they owe their very existence to the graces of the Dark Queen herself.

Perhaps the best reason to put these beasts into another category is that they do not breed like normal creatures. The disgusting perversion of metallic dragon eggs is the only way to get new draconians, and every beast made in the process is male. As far as I know, they have no natural life span; they simply live until their militant urges lead them to a violent end.

How could I possibly count these creatures as a "people" when they're clearly just Evil creations, with no part to play in the natural chain of life?

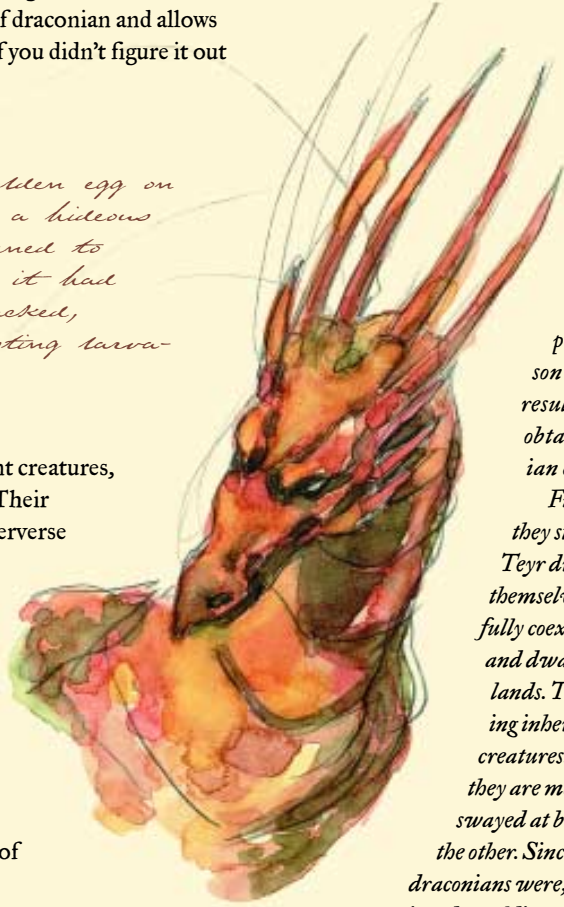
Although the author's attitudes toward draconians is understandable and accurately represents the most

widely accepted "common knowledge" about the creatures, scholars have recently made some interesting discoveries about draconian nature and physical adaptability.

Shortly after the Second Cataclysm, the draconians living in the Teyr region somehow managed to discover, create, or mutate into females of the species. In other words, draconians can now reproduce just like any other species. While this phenomenon has not yet been observed in any other population, I see no reason to believe that this result could not be obtained by other draconian communities.

Furthermore, though they still act aggressively, the Teyr draconians have proven themselves capable of peacefully coexisting with the humans and dwarves of neighboring lands. There seems to be nothing inherently Evil about these creatures. More likely, it seems, they are moral ciphers, easily swayed at birth to one extreme or the other. Since the vast majority of draconians were, upon creation, assigned as soldiers for the dragonarmies, I don't find it strange that they seem to be creatures of Evil.

All evidence points to the fact that draconians born and raised in this modern era are as free to choose their moral course as any creatures on Krynn. We have certainly seen evidence that they can perform many more kind and compassionate acts than anyone would have given them credit for just a few short years ago. If, as a race, they continue the improvements we've seen in recent years, draconians may soon be ready to take their place among the civilized peoples of Ansalon.



Aurak Draconians

Born of tainted gold dragon eggs, Auraks are the most powerful and devious of the draconians. They stand about seven feet tall with a short tail, bulging eyes, and no wings. Auraks have a sulfur stink that you can smell from yards away, and they rarely wear any clothing other than a sword-belt and sometimes a cape.

They don't say much, but they always cast their eyes around in a cold, suspicious way, almost as if they constantly planned what mischief they wanted to pull next. Maybe "mischief" is too soft a word, though, because Auraks have a cruel streak wider than any intelligent beast I've ever encountered. No act of cruelty is below them, and they take great delight in torturing their victims physically and mentally.

An Aurak uses its magical ability to change shape into any animal roughly its equal in size, or into an exact replica of any human it has ever seen, or even to disappear altogether. All of these tactics confuse its foes and give it another advantage in combat [something it hardly needs].

What I've found worse, though, is that sometimes the beasts take over your mind entirely. I've seen strong men forced to dance like puppets on a string at the Aurak's mysterious call.

They possess vicious combat skills, often fighting tooth and claw like trained soldiers, but they have other, more deadly weapons as well. First of all, Auraks have no need of bows or other missiles because they can fire bolts of energy from their hands. Add to this the fact that they have an acidic breath attack, which can blind a victim as well as kill him, and you can see why people fear Auraks the most of all draconians.

When you finally kill one, though, you may wish you hadn't. The moment they die, Auraks explode in a blast of magical energy. The pain this explosion causes is indescribable, and every living thing close to the beast, both friend and foe, suffers it.

Being the brightest of the draconian races, Auraks have tended toward more cerebral pursuits than their brethren. They have a natural affinity for the art of sorcery, and all Auraks practice the schools of pyromancy,



electromancy, and divination. It has also been said that many study the mystic sphere of mentalism in order to augment their natural abilities of mind control.

AURAK DRACONIAN: *Nonhuman.* Co 12, Ph 10, In 8 [64], Es 8, Dmg +10, Def -5, also acute sense [vision], alteration [self], breath attack [blind], charm, death throe, missile weapon [energy blast], resistant to magic, sorcery [pyromancy, electromancy, divination], summoning [self].

An Aurak can only use its alteration and summoning abilities three times per day, and its charm attack once per day.

In combat the Aurak must pick one type of attack per exchange. The missile attack inflicts damage equal to the creature's Physique score. The breath attack inflicts normal damage and requires the victim to defend against a blind attack.

Its death throe causes all living creatures within melee range suffer damage points equal to its remaining sorcery spell points.

Baaz Draconians

The smallest and weakest of the draconians, the Baaz are also the most common of their ilk. Born from brass dragon eggs, they are short [less than six feet tall] with scales of blotchy brass and dark green, and small, batlike wings. More than any other draconians, the Baaz liked wearing the colors of their dragonarmy, and the clothing they wear today looks very much like that uniform.

I fought more Baaz than all the other types of draconians combined. They're tough fighters, but none too bright or creative in battle. From what I could tell, even the other draconians treated them as weak cousins, taunting and berating them at every opportunity. It's no wonder the beasts act so cruelly to their own prisoners—they have some measure of power over these poor victims.



I noticed that Baaz drink heavily whenever they can find any liquor. As long as they had a position of power, they didn't seem to mind the company of humans, elves, and other mortal races. In fact, they seemed to enjoy the looks of disgust and the uneasy tension their presence causes.

One reason they might like spending time with humans is that the Baaz's favorite strategy is to don flowing robes and disguise themselves as human priests [invariably of an Evil god]. Hidden this way, the Baaz make contact with their intended foes and, before they discover the ruse, the draconians throw off their hoods and use the confusion to press a surprise attack. The shock of seeing a grumpy, but otherwise ordinary, priest suddenly transform into a slavering dragon-man is enough to knock anyone's guard down.

When a Baaz dies, his body immediately turns to stone. Any weapon or, worse, body part that sticks in it becomes trapped. About an hour later, the Baaz statue crumbles, freeing anything it held. However, during that hour, you are either trapped or weaponless. If you ever fight a Baaz, never finish it off with a solid thrust through the chest!

Records indicate that during the War of the Lance, Baaz draconians served almost exclusively as common foot soldiers, quite probably because they lacked the mental capacity for more detail-oriented work.

While it is certainly true that more Baaz were created than any other type of draconian, these beasts had a much higher mortality rate. Although no accurate census of the draconian forces exists, it seems likely that attrition has made the Baaz no more common than any other species.

BAAZ DRACONIAN: *Nonhuman.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +6, Def -3, also death throee, glide, and pounce.

Rather than pounce from ambush, Baaz use this attack only when they have fooled their foes into believing they are human. Then they throw off their cloaks to make a surprise attack.

When she kills a Baaz draconian in melee combat, a hero must attempt an *average Agility* action. If this fails, the hero's weapon becomes caught in the Baaz's death throee and cannot be recovered until the petrified corpse crumbles.

Bozak Draconians

Draconians from bronze dragon eggs are called Bozaks. Of all their brethren, you'll have the worst time trying to trick or out-think these kind of draconians. I'm pretty sure that Bozaks don't excel at any task, so they have nothing they can point to and say that they're better at than all other draconians. They're not the smartest, strongest, toughest, most magical—nothing! I think that makes the Bozak so anxious that they walk through life constantly looking over their shoulders for imagined enemies.

However, this makes them excellent military commanders [so they do excel at something], as their natural caution often keeps their more rash draconian troops in check. They can usually see when an enemy has more value as a prisoner than a corpse, and they fight their battles with more than animal bloodlust in their minds.

Bozak draconians stand about six feet tall, with bronze scales, leathery wings, and long, broad tails. They dislike wearing full suits of armor, but they usually strap various pieces of protection [breast plates, arm or leg bands, or helmets] to their bodies.

They use aeromancy to help them fly, though they hardly do so gracefully. I've seen a Bozak stay in the air for the duration of an hour-long battle. From these heights, they often cast spells [usually using pyromancy] at their foes below, softening them up for the ground troops.

Another favorite Bozak tactic, whether on foot or in the air, is to cast a web, which they generate through some magical ability, over their foes, particularly if they see some profit in taking them prisoner. Once the battle turns hand-to-hand, though, the Bozaks are no longer in their element. Oh, they fight well and all, but their basic lack of confidence undoes them more often than not.

Once you kill a Bozak, its skin crumbles and falls away, leaving only a skeleton. Quite a satisfying sight, let me tell you! Don't stand around to admire your work though, because about a minute later, the bones explode, sending shrapnel flying all over the area.



Of all the draconian races, the Bozaks are by far the most spiritual. They worship Takkbisis in a ritualized way that none of their brethren do, performing ceremonies and making sacrifices of food and drink in her honor.

BOZAK DRACONIAN: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph 6, In 7 [49], Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -4, also death throee, glide, sorcery [aeromancy and pyromancy], and web.

Bozaks can glide indefinitely in a strong wind, but cannot actually fly without casting an aeromancy spell to keep them afloat. Any other aeromantic spells they cast at the same time may upset their balance and force them to land.

In their death throee, the Bozak's exploding bones cause 5 damage points to every creature within melee range.

Kapak Draconians

The only poisonous draconians are the Kapaks, who come from copper dragon eggs. These man-sized beasts have long arms and legs, short manes hanging from the sides of their mouths, copper to coppery-green scales, and long, thin tails. Kapaks speak in soft, whiny voices, and bob their heads curiously as they talk. They have leathery wings strong enough for them to glide on, but not for full flight.

The soft pads on their feet allow Kapaks to move almost silently, making them deadly assassins. They almost never attack unless they have their foe at some sort of disadvantage, preferably completely surprised.

Scale mail is the Kapak preferred uniform, though many of them wear leather because good-fitting, better armor is simply unavailable. However, they almost always wear cloaks or other flowing clothes that help them avoid immediate notice.

The strangest thing about these draconians is their poisonous, yellow spit. Though they never spew it in a spitting attack, Kapak's do drool it onto their weapons, a disgusting sight that can make you very aware of your parries and defenses during your next battle. Of course, the beasts also deliver the venom by simply biting their victims. No matter how it's applied, the poison causes your joints to instantly stiffen, leaving you unable to move. I'm told that the effect lasts for an hour, though only the very lucky live long enough to find that out.

When it dies, a Kapak immediately dissolves into a pool of concentrated acid that splashes anyone standing nearby. Being splashed by, or stepping in, this acid is terribly painful, as it eats through almost any clothing and armor. For some reason, it stays in a pool on the ground for about an hour, then evaporates. Who can say why—after all, this is magic we're talking about!

Records indicate that one of the Kapak draconians' greatest faults lies in the fact that they seem incapable of taking leadership roles. A unit composed entirely of these beasts makes even the most basic decisions based on committee rulings. The Dragon Highlords always made sure to place Kapak troops under the command of strong human or Bozak officers.



KAPAK DRACONIAN: *Nonhuman.* Co 8, Ph 6, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +2, Def -3, also acute senses, death throee, glide, and poison [paralyze].

A Kapak's senses are keener than most other creatures', making it one degree more difficult than normal to surprise [or avoid being surprised by] them.

Victims of the draconian's poison attack must succeed at a *challenging Endurance* action or find themselves paralyzed for one hour. When the poison has been applied to a weapon, it evaporates in three minutes.

When a Kapak dies, its body immediately dissolves into a ten-foot wide pool of acid. Anyone who touches [or is touched by] the liquid suffers 5 damage points. The pool evaporates about one hour after it forms.

Sivak Draconians

When a silver dragon egg is perverted, Sivak draconians are the result. These draconians can actually fly under their own power. They move quickly and nimbly in the air, and they probably have the most strength of any draconian race. All in all, Sivaks are the one type of draconian I most hope never to see walk through the Inn doors [though I wouldn't complain if I never saw *any* of them again!]



Standing over nine feet tall, Sivaks cast an imposing shadow and smell faintly like a blacksmith's shop, a strange mixture of smoke and hot metal. They seldom wear armor, but dress in flowing capes and place metal bands around their arms, legs, and tails.

Sivaks have a strange power that allows them to take on the form of any creature they kill. Although they don't get any memories from their victims, the illusion is visually perfect. This always worried me and my companions during the war. Every time a

friend or comrade began to act a little odd, we began searching our minds for times when he might have been ambushed and replaced by a Sivak.

For all their physical might, one thing about Sivaks makes them preferable foes to any other draconian—unlike the others, Sivaks do not fight to the death. In fact, if you get in a few good licks on one of these beasts, it'll up and run, sometimes even giving you a chance for a parting shot.

When a Sivak dies, one of two things happens. If its killer is roughly man-sized, the corpse transforms to take on his, her, or its features. Let me tell you, it can give you quite a shock to strike a beast dead and suddenly find yourself staring into your own dead eyes. About three days later, the corpse dissolves into a fine black soot that clings to anything it touches.

If, though, the Sivak's killer is particularly large or tiny, the beast simply explodes in a burst of magic fire so hot that I've seen it melt the armor of nearby soldiers.

The Sivaks' instinct for self-preservation is a peculiar thing. No other race created by the Dark Queen has this "flaw"; they all fight for their cause with their final breath. Perhaps she considered this minor flaw of self-interest an acceptable defect since it released more of the metallic dragon's righteous ferocity.

SIVAK DRACONIAN: *Nonhuman.* Co 10, Ph 12, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +12, Def -5, also alteration [self], dive, death thro, fly, and resistant to magic.

When a Sivak kills a man-sized foe, it may use its alteration ability to take on that person's shape, gaining his, her, or its looks, voice, and mannerisms, but not any of its memories or special abilities. It can maintain this form for as long as it wishes, but once it changes back to its original form, it cannot shapechange until it kills again.

If a Sivak bursts into flame during its death thro, anyone within melee range of the creature suffers 10 damage points due to the intense magical heat. Armor does not protect against this damage.

Dragonspawn

My son tells me that a new type of draconian, called a “spawn,” lives in the world today. This cannot bode well for the defenders of Good.

“Actually, Father, it’s more like a half-draconian.” he said when I asked him about these dragonspawn. “You see, the dragon overlords have determined a way to take a human prisoner and fill him or her with a draconian’s spirit. This way, they get the skills and intelligence of a human combined with the absolute subservience of a draconian.

“Oh, it is a terrible sight to see, these shambling mounds of flesh, not quite draconic, but definitely not human. Remember how difficult it was to see a Good dragon egg perverted? Well, imagine how much worse it is to see the same thing done to someone of your own race! Their scaly skin has the tint of their master’s hide, and they all seem imbued with sorcerous skill and dragon breath similar to those their creator wields.”



Some of the heroes under Palin’s guidance have contacted the spirits of slaves whose bodies formed a basis for spawn. They speak of never-ending pain that is relieved only when something kills the spawn, freeing their bodies.

Dragonspawn Special Abilities

All spawn have the following special abilities: breath attack, death throe, and sorcery [one school]. See *Wings of Fury* for more information.

BLACK SPAWN: Breath attack is a blast of acid [treat as acid special ability], sorcery is hydromancy, and death throe is a shower of acid that inflicts 5 damage points upon anyone within melee range.

BLUE SPAWN: Breath attack is a lightning bolt [treat as lightning special ability], sorcery is electromancy, and death throe is an electrically charged cloud that inflicts 5 damage points upon anyone within melee range.

GREEN SPAWN: Breath attack is a stream of poison [treat as poison special ability], sorcery is enchantment, and death throe is to explode into a contact poison that causes confusion to all those within melee range who do not succeed at a *challenging Agility* action.

RED SPAWN: Breath attack is a blast of fire inflicting 14 damage points, sorcery is pyromancy, and death throe is to explode into a spray of flaming oil, inflicting 5 damage points upon all those within melee range who do not succeed at a *challenging Agility* action.

WHITE SPAWN: Breath attack is a blast of frigid air inflicting 9 damage points, sorcery is cryomancy, and death throe is to melt into a ten-foot wide pool of frigid water that then hardens, trapping all standing on it for ten minutes, at which point it evaporates.

SPAWN TYPE	CO	PH	IN	ES	DMG	DEF
Black	7	10	5 [25]	7	+9	-5
Blue	8	12	5 [25]	8	+10	-5
Green	8	10	7 [25]	7	+8	-5
Red	10	14	6 [25]	8	+10	-5
White	6	9	4 [25]	6	+7	-3

Dragonkin

Like I said at the start of this chapter, dragons have touched every part of Ansalon. However, some places and creatures have been touched a little more deeply than others.

The beasts I am about to describe owe at least some of their nature to dragons [usually their appearance gives away this relationship]. Most of them were, I believe, created, sired, or enchanted by dragons. In any case, they clearly make up part of the same family.

I cannot corroborate the above assertion with available research or even anecdotal evidence. Though clearly similarities exist between these beasts and dragons, I have no evidence that the relationship goes any further than scale-deep.

Basilisks

When my brother and I traveled back along the river of time to the Age of Might, I saw many wondrous and confusing things. It was here that I first heard of a creature called the basilisk, and in a most amusing way.

As I walked the streets of Istar, knowing full well that it would sink below the waters of the Blood Sea, I tried to memorize every detail so I could tell my friends about it in years to come. In the neighborhood south of the School of Games, I came across a pub whose sign featured a strange, eight-legged dragon. I stared at it for awhile, unsure of whether this was just some creature from a deranged artist's mind or if I had to worry about actually meeting one of these beasts before I found my way home.

The owner came out to scrub the windows of the place and I asked him what manner of beast adorned his placard.

He bristled a little, reddened around the neck, and said, "Well, I may not be the finest painter in all of Istar, but I think this is a well-enough known establishment that you'd at least be able to *guess* that that's a basilisk over my door."

In truth, I had heard of the Sign of the Basilisk. In fact, I'd hoped to find time to taste its hospitality before I left the city, but I never knew exactly what

its name meant. I said so to the man, and his manner grew much kinder.

"Have you never heard of a basilisk then, man? Ahh, they're terrible beasts. Stand about as tall as a man's waist and seven feet long. See up there? It's got a long, thin body, all mottled brown and scaly with a spiky ridge running down its back. That's no mistake either; the beasts have eight feet tipped with claws sharp enough to gut you from hip to gizzard."

The most striking thing about the painting was the beast's eyes, which were painted an eerie green and seemed to glow with supernatural power. I asked why.

"Son, I've never seen a basilisk myself, thank the gods, but I painted those eyes just the way they were described to me—those eyes can kill! All you have to do is look into them for a split second, and your flesh will turn to stone.

"Do you hear what I'm saying? You don't turn into a statue the way you would if you looked at a gorgon or got pecked by a cockatrice, where just your skin turns to stone. I hear tell that after an attack, you can see a basilisk's victims' eyes moving in panicky circles. They can't move, they can't even

BASILISK: *Monster.* Co 3, Ph 19, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -3, also petrify [gaze].

GREATER BASILISK: *Monster.* Co 3, Ph 30, In 3, Es 8, Dmg +14, Def -4, also petrify [gaze], poison, and rake.

Any creature within near missile range who looks directly into a basilisk's eyes is automatically the victim of a petrify attack.

The greater basilisk inflicts its poison attack through a bite and its fetid breath. Anyone entering melee or personal combat with the beast is considered a victim of the attack.

- Heroes may encounter a former mage looking for a basilisk. He persuaded himself that the reason his spells of High Sorcery don't work is because he no longer has any components from a basilisk. [He refuses to listen to any arguments about other spells of High Sorcery that use non-basilisk components.] Just as the heroes finish speaking to him, the basilisk that the mage had been trailing breaks out from the bushes and attacks.

breathe, but their minds still work—for a short while. They die quick, though. Not breathing will do that to you.”

This story amazed me. Why had I never heard of such a creature before? I asked my brother and every other man of learning I could find. No one had an answer for me. Over the years I’ve heard tales of whole villages that were destroyed by odd creatures, “stone dragons” who turned all the people to rock and wandered off into the woods never to be seen again. Nobody can figure out a pattern to where or when these events occurred. Some happened in the woods, others in the desert, some in winter or summer; it made no difference. The basilisk, for I’m convinced the beast must be a basilisk, simply wanders through an area and never returns.

Oh, if only I were younger, I’d find the creature and kill it! What an adventure *that* would be—as long as it didn’t see me first!

The author’s attitude here provides a likely explanation for the disappearance of this creature from the world at large. Brave warriors out to test their mettle against a mighty basilisk may very well have thinned

their numbers until, today, many believe them to be mythical beasts.

Basilisks are certainly more than legend, though. Several of the Library’s magical tomes are bound in leather made from basilisk hide, and a taxidermist shop near the Palanthas wharves has a genuine, if threadbare, specimen displayed above the counter.

Still, the rumors referenced by the author persist. It seems likely that at least a handful of basilisks still roam Ansalon, looking for unsettled areas to call their own. It seems doubtful that the creatures exist in the great numbers they did before the first Cataclysm, however there may yet be small herds of a half dozen or fewer beasts wandering the deep forests and desolate wastes of the world.

One or two specimens of the larger “greater basilisk” may live in the most remote locales. These beasts grow up to twelve feet long, stand four or five feet high at the shoulders, and have a bite as venomous as a white scorpion’s sting.

As a scholar, I hope that should such a creature still exist, it does not end up on the tip of an adventurer’s blade. Were I ever to come face to face with it, though, I would feel infinitely safer with the author at my side.



It’s got a long, thin body, all mottled brown and scaly with a spiky ridge running down its back. That’s no mistake either; the beasts have eight feet tipped with claws sharp enough to get you from hip to gizzard.

Behir

At first glance, a behir looks a little like a sickly young blue dragon. Once you see its dozen legs and notice that it has no real horns [only wispy spines along the back of its head], you'll know right away what beast you face.

Behir have snakelike bodies covered with large, pale blue scales. They grow to about forty feet in length and curl their long necks so that their heads sit ten or fifteen feet off the ground.

The first time I saw a behir moving through the brush, I almost laughed out loud. It had all twelve of its legs curled up at its side and was slithering along, snakelike. It just looked so ridiculous. My attitude changed quickly, though, because when it heard me, it sprang instantly to its feet and charged straight toward my hiding spot. I'd never seen anything run so fast!

As soon as the beast was certain of my spot, it unleashed a blast of lightning. Luckily, I moved just in time, though my legs went numb from the electrical discharge. Before I could do anything else, the

behir was upon me, hissing like a cobra and coiling its long body around mine.

It pinned my arms. Try as I might, though I had my sword unsheathed, I could not press the edge of the blade into its hide hard enough for it to do any good.

The beast ripped at my body with its claws. If not for the armor I wore, it surely would have torn me in two. Still, I could do nothing to fight back as it curled tighter around me and raised its head for what I feared would be the death strike.

When the head came down, though, it did not bite my head from my shoulders, but rather it swallowed my entire torso from the waist up. I hung there, squeezed by the hot, wet muscles of the thing's throat as it threw back its head and swallowed again. Now only my feet hung out from its maw. What a terrible fate!

The behir swallowed again, and again, and I could smell the acid in its belly when I stuck and did not move another inch. The sword, which I still clutched in my hand, dug into the beast's gullet and caught. As the beast gagged and swallowed repeatedly, I saw my one chance.

Behir have snakelike bodies covered with large, pale blue scales. They grow to about forty feet in length and curl their long necks so that their heads sit ten or fifteen feet off the ground.



Tightening my grip, I pushed the sword down deeper into the flesh of the behir's throat, causing a stream of black, fetid blood to wash down over my face. Ignoring it, I pushed harder still until I felt the sword tip come up against the back of a scale.

Let me tell you, I found it much easier to get a sword out from behind armored hide than in through it. One more good push was all I needed to open a gaping wound in the beast's throat and send myself tumbling out into the daylight once more.

For its part, the behir's tremendous pain confused it terribly [I dare say that no other meal had ever managed to find an escape between its mouth and its belly], but it was intent on eating nonetheless. However, having just escaped, I had no intention of becoming both the first and second course for this beast.

I swung my sword at the wound in its neck, striking deep into its flesh. Pulling the sword quickly upward, I bypassed the armor and slit the behir's gizzard from the inside, then collapsed on the body, bone weary from the disgusting experience.

While this method worked for me, I do not recommend it for those of you who find yourselves faced with a hungry behir. Rather, I'd suggest you give it something to eat—a horse or large haunch of meat—and attack it while it chews on that. You see, the behir cannot eat and fight at the same time. Once it begins swallowing, it opens itself up to any attacks you wish to throw at it—at least until its mouth is free again.

Behir usually lair in shallow caves on mountains or cliff sides [they are excellent climbers], but they hunt over a very large area. A hunter who came into the Inn once showed me a coin minted in Thorbardin that he pulled, along with a dwarf's armor and war hammer, out of the stomach of a behir he killed in the Qualinesti Forest.

For all the fact that they seem to be related, behir and dragons do not get along at all well. In fact, when a dragon moves into an area, the behir move out [which can cause quite a problem for the people who live in their evacuation path].

They live solitary lives, and the only time you'll find two of them together is if they have recently mated.

BEHIR: *Monster.* Co 8, Ph 36, In 3, Es 8, Dmg +7, Def -3, also crush, lightning, swallow whole, and immune to electricity and poison.

The behir's lightning attack may be used at near-missile and melee range only and has a damage rating of +12. It can strike with this attack only once every ten minutes, as it takes its metabolism that long to build up a new charge.

Unlike other creatures, the behir does not apply its swallow whole in a single strike. Rather, if the initial attack succeeds, it takes half of the victim into its gullet. The behir spends the next three exchanges slowly swallowing the victim. On his actions, the victim may attempt a *challenging Strength* [Strength] action to extricate himself. After three exchanges, though, if he has not freed himself, the normal progress of the swallow whole attack continues [see page 15].

- A very young Kagonesti orphan girl with a talent for mentalism and animism managed to persuade a behir to protect the cave she lived in while she went on a journey to seek out her mother. The heroes can come across this cave just before the Kagonesti girl comes back. If they kill the behir, the young girl will attack the heroes blindly. If she can stop them from killing it, then she bids them to silently enter. Then she tells them her sad, but halting tale of loss and life.

It is interesting to note that behir young are born with six or eight legs, with the additional pairs appearing slowly as they mature.

Another useful thing to know is that behir have total immunity to all forms of poison and natural toxins. I cannot find records stating who first suspected or studied this phenomenon, but it has been clearly documented over the past several hundred years.

Alchemists and naturalists highly prize freshly-killed behir meat. Both types of scholars use it to concoct antitoxins. There yet exist copies of rituals and recipes for High Sorcery spells, potions, and scrolls that protect the user from all manner of poison, many of which call for various parts of a behir [from a scale to its liver].

Cockatrices

I never felt dumber than the time I found myself running from a chicken because I thought it was a cockatrice. The stupid bird had killed a grass snake and was dragging it behind as it walked through the chicken pen. I, being a young lad with more imagination than sense, mistook the dead snake for a scaly tail and panicked. Still, if I had it to do over again, I'd run all the same; that's how dangerous these beasts can be!

In case you don't know, a cockatrice is a turkey-sized animal with the body of a chicken, the leathery wings of a bat, and a dragon's tail tipped with a few feathers. A more ridiculous looking beast you'll never see. They can't fly very well——only over short distances——so you find them roaming around in packs of up to a dozen birds. Usually they

In case you don't know, a cockatrice is a turkey-sized animal with the body of a chicken, the leathery wings of a bat, and a dragon's tail tipped with a few feathers.

prefer warmer climates, but local hunters say they've seen a small pack wandering the Abanasinian plains. I've seen no real proof of this other than a fist full of hen's feathers they claim come from a cockatrice, though.

"What makes these beasts so dangerous?" you may well ask. Ridiculous as they look, cockatrices have one of the most feared weapons known: They can turn you to stone with but a single touch. Yes, unlike the basilisk or gorgon, their gaze means nothing——thank goodness for that. The way a cockatrice hops around [very much like an excited chicken], you would be hard pressed to avoid its gaze entirely. In battle, though, you'll find it equally as difficult to keep yourself from being pecked even once by one of these nimble critters.

I used to work on a farm, and let me tell you, before you go into battle with a cockatrice, you should go into a pen and try to grab a normal bird.



You'll soon find laying your fingers on one a very difficult thing to do; they move like greased lightning and change direction quicker than the Gale blowing across the Straits of Algoni. While you're scrambling and clutching, though, the boldest of the brood have no trouble pecking away at your ankles and knees. Later on, count the welts on your legs and remember that it takes only one of those to turn you to stone if they came from a pack of cockatrices.

Well, in truth, the beast would have to touch its beak to your bare skin, and armor can protect fairly well against that. However, years in the wild have trained the cockatrice to strike only at exposed areas like hands, knees, and faces.

Now, the cockatrice doesn't turn *everything* it touches to stone. No, the beast attacks purposefully; otherwise every lizard, mouse, and insect it ate would sit like a stone in its belly—literally. If, for some reason, the cockatrice doesn't think you're a threat, or thinks that you'd make a tasty meal, it can peck just to draw blood. Still, I wouldn't count on that.

Mad wizards often keep these beasts as pets or guardians. Also, you can find very few wild range chickens in even the wildest sections of Ansalon. Should you see such a flock in the wild, or your adventures lead you to a villain's lair where the yard is filled with fowl, look very carefully for dragon tails. If they have them, bear a few simple rules in mind.

First, remember that a cockatrice still has the mind of a chicken! If you can frighten one, the chances are, the rest of them will panic too, and the whole group will run away as quickly as their legs and wings will carry them. Of course, in an enclosed pen, that means they'll get right back to where you're standing very quickly, so hurry through the yard and into the safety of a building [just hope that the structure isn't a cockatrice coop!]. To spook the beasts, you can try charging into the pen stomping loudly and waving your arms about. On the safer side, you can lob a lit flask of oil in among them; cockatrices have a terrible fear of fire. Either way, though, you lose the element of surprise, as when these birds are frightened, they make a terrible racket.

Also you might want to try to throw food to the cockatrices. They always find food much more

interesting than trespassers. Now, they don't eat seed like chickens do, so you'll somehow have to come up with a basket full of grubs, lizards, and mice, but other than that, the plan should work quite well.

Should you manage to kill a cockatrice, do not pluck and cook it for your evening meal. For though it resembles the common chicken, I'm told that its taste does not.

When asked why he included the cockatrice in the Dragonkin section, the author replied that he was certain these beasts had some draconic link. "I mean, a chicken doesn't just grow a scaly tail and start turning people to stone just because it's fed up with laying eggs for the farmer's breakfast!" he said.

Most scholars agree, though, that the beast's origin most likely links to the Graystone rather than to draconic experimentation, though given the obscenities being produced by some of the dragon overlords, the cockatrice seems tame by comparison.

Interestingly enough, the female cockatrice [discernible by the lack of wattles and combs] dominates the pack. Wild groups usually consist of two or three females and their attendant harem of male suitors.

COCKATRICE: *Monster.* Co 9, Ph 15, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -2, also immune to petrify, and petrify [touch].

A cockatrice has immunity to petrify attacks by other cockatrices. Other creatures' petrify attacks work normally against them.

Any time a cockatrice touches another creature's bare flesh, the creature falls victim to a petrify attack. Any time a hero fails to avoid a melee attack from the creature, flip the top card of the Fate Deck. If the aura of this card is black, the cockatrice has struck exposed flesh [the Narrator may deem this result occurs with red auras as well if the hero's clothes do not provide adequate protection].

- As mentioned in the text earlier, heroes might come across a group of cockatrices outside of a mage's hut. If they figure out what they are, then they can easily avoid the area. If not, they might be tempted to cross the area filled with "chickens" to get to the mage's door more quickly.

Gorgons

I've never actually seen a gorgon, and at this point in my life, I hope I never do. I remember, as a boy, hearing tales of great heroes battling gorgons blindfolded, so as to avoid their deadly gaze. How I longed to one day be such a man.

I used to picture myself standing toe to toe with a creature so fierce that I dared not even look at it and walking away triumphant. My brother once came across me lost in this fantasy, standing with an oak-switch-sword in one hand and a badly beaten musk melon in the other. He laughed at me for days afterward.

Against the better judgment of Raist and all my other friends, my childhood dreams eventually set my feet on the road to the Khurish deserts, where I supposed the gorgons were as thick as flies.

Along the way, I convinced a group of Hachakee warriors to let me ride with them [no easy feat I assure you]. Their leader had leather for skin and fire running through his veins, but when I told him I sought a gorgon to slay, he blanched and shifted away from me. Now, the Hachakee are fierce fighters with no fear of death, so I was quite shocked to see these men shiver and hunker closer to the fire at the mere mention of a gorgon.

They are fearsome creatures, serpent-women with snakes for hair who could turn a man to stone simply by gazing at him.

"You are either the finest warrior in a hundred years," the leader said to me, "or a fool. No one else would boldly seek out such a grisly death."

He asked what set me on such a mad quest and how much I knew about gorgons.

"They are fearsome creatures, serpent-women with snakes for hair who could turn a man to stone simply by gazing at him."

He looked at me for a long, silent moment, then said gravely, "You certainly are a fool." He spent the rest of the night sharing with me his people's knowledge and lore about gorgons—and that in itself is a night I'll never forget.

According to the Hachakee, gorgons are children of the Dark Queen, put upon the world by Takhisis herself to remind mortals of her dark power. A

gorgon looks like a half-elf female with the lower body of a great serpent. Her scales and pale skin are unnaturally tough—proof against all but the mightiest blows.

Some legends say that these creatures possess a terrible beauty, but my barbarian friends told me that, while they are awesome to behold, nothing about a gorgon is at all beautiful.

A gorgon's hair consists of writhing snakes, which constantly crawl over her face and shoulders, hissing at anyone who has the courage to approach her. Her eyes are red and glow with deadly power. Anyone who looks directly into those eyes finds themselves turned to stone. Dozens of tales tell of heroes who cracked an eye in hopes of gaining some combat advantage only to find themselves nose-to-nose with a gorgon. Every legend about defeated gorgons mentions the hero somehow blinding himself before the battle.

Anyone who has enough skill to get into hand-to-hand combat with a gorgon has another worry. These creatures are deadly poisonous. One bite from a gorgon can kill ten men. Not only that, but an equally deadly poison that stays potent after the creature dies covers the gorgon's scales.

GORGON: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 8, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -3, also petrify [gaze] and poison [bite].

It is very unlikely that heroes will ever face a gorgon unless they go looking for one. Only found in the deserts of Khur [and, rumor has it, on Karthay], gorgon lairs can be identified by a successful *easy Perception* action, which allows heroes to notice stone body parts strewn around the entrance.

- An adventure could feature attempts to rescue petrified remains from a gorgon's gallery.

The Hachakee say that their most powerful shamans have magic that can clean the poison from a man's blood, but only if they treat him quickly.

The warriors seemed to be very glad when the sun began to rise. They had spent the entire night sharing their lore with me, and it seemed to have the same chilling effect on them that it was having on me. Still, the leader said that he would tell me how to find a gorgon if I still insisted on seeking an early death.

He told me that gorgons live in rocky caverns and shallow burrows in the deserts of Khur. They are easy to identify because the power of the gorgon often scatters the area around the entrance with lifelike stone heads and limbs of warriors and beasts of prey, petrified warnings to seek shelter somewhere else. Gorgons are usually solitary creatures, but he warned me that sometimes groups of two or three share a den.

After a silent morning meal, the Hachakee and I parted ways. They continued on their journey home, while I found that the eastern deserts no longer beckoned to me. I rode back to my brother and friends, content that it was a braver and wiser thing to face their teasing than to continue following a foolish child's dream of glory.

Several texts agree with the author's assertion that gorgons are children of the Dark Queen. Others, how-

ever, postulate that they are in some way related to nagas. One particularly disturbing scroll insists that nagas result from a human-gorgon mating.



Interestingly, gorgons have their own language, very similar to that of draconians. They are obviously intelligent creatures, making and using tools and weapons such as short bows and artfully carved knives and daggers. Gorgons reportedly also arrange their petrified prey in aesthetically pleasing patterns deep in their lairs, like grotesque subterranean art galleries.

Some Khurriish folktales say that a gorgon's petrifying gaze works only in her lair, but close examination of all the reliable information leads me to conclude that the victim must be relatively near the creature [say twenty or thirty feet]. Since gorgons rarely leave the security of their caves or burrows, it would be hard for someone who didn't venture in to fall prey to the creature's gaze.

Sources unanimously say that a gorgon's gaze is equally effective against men and beasts, but other gorgons have immunity to it.

Beside the deserts of Khur, some records indicate that gorgons live in large numbers on the island of Karthay. If this is true, it would go a long way to explain why the island has never been settled or even explored.

Hatori

A merchant passes through Solace every fall and stops at the Inn to sell me Estwildian brandy. Now, I'm pretty sure that he pours a Solamnian brew into exotic bottles, but I feel that the stories he tells are well worth the price of his wares. The weirdest thing he ever told me dealt with a creature called a hatori.

"Big as this inn and twice as sturdy, with skin made of solid rock,"

he described them. "A hatori is a desert dragon that lives beneath the sands. They swim through desert faster than you can run on dry land, and they're *always* hungry. Luckily, they still need to breathe, so they stay just below the desert floor with only their backs sticking out, but you can't tell the difference between them and a normal outcropping until you're too close for it to matter!

"I remember once, while leading a caravan across the Northern Wastes, we crested a dune and saw a rival merchant camping down beneath a small, rocky ridge. Now, I know this desert like the back of my hand, and no such rocks had ever been there before. As I wondered about it, I saw the truth—the rocks were a hatori fully two hundred feet long!

"The beast snapped its head up and swallowed half the caravan in one bite—one bite!—then turned around and finished the job. I've never seen anything like it in my life!

"Luckily, they're lazy and prefer to let their food come to them. So it pays to know where the rock formations are, and to stay away from any unknown ridge that crops up at just the perfect time. Hatori are masters at placing themselves in spots that draw weary travelers."

The merchant clearly discusses the greater hatori, a beast that scholars studied during the Third Dragon War. This rare creature has a closer relationship to crocodiles than dragons. Still the name "desert dragon" has been applied to the species for centuries. No reports of a living specimen have been filed in nearly three hundred

years [save that of the author's merchant friend], however, if the creature attacked, it could have left no survivors to talk about it.

People disappear in the wastes with alarming frequency, and greater

hatori could be the culprits in some or all of these cases.

Not as well-known is the lesser hatori, identical to its larger cousin in everything except size. They cannot

swallow whole prey larger than a kender. However, they make up for this by attacking in packs of five to ten creatures and tearing their victims to shreds in mere instants.



A hatori is a desert dragon that lives beneath the sands. They swim through desert faster than you can run on dry sand, and they're always hungry.

GREATER HATORI: *Monster.* Co 6, Ph 18–60, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +30, Def –5, also camouflage, pounce, and swallow whole.

LESSER HATORI: *Monster.* Co 7, Ph 3–15, In 3, Es 5, Dmg +15, Def –4, also camouflage, pounce, and swallow whole.

Greater hatori range in length from sixty to two hundred feet, while lesser hatori grow to anywhere from ten to fifty feet long. The beasts cannot digest gems and enchanted metals, and their bellies can be veritable treasure troves depending on what they have eaten over the years.

The hatori can use its pounce ability to initiate attacks only, not to leap to safety.

- Should the heroes ever need to earn a little steel, they can find a merchant caravan that wishes for some extra protection along a desert route. Once they start into the desert, they can experience an attack by a hatori.

Hydra

One of the first jokes I learned as a child was about a man who complained about having to share his bed with a dragon. “I don’t mind the snoring,” he says, “but it keeps stealing the pillow.”

As silly as that joke is, I sometimes wonder, according to its standards, whether a hydra would be a worse bunkmate than a dragon? After all, with all those heads, the beast could steal an awful lot of pillows.

In case you don’t know, a hydra has the body of a young dragon [between fifteen and thirty feet long] and anywhere from five to twelve heads. Its scales are grayish-brown in color, a shade not seen on any real dragons, and it has a row of spines running down its back and tail. The heads, each of which looks slightly different from all the others, have bony ridges on the crown, and long, yellow fangs poking out of the mouth. These solitary creatures live in swamps and sometimes in dank caves.

The minute a hydra notices another creature, it attacks and does not relent until it dies. Because it has so many heads, one hydra can fight an entire unit of soldiers and press the attack on all of them at once. Each head tries to grab a target, crush it to death, then move on to another victim. Sometimes two or more heads can strike at the same target and tear it limb from limb.

I have never faced a hydra in battle, though in the fortress Skullcap I did see a metallic monster made in one’s likeness. However, I know enough folk who have battled these beasts to know exactly what I would do should I need to face one.

HYDRA: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 15–36*, In 2, Es 5, Dmg +10–24*, Def –3, also crush.

*A hydra has 3 points of Physique and has a damage rating of +2 for each head it originally possesses. So a five-headed hydra would have a Physique score of 15 and a damage rating of +10, while an eight-headed one would have a Physique score of 24 and a damage rating of +16.

In melee combat, each active head may choose one victim per combat exchange. No more than three heads may target the same victim. Every time a hero causes 3 damage points to a hydra, one of its heads is killed. This does not, however, affect the creature’s damage rating.

- A Narrator can introduce a hydra while experienced heroes travel through an area riddled with caves or ruins.

Attacks on a hydra’s body seem to be less effective than those at its heads; for some reason its scales grow thinnest along the necks. Your best strategy, should you find yourself in battle with one of these beasts, is to concentrate your blows on one head until you kill it, then move on to the next. During the heat of battle, you may get confused as to which head you’re fighting [particularly if two others are nipping at you in the meanwhile], but stay focused.

I’ve heard tales about a hydra which, when someone cuts off one of its heads, grows two more in its place; it has an immunity to all magic, and you cannot defeat it unless you kill all of its heads in successive blows. I very much doubt if this story is true, but if it is, I hope that some warrior besides me has to prove it.

Scholars consider a myth concerning hydras and their origin from tainted metallic dragon eggs [before the creation of draconians] to be close to the truth. Many, however, point out that hydras have existed in legend since long before the chromatic dragons had control of the metallics’ eggs. Perhaps, then, hydras result from experiments on chromatic eggs.



Nagas

Of all the creatures I've met or heard tales of, the naga is one of the strangest. Just picture a twenty-foot snake with the head of a human. Sends a chill through you, doesn't it? I ran across very few nagas in my travels, but every time I did, I didn't sleep well for a week afterward.

Thick, tough scales cover a naga's body. If you don't land a clean, solid blow, the beast will probably just shrug it off. You must be very careful how you attack, too, because a row of sharp spikes line its back. When you draw naga blood, you know you've done something right.

The really weird part about any type of naga, though, is its head. You can see enough beasts out there with human [or at least semi-human] forms so that you get kind of used to it after a while. A rat-man or a lion-man or a goat with a winning smile becomes just another thing to defend yourself from. The naga's head is something different, though; it really does seem human. The eyes have no lids, and they glow a little in the dark, but when you look in them, you feel like someone is looking back! Spooks me just thinking about it.

The naga backs this appearance up, too; it's one smart creature. Every naga I know of speaks three or four languages, and out-thinking one is at least as tough as cutting it.

Nagas generally come in one of three types.

GUARDIAN NAGAS have green-gold scales, golden eyes, silvery spines and a sweet, flowery scent. Stories I've heard claim that these nagas have honor and speak the truth, that their word is their bond, and that they can be counted on to do what is right in any given situation. I wouldn't want to bet my life on these characteristics, but I've never seen them disproved.

SPIRIT NAGAS are covered with black and red bands. Their heads have sunken brown eyes, rotting skin, and stringy hair. They have a fishy smell about them that is as unpleasant as they tend to be. These nagas usually live in deserted ruins or dank caverns, and have a taste for carrion. As predators of any type of rotting flesh, they should not be trusted beyond the reach of your sword arm.

WATER NAGAS have blue-green scales and, as if you couldn't guess, live in large bodies of fresh

water. They have large, amber-colored eyes and are the most reclusive of the nagas. They're curious as kender but prefer to remain unseen. Water nagas usually swim away when they're spotted and fight only if they're cornered.

The first time I ever ran across a naga, it was a spirit naga, and I was completely fooled by its pose. It lay in the bottom of a well and called out to us when we approached, claiming to be a spirit that would grant us wishes if we threw valuable treasures. Judging by the hoard we found there later, quite a few travelers fell for this trick.

Nagas are great at arranging tricks like that. They often back their clever schemes with magical spells. [The one in the well used a darkness spell to hide itself.] Though they're much stronger than most men, nagas stay away from physical combat. They prefer to trick their foes or, if that fails, take them down with magical spells. Only if these attacks fail

GUARDIAN NAGA: *Monster.* Co 8, Ph 30, In 8, Es 8, Dmg +7, Def -3, also spit [poison] and mysticism [meditation, necromancy, sensitivity].

SPIRIT NAGA: *Monster.* Co 6, Ph 30, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +2, Def -3, also poison [bite], pounce, sorcery [geomancy, hydro-mancy, spectramancy], and mysticism [mentalism].

WATER NAGA: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 24, In 6, Es 6, Dmg +2, Def -3, also poison [bite], swimming, and sorcery [aeromancy, cryomancy, hydromancy].

Guardian nagas often protect caches of treasure and other valuable items. They are Good by nature and never associate with Evil creatures. Heroes may meet a guardian naga who struck a bargain with an ancient hero to protect his now-ruined castle or possibly even his tomb.

Spirit nagas are more likely foes for heroes. They are Evil and, although they avoid the cities, they prefer to feed on intelligent creatures. Spirit nagas usually set up some kind of ruse to lure prey.

- Any time the heroes are near a large, secluded body of fresh water, their activities may be spied on by a curious water naga.

will they resort to using their poisonous attacks. Maybe they think the poison spoils the taste of their prey.

If you survive one encounter with a naga, though, you will be well prepared for their tricks in the future. The beasts have an odd smell that clings to them and their lairs. If you can recognize that smell, you'll be halfway to seeing through any scheme a naga lays.

Although they have frightening intelligence, nagas would be much more dangerous if they were more organized. They tend to live in very small groups, so you probably won't find more than four of them in one general area. If a large group of nagas ever worked closely together, they would be a serious threat to any force on Krynn—even one of the dragon overlords.

Very little has been written about the three species of naga, and the reports often contradict each other.

They seem to be highly intelligent, with advanced skills in sorcery and mysticism. Several sources say that they occasionally make and use tools and clothing [in the form of pouches to carry their possessions]. If they had a more advanced social structure, they would probably be referred to as a race rather than as creatures. Nagas reportedly keep complex oral histories of their families' possessions and actions. If one could observe a naga, one would be treated to exquisite poetry and epic songs listing the vanquished foes and the accumulated spoils its ancestors had amassed.



You must be very careful how you attack, too, because a row of sharp spikes line its back.

The guardian and water naga reportedly can coil their bodies around foes, crushing the life from them, but the spirit naga apparently is too small to use this type of attack against man-sized opponents. Instead, sometimes spirit nagas try to control humanoids or other creatures. I have records of a spirit naga in Northern Ergoth who has done just such a thing. The nagas rarely use their crushing attack, though. All three species prefer to use their magical abilities first, their poisons second, and physical attacks only if no other option is available.

I know of several antidotes for naga poison listed in the Great Library. However, none of them has proved completely reliable.

Tylors

When it comes down to it, tylors are best described as the illegitimate dragonkin. I've heard that they occur when an Evil dragon mates with a hatori, though why a dragon would do this [other than for the specific purpose of siring a tylor] is beyond me.

A tylor looks like a wingless dragon with two long, straight horns on top of its head, and winglike fins on the sides. Its tail is long—very long—stretching up to eighty feet by the time the beast is full grown, and it has as sharp an edge as any sword you've ever swung.

Many of the animals I've told you about have one or another type of camouflage, be it the leonine's spots or the ice bear's white coat. The tylor, though, has a magical camouflage that beats them

A tylor looks like a wingless dragon with two long, straight horns on top of its head, and winglike fins on the sides.

all. As the beast walks through the forest, or mountains, or wherever it happens to be [tylors have no natural homelands], its hide changes color to blend in perfectly with the surrounding terrain. From what I hear, it's almost impossible to pick out a tylor until it moves—and by then it's probably too late.

The beasts have incredible appetites and eat just about everything that crosses their paths. Don't mistake them for dumb animals, though. They get more than a little of their dragon parent's brains and skill.

Tylors speak the common tongue, probably better than I do, and also several dragon languages. Not only that, they are powerful sorcerers, having a natural skill with whatever school their sire practiced. They think quickly on their feet, plotting and planning where and when to get their next meals without letting the local folk know they are about.

Tylors are very rare creatures who live lonely, wandering lives.

They never stay in one place very long, mainly because

they eat so much that they quickly exhaust the food in a given area.

I would be surprised if more than a dozen of them live in the whole of Ansalon—that is,



unless the dragon overlords have decided to hatch more of them.

I've never seen one of these beasts myself, but Tanis and Flint once faced a tylor together.

"I met it first," Flint told me. "Well, first I saw its handiwork, an elf merchant almost cut in half, then I saw its tracks. I had no idea what could have left such huge footprints yet disappear so completely. Searching the forest warily, I stopped, though I wasn't sure why. Something *felt* wrong. Then I looked up, and the tree in front of me was covered with blood and was smiling at me.

"The next thing I knew, a huge swath of the forest was leaping out to kill me, teeth gnashing, claws whistling, and a tremendous tail slicing through hundred-year-old oak trees. I ran, though where I thought I would go to escape the forest itself, I don't know. Reorx guided me to safety!"

Tanis laughed at this last part. "Reorx and a skitish mule!" he added, sending me into gales of laughter and Flint into blustering embarrassment.

"Now, now, friend!" Tanis soothed. "You took the wisest course of action—— certainly the one I would have taken.

"At any rate, Flint and I later found ourselves hunting the creature, together with a handful of Qualinesti warriors.

"We tracked it through the forest, not a terribly difficult thing to do now that we knew what we were looking for, but we knew that any bank of trees, any large rock ahead could be the tylor lying in wait. It was a nerve-wracking trail, believe me.

"When it finally leapt from its hiding spot, the battle seemed unreal. It appeared as if we were loosing arrows and swinging swords at nothing, but the howls and blood we drew were proof enough that the tylor was actually there. In the end, magic felled the beast, but it was quite satisfying to see its hide, which turned a dull brown after it expired, peppered with all those arrows."

"All except yours!" Flint pointed out, obviously seeking good-natured revenge for the ribbing Tanis gave him earlier.

"Yes, well, that was hardly my fault."

Very little accurate information is available on the tylor. Most of the texts mentioning them are filled with supposition and hearsay, but one treatise, penned by a priest of Takhisis, discusses the beasts in a chapter

TYLOR: *Monster.* Co 8, Ph 3–39*, In 6 [36], Es 8, Dmg +15, Def –3 to –9*, also camouflage, pounce, and sorcery [one school].

*Newly hatched tylors have a Physique score of 3 and defense rating of –3, and they mature slowly. The creature's Physique score goes up 3 points every fifty years, while its defense rating increases by –1 for every hundred years of life until it is six hundred years old, at which point it has reached its physical peak.

The tylor's camouflage is so complete that it increases the effectiveness of its pounce attack. If the beast stands still, hero attempts to avoid surprise become two degrees more difficult.

The draconic sire of a tylor determines the school of sorcery the tylor knows [e.g., if its parent is a black dragon, it uses hydromancy]. See page 167.

- Heroes might meet a tylor when dealing with a dragon overlord. Perhaps Sable has learned of tylors and created one for her own reasons.

devoted entirely to the goddess' plan for her bastard children in the coming age [the entire book reveals the Dark Queen's grand design for the world when her conquest is complete—— illuminating reading].

According to this text, although tylors are solitary creatures, they feel a close kinship to one another. Every hundred years, the beasts gather and talk of their lives, sharing experiences, news of the world, and commiseration on their isolated place among the creatures of Krynn.

Tylors are sterile and thus can never increase their numbers. Perhaps this explains why they take such interest in one another's lives. It is said that if a tylor bears of the death of one of its kindred, it goes to the ends of the world to avenge this act, hunting down the slayer no matter where he hides. The tales I have knowledge of consider it unlucky and unwise to brag of slaying a tylor, even in jest.

Once report I've read states that the Dark Knights captured a tylor and trained it to serve as a warrior's steed. The creature made a terrible mount, though, as it had absolutely no experience living or working with others and cultivated few if any social skills. When the tylor's rider became incapacitated, it simply ate him then wandered off into the wild again.

Worms

Bertrem and I have argued over worms for weeks now! He says that worms [like those I'm about to discuss] and wyrms [baby dragons] differ in various ways. Of course, I agree, but if they have the same name, they must be related!

The facts about worms remain unchanged despite debates about the mutually exclusive relationship between spelling, pronunciation, and genealogy.

Like the umber hulk, the **PURPLE WORM** is one of those strange dangers that comes with living underground.

These huge beasts are ten feet wide and over a hundred feet long. They spend their lives burrowing through the earth. As far as I can tell, they swallow tons of dirt in order to eat the moles, voles, and grubs living there. They can feel the vibrations made by living things [I've heard that from a half mile away they can hear the heartbeat of a burrowing rabbit] and are drawn toward any substantial meal such as a dwarf mining party. They then make a feeding pass, trying to scoop the meal up in their toothy maws, and continue on burrowing into the depths of the earth.

The worm's tail has a poisonous stinger which the beast waves back and forth behind it to keep anyone from following it too closely. Why would someone do something so foolish? I've heard it said that among the things a purple worm cannot digest are jewels, gold, and iron.

Thankfully, from the perspective of dwarven culture, purple worms have always been a rare breed. They live mostly in the hard, packed earth under plains and forests, but occasionally wander into the more rocky, mountainous regions when food supplies dwindle.

Ore and gems that have passed through a worm's digestive tract are said to be tainted with a sulfuric odor

and a yellow film that cannot be removed by any known means.

A worm that dwarves like is the **TRACTOR WORM**. Dwarves of Thorbardin keep these beasts, about thirty feet long when fully grown, as pack animals. They pull carts and trams, and generally do all the same jobs a draft horse would in your town. The young grow in the North Warren, where their scramble for food tills the soil of the fungus farms.



Given the general intellect of most known worms, I do not understand how the dwarves train tractor worms—also known as Urkhan worms—to fulfill any useful purpose. No human or elfscholar has even the glimmer of a workable theory on the subject, and the dwarves refuse to discuss the matter at all.

PURPLE WORM: *Monster.* Co 5, Ph 4-5, In 1, Es 6, Dmg +22, Def -2, also acute sense [vibrations], poison, and swallow whole.
TRACTOR WORM: *Monster.* Co 3, Ph 24, In 1, Es 5, Dmg +4, Def -4.

- While the heroes trek through underground caverns and tunnels, they could meet up with an ill tractor worm that blocks their passage. Unfortunately for the heroes, they need to wait for the dwarves to figure out what is causing the illness. If the heroes help, they discover that a strange fungus that looks much like the worm's normal fare has made the worm ill.

Wyverns

Wyverns are the poor relations of the dragon family. They certainly look like kin but, if the dragons had a choice, they'd probably disown them.

A wyvern has a long, thin body, nearly half of which is its tail, with no arms and tremendous, bat-like wings. Its face certainly has the look of a dragon about it, but it seems like the face of a wild animal rather than that of a cunning child of the gods. Its dull, red eyes hold no sign of intelligence, and the only sounds it can make are a hiss and a deep, throaty growl. A wyvern's tail ends in a curved stinger, very much like a scorpion's and just as poisonous.

The one thing that wyverns do with a fair amount of cunning is hunt. They make nests in caves and on ledges high on cliff faces overlooking

jungles and deep forests and silently swoop down on their prey. It seems to me, though I have no way to prove it, that they take great care to make sure that no scent or shadow reaches their targets ahead of their claws, so you must be very careful when traveling through wyvern territory.

Since they have no arms, wyverns always try to remain airborne while hunting. They grab prey in their mighty talons and carry it off, stinging it

Wyverns are the poor relations of the dragon family. They certainly look like kin but, if the dragons had a choice, they'd probably disown them.

WYVERN: *Monster.* Co 12, Ph 28, In 4, Es 7, Dmg +11, Def -4, also dive, poison, and swoop.

Victims must resist the wyvern's poison attack each and every time they fail to defend themselves against a normal melee attack.

- Aside from guarding overlord lairs, wyverns can also be used as mounts. One of the lesser dragon lords might send mounted wyverns after a group of heroes that thwarted it.

repeatedly with their tails and swooping near the rock face hoping to dash the victim's life out on a sharp ledge. Oddly enough, the one weapon wyverns

do not use in battle is their dagger-sharp teeth. In fact, they do everything they can to keep their heads

as far away from their prey as possible until they know it is completely dead.

You'll usually find a dozen or more wyverns nesting in the same general area, but they do not work together at all. In fact, you'll often see larger wyverns chasing smaller ones away from a kill so that they can steal it for themselves.

While, as the author indicates, dragons have no respect for their wyvern cousins, they do occasionally employ them in their lairs as guards. The two races have some basic form of communication that allows dragons to leave simple instructions with a wyvern and expect that they will be carried out correctly.

Palin Majere reports, in fact, that Skie, the Blue Overlord, left his lair in the Northern Waste guarded by a pair of wyverns.

However, by using only the simplest of ruses, the sorcerer befuddled them and escaped with his life.



Chapter Six:

You might wonder, "Why does a book about the animals, monsters, and assorted creatures of Ansalon have a chapter called 'Peoples?'" Plainly put—it's because I say so! Now, I don't plan to tell you about the habits and cultures of humans, dwarves, and such (they are topics for another book), but I believe a few races don't fit into any other category in this book. They're too smart to be animals and too civilized to be monsters. So what are they?

My brother laughed at me when I asked questions like that. He'd tell me, "Things are what they are, you fool. If they refuse to fit into the narrow molds you create for them, the fault is yours, not theirs." I'm still not sure exactly what he meant, but I think that since these creatures aren't anything else, they must be people.

I would like to officially lodge my objection to this chapter's premise. The author's assumption that these species are "people" carries with it a moral question. Simply seeing these creatures often causes "civilized" races to slay them and make off with their worldly goods [and their pelts]. If they are people, how can we justify our attitudes and actions?

Beastmen

Beastmen is a good catchall term for the various peoples that look like equal parts man and animal. I've met a few of these races and heard tales about the rest.

I asked the author why he didn't include minotaurs in this category. He looked shocked at the suggestion. Apparently, while they have similar origins, he sees a difference in that minotaurs do not have a bestial side to their natures. Although I find them pig-bearded, I had to agree that they do not have the personality schism that prevails in all the races Caramon called "beastmen."

Brutes

One of the biggest arguments Bertrem and I had was over whether or not to include brutes in this chapter. Bertrem almost won the fight too, because he rightly pointed out that as strange as they seem, brutes are nothing more than human barbarians. However, when I came back with the fact that, unlike other barbarians, brutes don't come from Ansalon, he gave in.

Brutes come from a mysterious land on the far eastern side of the Courrain Ocean. From what I hear, the Dark Knights sailed there and somehow convinced the savages that they served the gods, and that working with servants like themselves would allow them to follow a path to honor and glory. I also heard, though, that as a race of warriors, the brutes took very little convincing.

They're pretty much human, though very large—I've never seen one shorter than six feet, and most of them stand closer to seven—with muscular, bulky bodies, and thickly-bearded faces. However, their ears form points, like an elf's. Their language sounds like a dog growling, and they have strange habits.

If left to their own, brutes wear nothing but a leather belt [which they use only to strap on their weapons]. The Knights have convinced them to wear a loincloth while in our lands, at least. Brutes also tie feathers into their hair, which they pull back into scalp locks.

Before battle, they cover themselves head-to-toe with a rich blue paint. This makes the brutes look monstrous and draws attention to their inhuman qualities.

The paint also serves as armor for the brutes. Soldiers who have faced them in battle tell me that during the first few exchanges, their hides are tougher to cut than normal skin; arrows tend to bounce right off their chests, and any wounds they take heal almost immediately. After several strikes, though, brutes bleed and die just like any other mortal.

Peoples of Krynn

The Dark Knights brought the brutes to Ansalon to serve as soldiers during the Chaos War. Their natural grace would have made them excellent scouts, but though brutes generally understand the common tongue, very few of them have any interest in speaking it. So while it is possible to get the brutes to follow orders, they have no way of telling you anything about what they've seen or heard.

Still, don't let their inhuman size and unbelievable ferocity fool you into thinking they lack combat skills. In fact, they have a natural sense for strategy and tactics that rivals trained Solamnic Knights. Also, the strange bows they use fire arrows that whistle hauntingly as they fly, making fighting them even more disturbing.

Brutes are incredible warriors—they live for battle. I've heard tales, though, that when no war is waged, the Dark Knights have to watch them or the brutes begin a series of death duels among themselves, just to keep their battle senses sharp. When they are preparing for an engagement, I hear that they play a game that involves throwing a long knife carved from a fallen comrade's leg bone.

Though most brutes you'll meet still serve the Dark Knights, I've heard that a group of them have struck out on their own. Rumors say they wander the continent gathering information on the people and places to be found here.

Oddly enough, they seem as frightened of us as we are of them. Someone came to the Inn the other night and told us that these wandering brutes passed through Duntol the other week and ran screaming like scared children from the centaurs there.



In the end, the author was quite persuasive in his arguments for including brutes in this treatise. Though I can't add much, I can report that magical scholars have examined the brutes' blue war paint and determined its abilities, if not its origin [the brutes refuse to discuss the substance, maintaining it is a sacred formula].

The paint is a plant extract [probably made from a mixture of fruits, tree sap, and pulped leaves] of flora not native to Ansalon. It has several mystic properties, according to mystics from the Citadel of Light, including instantly healing even the most serious of wounds. It also causes the wearer's heart rate to increase and causes a state of agitation, useful in preparing the brutes for battle.

Any skin covered by the paint tingles at first then itches annoyingly. Other than this, there seems to be no detrimental effects to wearing the mixture.

BRUTE: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph II, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +8, Def 0 [-5], also melee weapons, missile weapons, thrown weapons.

Brutes use various weapons, including long bows, short swords, long swords, spears, and throwing axes. The brutes' regenerate power comes from the mystical blue war paint they cover themselves in before entering combat. This paint also gives a brute a defense rating of -5. If a brute is not wearing the paint, he gets neither advantage. The blue paint can regenerate up to a total of 20 points. After that, it ceases to be effective.

- Any heroes who have fought large-scale battles against the Dark Knights have probably faced brutes. What would these heroes do if they met a group of nonthreatening brute explorers?

Gnolls

The best way I can describe a gnoll is “a dog with the shape of a man.” That’s not strictly right, but that’s always been my take on them. Gnolls are big, strong, tough, vicious warriors, and they have good skills in hand-to-claw fighting. I’ve found that they usually arm themselves with swords and axes scavenged from fallen prey or battlefields—the same place they get their tattered, mismatched sets of armor. They also make and use simple bows and other missile weapons.

I’ve faced gnolls on the battlefield, but I’ve never actually seen one in its “natural” home. As near as I can tell, they’re not really Evil, but they are warlike. I’ve heard that young male gnolls often join mercenary armies. Flint Fireforge once told me what he knew about them. “They are as cowardly a creature as you’re ever likely to meet. In their swamps, they attack any creatures or travelers weaker than they are. They have a pack mentality and avoid confrontation of any sort unless they outnumber their foes.”

I want to say that gnolls are stupid, but that’s not true. They’re simple, but cunning. One gnoll trait that you can exploit, though, is that they think the same way they fight: They focus on a single subject and stay that way until a more important one comes along. If you can use a distraction to focus a gnoll’s attention, you can do almost anything [short of hitting it] without it noticing.

I’ve heard that every few years a gnoll is born with a gift for tactical thinking. These natural leaders can turn a pack of gnolls into a force that at least matches an equal number of trained soldiers.

In fact, Caramon is much closer to correct than he knows. Gnolls are more accurately described as hyenas in human form, but most reputable sources agree that they



have a very canine nature.

Gnolls function in small packs of ten to twenty individuals led by the strongest male. Usually the pack has two males for every female.

Though all the females “belong” to the leader, the stronger male members of the pack form permanent “family units” with specific females.

Although many civilized cultures consider gnolls to be cowardly and aggressive, gnolls are simply territorial scavengers. Gnolls allow creatures and groups more powerful than they are to pass through the territory [hoping that the groups leave behind some usable refuse]. However, weaker groups, or those wanting to move into the territory, are met with savage aggression.

Nocturnal by nature, gnolls usually live in ruins and makeshift structures in thick, dark swamps, although some have also lived underground. Often, a dozen or more packs of gnolls share a territory, with the leaders of the packs establishing a hierarchy based on their relative strength and cunning. Because of their reclusive nature, much about the gnoll culture is still shrouded in mystery. In fact, I know of several references to packs of gnolls living in the Plains of Dust, though no one has confirmed these assertions.

GNOLL: Nonhuman. Co 5, Ph 7, In 3, Es 5, Dmg +4 [claws], Def -3 [hide], also missile weapons [light].

Although individual gnolls work in any army that accepts nonhumans, heroes can also meet packs of gnolls in swampy regions such as the New Swamp or the bogs found along the Vingaard River.

- If a group travels into a gnoll’s territory, it may find itself under attack by a horde of them. On the other hand, if the heroes are powerful, they may find a pack of gnolls following them. The heroes can even forge an alliance with the creatures [although they are not terribly reliable allies].

Satyrs

I'm not certain whether or not satyrs still exist, but I love to hear stories about them. When talk around the campfire would fall away, I often urged Laurana to tell a tale about one of these half-man, half-goat guardians of the forests.

Satyrs live in deep forests, where men rarely ever see them. They exist to protect their woods and the creatures that live there from all outsiders. According to Laurana, the god Chislev created satyrs to be the joyous of the Children of Krynn; they love to drink, sing, and carouse [which is probably why I like tales about them so much]. My favorite story involves a group of humans who trespassed in a satyr's woods.

"These men hunted and killed more rabbits than they could possibly eat in a week, and they chopped down the oldest tree in the forest for use as firewood," Laurana told us sadly. "The outraged satyr, being a peaceful, intelligent creature, decided to reason with the humans. That night, the satyr entered their camp bearing a very special skin of wine. No matter how much they drank, it always remained full.

"As dinner began, the satyr asked them to hunt only what they needed to survive. They laughed, threw their half-eaten food in the fire, and caught more rabbits. As the animals cooked, the satyr asked them to select firewood carefully since some trees in the forest were as old as the land itself. The men laughed and chopped down another ancient tree merely to sit on. Since they had heard that satyrs were full of revelry and mischief, their disappointment at the creature's preaching grew.

"Completely disheartened, the satyr got up to leave, and because the men insisted, he dropped the wineskin in the camp as he passed by. The next morning, half the men woke to find themselves transformed into rabbits while the other half had

become oak trees. Suddenly, the satyr stood in their midst, wielding an axe and laughing evilly. The rabbit-men scurried for hiding holes; the tree-men found their limbs shaking as though a great wind blew. Then the satyr put the axe down and called them to his side.

"Silly children!" he said. "I couldn't hurt you any more than I could other members of my forest family. More men will come to these woods, though. For your sake, I hope they respect their weaker cousins more than you did."



While the anecdote above enlightens us to a folklore perspective, it does not portray an accurate picture of satyrs. These creatures guard the forests of Ansalon, but not as audaciously as described. Usually they coax creatures of the woods to work together to drive off offenders. If that does not work, satyrs play music so beautiful that it causes listeners to fall into a trance [making it easy to move them else-

where or, in extreme cases, dispose of them entirely].

I asked Caramon why he thinks satyrs might be extinct. He believes satyrs have a link to the woods they protect and fears the land shaping of the Great Dragons means the death of a race closely tied to the land. I pray he is wrong, but satyrs once congregated in groups as large as eight, and no one has seen more than one since the end of the Chaos War.

SATYR: *Nonhuman.* Co 9, Ph 15, In 6, Es 7, Dmg +4, Def -3, also charm [music], missile weapons, and mysticism [animism].

Satyrs are encountered only in the most secluded forests, and almost never in a groups larger than two or three.

- A satyr whose woods are threatened by a force too powerful for him to deal with might seek help from trustworthy heroes.

Taer

Taer, the wildest of the beastmen, are brown- and gray-haired shaggy apes. I've heard that they are very devoted to their own clans, but treat all strangers [even other taer] as enemies. I wouldn't say that taer are smart really, but they certainly are clever. They know how to use weapons [though they usually don't] and can set simple-but-deadly traps.



At a distance, a taer looks like a bulky, slope-shouldered old man, but the smell of its fur will tell you that it is definitely not human. When taer sleep in a location, a scent like rotting wood mixed with dung lingers heavily, bringing tears to your eyes a day or two later. Before you get into close combat with a taer you'd better be sure you can handle the smell, because if you can't, the stench will leave you retching and gasping for breath.

Taer live in small, nomadic clans with three or four interrelated families. They live in almost every mountain range in Ansalon. They generally avoid contact with men, but when they feel threatened, taer become extremely aggressive.

Many scholars say that what we commonly call taer are actually two species: the brown-furred taer and the white-furred yeti. To my mind, the difference is merely cosmetic, though I have found records indicating that most taer found in arctic mountains are white-furred, while taer in more temperate climes usually have brown fur.

TAER [AND YETI]: *Nonhuman.* Co 7, Ph 16, In 5, Es 7, Dmg +6, Dmg -2, also crush, musk [fur], thrown weapons [spears] and immune to cold or ice [yeti only].

- Taer occasionally attack a group passing through their mountains in order to steal weapons, coins, and other metallic items.

Thanoi

I've never actually seen thanoi myself. While I was escorting Alhana to the Silvanesti Forest, though, some of my companions visited the walrus men's icy home; none of them seemed very willing to tell of the adventure—except Tas.

“Oh, they were really interesting” he said. “Big, stocky guys with dark skin like a . . . a . . .”

“Walrus?”

“Yeah! Anyway, they had these two long teeth sticking out of their mouths.” He wiggled his little kender fingers at the corners of his mouth. “They smelled like week-old fish and they sounded like Flint when he snores. They were terribly mean and didn't seem to like anybody—

including kender! I'd stay away from them if I was you . . . but if you really want to go see them, I'll take you!”



Thanoi are usually grouped as one of the so-called “lost races,” ones that have all but vanished from the face of Krynn.

However, Gellidus brought several tribes to Southern Ergoth, and they have flourished. As a result, no one can call these barbaric humanoids “lost.”

THANOI: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph 8, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +8 [claws, clubs, or spears], Def -3, also immune to cold, thrown weapons [spears], and vulnerable to heat.

- Heroes meet thanoi only if they travel to arctic locales such as the southernmost reaches of Ansalon or the heart of Gellidus' realm. Even then, the walrus men live in small, isolated tribes [no more than twenty individuals] and may be hard to locate. They are extremely aggressive, however, and should the heroes be seen by the thanoi, they are attacked immediately and chased until the creatures can no longer see them.

Birdfolk

As I mentioned earlier in this book, I find the idea of flying very imposing. I know that Goldmoon found her flying experiences exciting, but I had trouble keeping my mind off the fact that my feet were nowhere near the ground. I have this same feeling for birdlike creatures with intelligence. I can respect them because they fly high over my head with very little effort. Sometimes in nightmares, though, these birdfolk come and grab me for a long flight over all kinds of terrible landscapes.

Aarakocra

Aarakocra are clearly more bird than man. While they have humanlike bodies and working hands, their faces show their true feathers, if you know what I mean. They look like some odd cross between a parrot and an eagle, and although many of them can speak, they never sound natural doing so. I always find myself wondering, “Who taught it that phrase?”

They’re tough fighters, circling overhead in groups of three or six and swooping down to attack with their razor-sharp talons and beaks. If that doesn’t work, they throw javelins extremely accurately.

Aarakocra are an intelligent race. Tribes of up to thirty members live in a giant nest, usually near the peaks of high mountains [although I know of at least one tribe that built its nest along the ridges of a secluded vale]. They’re very spiritual creatures, with a religion of their own [though it seemed to me they were worshiping Chislev under some unpronounceable bird name].

They love treasure, particularly gems and polished metal objects. Any time aarakocra come across a traveler carrying such items, the birdmen try to trade with him for his “shinies.” While they usually have nothing of any great value, aarakocra have keen eyesight and know every inch of their territory. A well-prepared traveler can trade a brass candlestick for all sorts of useful information [the location of lost ruins, enemy troops, or fresh water].

Aarakocra are hunters by nature, presumably descended from birds of prey. However, several sources refer to tribes that cultivate fields of corn and wheat.

Perhaps this shows that the creatures are becoming more civilized. Then again, perhaps they simply learned the process through imitation.

Their love of treasure has led the aarakocra to use their talons to cover their tools and weapons with intricate carvings. The carvings show snippets of their daily life, birdseye maps of the region, and beautifully abstract patterns that the aarakocra say can be used to accurately predict the weather weeks in advance. These carved items are becoming a favorite among art collectors in Palanthas.



AARAKOCRA: *Nonhuman.* Co 3, Ph 5, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +3 [talons or beak], Def -2, also acute sense [vision], fly, dive, missile weapons [javelins].

- Heroes may see aarakocra soaring around peaks in any tropical or temperate mountain range. The birdmen likely ignore them unless they display large, shiny objects such as polished steel weapons, armor, or gem-encrusted jewelry. In this case, the aarakocra may fly down and try to barter for pieces of the treasure. If the heroes are rude [or if they somehow threaten the communal nest], the aarakocra fly away immediately. However, they circle in the air above the group and attack them periodically until they leave the birdmen’s territory.

Kyrie

The other type of birdmen in Ansalon is the kyrie. They're a fierce, proud race of warriors who live mainly in the Blood Sea Islands, eternally fighting with the minotaurs.

I was rescued from a minotaur prison by members of the local kyrie flock [one of their number was also being held in the complex]. They brought me back to their aerie, a series of caves set in high cliff walls surrounding a nearby valley, where I spent a week or so healing.

These bird people told me that the kyrie were once nomadic, living in one set of cliffs for a year or so, then flying great distances over land and sea to find a likely new home. Over the course of dozens of years they would make a complete circuit of Ansalon. Kyrie, who live for four or five hundred years, would usually make at least ten such circuits in their lives. However, the depth of the bitter conflict that has developed between them and the minotaurs has caused the kyrie to give up their wandering ways. Fifteen or twenty clans now live permanently on the Blood Sea Isles [mostly on Mithas] involved in a war they have little hope of winning.

During my stay, I was amazed at how savage the kyrie can be. At first, they seem a beautiful, delicate race with flutelike voices and a poetic way of speaking. However, when they talked about their war with the minotaurs, I found myself pressing against the wall for defense. Such hatred is a terrible thing to see.



One night, they invited me to a meeting of the Warrior Society, a group of the strongest, bravest warriors from among the various flocks. They planned to attack the minotaur prison to free their chief's son and offered me the chance to join them. I hoped to rescue Sturm at the same time, so I accepted.

The war rituals of these birdmen were as savage and brutal as any I've ever seen. They fight ferociously, clawing at their opponents with foot-talons or clubbing them with a curved wooden weapon called a stryker. It was a privilege to fight alongside such skilled warriors, and educational, too—I learned that I never want to fight against them!

By all accounts, the kyrie are a highly intelligent race. If the war with the minotaurs did not cause so many casualties, their numbers might be much more plentiful. I find it a great shame that the kyrie cannot give up their battle with the minotaurs, for everyone familiar with their situation concurs that they cannot win this war. I think it discouraging to see a race bent on bringing about its own extinction.

Although rumors abound of kyrie living in the fabled Dragon Isles, I cannot find any proof that points to other kyrie than those in the Blood Sea Isles. However, dozens of sites across the continent have ruins of kyrie aeries, and it remains possible, if unlikely, that other isolated flocks may exist.

KYRIE: *Nonhuman.* Co 8, Ph 7, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +3 [claw], Def -3, also animism, fly, melee weapons [stryker +4], mentalism, and thrown weapons [spears].

Some kyrie may have a natural skill in one school or sphere of magic. The most commonly known specialties include aeromancy, animism, and spectramancy

- If the heroes find themselves in remote valleys on the island of Mithas they might need to decide whether to help a small group of minotaurs or kyrie when they come across a pitched battle between the two groups.

Goblin Races

By all the gods, I hate goblins! A more despicable, untrustworthy, filthy, sniveling, cowardly group of races you'll never find. It almost pains me to include them in a chapter about "peoples!" They have no care for anything but their own selfish wants, and they can't show noble or even humane emotions.

Having said that, though, I must admit that, as a whole, they are far too shrewd to be dismissed as lesser beasts. Overconfidence can always kill you, but underestimating the guile, treachery, and determination of a goblin can cost the lives of everyone around you.

When I say "group of races" I mean the various tribes of common goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears. I also include kobolds and sligs as goblin races, though Bertrem and I have spent several nights arguing this point. He says that these races clearly come from another species, but where I come from, we've always thought of them simply as scaly goblins and hobgoblins. I mean, with the variety of shapes and sizes within the races of Ansalon, I think that grouping them by personality is as valid a method as any other. Also, anyone who has ever met a kobold will tell you that they are cut from the same cloth as goblins.

The way I learned it, the goblin races came from joinings between foul ogres and fair elves, which filled the goblins' veins with poisoned blood. The offspring with elf and ogre blood in equal portions are common

goblins, while those with more elf than ogre inside them are hobgoblins, and those with too much ogre blood are bugbears. Kobolds and sligs are merely goblins and hobgoblins that the Graystone transformed. This god-touched crystal certainly caused many greater changes than giving a goblin scales and a tail!

The author's opinion on goblins prevails among the intelligent races of Ansalon [and is shared by me]. However, I should point out that, but for a matter of attention span, the goblin races would surely rank as "intelligent" themselves.

I hate goblins! A more despicable, untrustworthy, filthy, sniveling, cowardly group of races you'll never find.

As to the validity of the author's claim that kobolds and sligs actually belong in this listing, I can say only that he has been asked to write this

volume because of his experience interacting with and battling such creatures, not his expertise in comparative zoology. The fact remains that his opinion is a widely held one, and right or wrong, the final decision is his.

The moral notion that goblin blood is "poisoned" led to a belief that it is also poisonous. Opinions on the validity of this claim are split. Many alchemists [and

assassins] claim that goblin blood actually is poisonous and that it is the active ingredient in several potent potions and poisons. Many other scholars, though, say that nothing is inherently noxious about goblin blood. Rather, they claim, the filthy living conditions and poor hygiene of the goblin races makes them a breeding ground for all manner of deadly illnesses that make goblin blood seem toxic.

In a related topic, both the elves and the ogres vehemently deny any relation to goblins.



Goblins

The common goblin has a flat, pug-nosed face with a wide mouth and pointed ears. Goblins are fanged terrors with skin tones ranging from yellow to red. They have worked as hired swords in every pillaging army I've ever faced or heard of. I sometimes wonder if they live in Ansalon solely to fill out the armies of Evil.

Goblins aren't the strongest race in Ansalon. They aren't the smartest, fastest, toughest, or most agile either. What they do have in their favor is their pluck. If a goblin enters a battle, he will see it through to the end.

I say "if" because goblins are generally sniveling, bootlicking whiners who cower shamelessly in the presence of superior forces. I've heard many stories of how a goblin mercilessly harassed and bullied someone weaker than he was. One soldier who passed through Solace told me about his experiences with goblins. He told me how goblins yelled at, beat, and insulted their inferiors at every opportunity. However, the minute a stronger goblin entered the room, a goblin immediately began groveling to, cajoling, and flattering the newcomer.

It should come as no surprise, though, that this fawning is all a show. In the end, if a goblin has a chance to eliminate a superior, he will not hesitate for even a heartbeat. Goblins have no honor; they lie, cheat, steal, and sacrifice any number of their comrades for even the most trivial victory. I can't believe that they can cooperate on anything, but I suppose the only reason they do is because each goblin involved secretly believes that he will triumph over all the others.

This brings up another point. Goblins are terribly shortsighted, rarely thinking about anything beyond their current mission. As a result, though they often join conquering armies, goblins almost never

advance to important positions. They carry out only the most direct assignments, and they cannot be trusted with important items or information.

Goblin society focuses upon tribe. Tribes can be very large, ranging in size from about fifty to five hundred individuals. Traditionally, the semi-nomadic tribes wander from place to place like a plague of bandits. While goblin tribes still wander parts of Ansalon, the goblin nation, Throt, has not only survived but also thrived.

In all past ages, goblins lacked the commitment to develop a viable nation. However, Throt has succeeded for one important reason: It acts as a buffer between Solamnia and Neraka. This location means that an almost constant stream of caravans cross the land, providing the goblins with a never-ending supply of victims. More importantly, the Solamnic Knights actively support the fledgling nation, wishing to have reasonably neutral territory between themselves and the Knights of Takhisis.

The author believes Throt to be an anomaly, succeeding as a nation only because human forces on either side hold it in place. However, an even better example of what goblins are capable of exists: Sikk'et Hul. This province in Northern Ergoth has been not only a viable, but also a peaceful and civilized goblin realm for hundreds of years. When I pointed this out to him, the author snorted derisively and left the room.

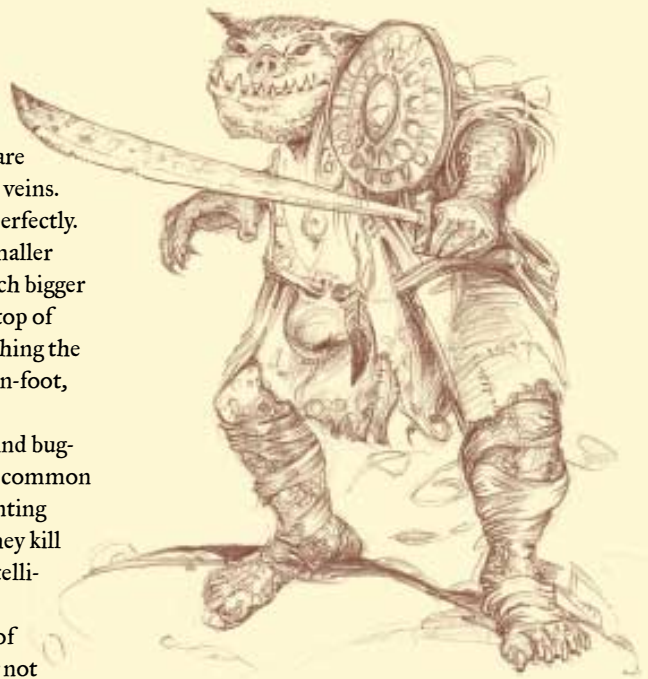


Goblin: Nonhuman. Co 4, Ph 3, In 4, Es 5, Dmg +3, Def -2, also melee weapons and missile weapons.

Very few goblins can learn sorcery and mysticism, and only rarely does one know more than one school or sphere.

- In the Fifth Age, goblins live in every part of Ansalon. Goblin tribes still wander most countries outside Throt, and many of the dragon overlords have units of goblins in their armies.

Bugbears



As I said before, I've heard that bugbears are goblins with too much ogre blood in their veins. Even if that's wrong, the description fits perfectly. In mood and manner they mirror their smaller cousins. However, the mirror shows a much bigger image. Even if you stacked one goblin on top of another, you wouldn't come close to matching the power, greed, and pure meanness of a seven-foot, three hundred pound, hairy bugbear.

Anywhere you find goblins you'll also find bugbears, though in smaller numbers. Unlike common goblins, these brutes have honed their hunting skills. They eat everything they kill, and they kill anything they can catch—including intelligent races and even other goblin races.

I've found that bugbears are very fond of treasure. They often attack a lone traveler not for food, but rather because he has some trinket they want to add to their collection. The bugbears I've seen clothe themselves in bits of fine fabric [that quickly become soiled beyond salvation] and pieces of various types of armor cobbled together with leather thongs.

In combat, bugbears can overpower, but they're not terribly creative. A group of hunters who passed through the Inn told me of how they outmaneuvered some bugbears. The next time they faced bugbears, though, the hunters realized that the creatures had learned from past mistakes. Instead of being crowded into fighting from a lower ground as before, the bugbears ambushed the hunters, striking from hiding with sudden, savage attacks meant to wipe out their foes before they could recover their wits. Thankfully, the hunters kept their heads about them and won through, causing the bugbears to retreat again.

I've heard other stories about bugbears pressed into service in a large military force. They usually bring a hobgoblin along to act as their strategic leader since though they're good at following orders, they're not good at thinking up new ones.

If you ever have to face a bugbear one-on-one, for Paladine's sake, don't try to stand toe to toe with it. They're too strong and quick for anyone but the most seasoned warrior to hope to overcome. If you

keep moving, though, and try to outflank the brute, you may get it so flustered that it simply withdraws, thinking that you're too savvy an opponent for it to best.

Bugbears often live among common goblins; they find their lesser cousins amusing, if somewhat loud and annoying. They have more respect for hobgoblins, which they consider to be the best military planners on Krynn.

Unlike the common goblin, bugbears only rarely have any skill in sorcery or mysticism. They devote too little time to anything other than their stomachs or their treasure hordes to consider, let alone master, the basic forces of nature.

BUGBEAR: *Nonhuman.* Co 5, Ph 10, In 4, Es 6, Dmg +4, Def -3, also melee weapons and missile weapons.

If a bugbear attacks a hero and cannot land a blow for five exchanges, the bugbear attempts to flee. However, it might try to ambush the hero again at a later time.

- Any group traveling through goblin country may be attacked by bugbears, especially if they carry large amounts of treasure or wear particularly distinctive outfits. If bugbears attempt to ambush heroes, they must outnumber the group by at least fifty percent [although they prefer the ratio to be two to one].

Hobgoblins

Hobgoblins may be the most dangerous of all the goblin races. They do not have the same focus as common goblins, nor the strength of bugbears, but they have the most intelligence of the group. Goblins and bugbears hold hobgoblins in the highest regard. Any successful goblin military unit usually has a hobgoblin directing them.

This is not to say that hobgoblins do not fight. My experience with them has proven that they are well-trained, clever warriors who prove deadly in squads of ten to fifteen. They use teamwork to overcome foes, often sending one or two of their squad to certain death distracting a foe while the rest of the group attacks from ambush. A hobgoblin never attacks directly, though, unless he has a plan that assures his victory.

According to Sturm, hobgoblins organize themselves based on who among them is the meanest, toughest, and most brutal, like their cousins. However, unlike the other goblins, ambitious hobgoblins often plot to overthrow their superiors; a hobgoblin leader cannot always count on the support of his people.

As a result, hobgoblins are the most overbearing and abusive of the goblins, but they also have a deft hand at flattery and deflecting attention away from themselves. You would do well to remember these things if you ever have to deal with these awful creatures. In my opinion, they are self-involved and do not do anything that is not in their own best interest. A hobgoblin's smile often threatens more than his sword.

However, Sturm told me that hobgoblins can organize and lead members of all the goblin races. If a hobgoblin [or a group of them] ever comes along

with the personality and ambition to raise a functional goblin army, Ansalon will be in serious trouble.

Of all the goblin races, hobgoblins are the most interesting. They have a fully developed [if terribly crude] sense of community, history, and even art. True, they devote most of their thoughts to warfare and personal gain, but they do so with a particular sense of style.

Hobgoblins are responsible for the only known texts on goblin culture and history. In fact, a hobgoblin author named Grinfroth, who lived during the Dwarfgate War, wrote a ten-thousand-line poem called "Cracking the Bone." This epic tells the goblin view of the world's creation and explains where every race fits into the divine plan. Not surprisingly, the goblin races [particularly hobgoblins] are the chosen people and are fated to one day "rule Krynn from a throne built of the cracked bones of our enemies." While the verse is somewhat rowdy, and the meter is unsettling at best, the fact that a hobgoblin created this work makes it a seminal piece of Ansalonian literature and begs that we reevaluate the entire race's potential.



HOBGOBLIN: *Nonhuman.* Co 5, Ph 4, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +4, Def -3, also melee weapons and missile weapons.

About one in every fifty hobgoblins has the insight and ambition to learn mysticism [they tend not to have any interest in sorcery] and becomes the shaman for his tribe. Shamans often specialize in the sphere of mentalism, using their skills to pick the brains of foes, and even the members of the tribe, for knowledge.

- Most large groups of goblins the heroes meet have a hobgoblin leader. They may also meet a lone hobgoblin traveling the land looking for his lost squad, which the heroes know is dead.

Kobolds

If you asked me to give a quick description of a kobold, I'd say something like "a scaly cross between a goblin and a rat." They stand about three feet tall, have pointed ears, small horns on their brows, and fairly long tails. Their skin is dry and scaly, like a lizard's, and they have rough whiskers growing from their chins.

Since kobolds don't fight terribly well, they refuse to enter combat unless the odds favor them overwhelmingly. I've seen them fight with clubs, spears, javelins, and shields—all made of wood, since kobolds avoid using metal.

Rather than relying on brute force, though, kobolds use tricks, traps, and deception to beat their foes. Like goblins, kobolds are cunning, but unlike their cousins, they are also very smart. What I mean is, while goblins may think of a good trap or a clever plan, kobolds can think of a clever plan to hide a good trap.

All kobolds hate two things: magic and gnomes. If a group of kobolds enters combat, they always attack their foe's mages or gnomes first. I believe that these hatreds stem back to the days when kobolds were still normal goblins.

Let me tell you a tale my son Palin told me. He heard the tale from Gargath himself, who was guardian of the Graystone for three thousand years.

A group of "Reorx's Chosen" [or what would become gnomes] were chasing after the Graystone, but they found that the world held many dangers. While passing through the lands of Throt, the Chosen hired goblins and hobgoblins to protect them by promising riches beyond imagining. For seven years this group crossed the mountains and oceans of Ansalon, following the gem to Sancrist Isle, where

they gained control of the Graystone. The Chosen set to work erecting a great engine that they claimed would transfer the divine energy from within the stone to mortal vessels.

The goblins and hobgoblins thought that the Chosen were going to drain all the power and leave none for them. They plotted and, just as the transference began, grabbed the Graystone. Brilliant light engulfed them and ebbed away, exposing their new forms: kobolds.

The Chosen realized the Graystone had far too much power for them to control, so they abandoned this foolish quest before anyone else got hurt.

They settled in the mountains of Sancrist Isle and found a new focus for their lives. The kobolds were enraged at the situation, but, the Chosen pointed out, the kobolds' troubles resulted from their betrayal.

Understandably, this did not sit well with the kobolds, but they were not yet used to their new bodies, and the Chosen drove them off easily. Ever since, all kobolds have hated gnomes.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the learned community holds a different opinion on the origin of kobolds. According to all reputable zoology texts, kobolds are an offshoot race of the bakali [a so-called "lost race" of lizard-men].



KOBOLD: *Nonhuman.* Co 3, Ph 2, In 5, Es 5, Dmg +2, Def -2, also infravision, melee weapons, and missile weapons.

Kobolds excel both at laying traps and diverting attention from them. As a result, any Perception action made to notice a kobold trap is one degree more difficult than usual.

- Heroes may run into tribes of kobolds in almost any terrain, though goblins are always encountered more frequently. Gnome heroes are attacked every time kobolds spot them. An entire adventure could be based around escorting a group of gnome scientists through kobold-controlled territory.

Sligs

The hobgoblins who chased the Graystone with the Chosen [don't ask me to repeat the tale of the kobolds again!] were also transformed. While the kobolds became smaller than they were before, the sligs found themselves even more powerful and dangerous than they were as hobgoblins.

Sligs are man-sized lizards with tough, leathery hides and more meanness than a whole tribe of kobolds. Perhaps because they feel that the Graystone improved them, sligs do not hate gnomes the same way their smaller cousins do. They do, however, attack any animal or person they think is weaker than they are. Although they eat everything, they often kill for the sheer joy of it.

While sligs often prepare traps in the same way kobolds do, their traps are nowhere near as clever or hard to spot. Sligs usually coat the traps in a foul-smelling slime that makes them tough to climb out of.

If this wasn't awful enough, sligs also have the ability to spit a contact poison, though they usually do this only three or four times per day. Be careful not to get this poison anywhere near your eyes; the blindness it causes is only temporary, but an attacking slig won't let you live long enough to find that out.

Sligs seem to be more like reptiles than lizards. Although they live anywhere, they prefer wet, humid locales such as bogs and swamps.

According to several reports, sligs are naturally resistant to flames. Normal fires cause them no damage, and even pyromancers find it more difficult than usual to cast spells that affect sligs.



Sligs are man-sized lizards with tough, leathery hides and more meanness than a whole tribe of kobolds.

SLIG: *Nonhuman.* Co 5, Ph 12, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +4 [bite], Def -4, also immune to normal fire, poison, resistant to magical fire, thrown weapons, and swim.

- Any settlement near a swamp is constantly under the threat of slig attack. The heroes may be hired to find some way to allow the two communities to coexist peacefully.

Ogre Races

Just like with goblins, an “ogre” is not one specific type of creature; it’s more like a family of inbred races. Ogres are the most common of the ogre races, but they are by no means the strongest, meanest, or most dangerous. Just because you’ve seen, or even fought, an ogre in your day, don’t think that you know it all. The ogre races vary so much that it would take a lifetime to really understand them all.

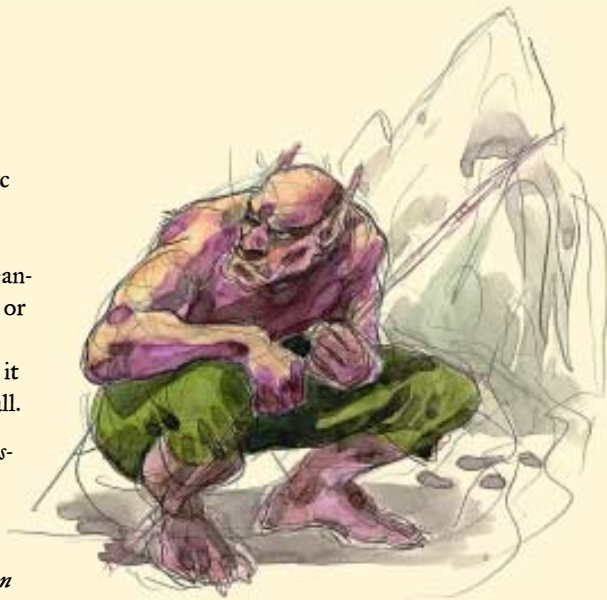
While the ogre races are, if anything, even more disparate than the previously discussed goblin races, I can trace their history clearly and credibly through scholarly texts from ages past. It may be difficult to see the relation between a sea hag and an ettin, but no one doubts that it is there.

Ogres

I’ve heard a lot of tales about how ogres were once a beautiful race whose greed and cruelty deformed them into the hideous creatures we know today. Nice stories, but they’re too dangerous to believe. I mean, if you think that the ogre in front of you is really a sensitive, caring soul trapped in a monster’s body, you may hesitate when attacking, which can get you skewered and hung over an ogre cooking pit. So, I’m not going to bother with any ogre tales. I’m sure they’d make an interesting book of their own, but I’m here to tell you how to survive against today’s ogres, and that’s no mean feat.

Ogres stand eight or nine feet tall, have sickly, yellow-colored skin and gray eyes, and are as blood-thirsty as any creature I know. They’re disgusting, living in filth and caring nothing for civilized notions like bathing. They have incredible strength and can crush a fully armored man with their bare hands.

Nothing frightens an ogre. I’ve always thought that they’re too busy hating everything to remember to fear the few things bigger than they are. If nothing else is around, tribes of ogres usually begin fighting with one another. That’s why any ogre you meet will probably be covered with cuts and bruises.



Wild ogres live in small clans [no larger than ten] in mountains throughout Ansalon. They move from cave to cave and live off herds of mountain goats. They never stray far from caravan trails that bring more appetizing prey [like merchants]. They’re also very jealous of their territory; if someone tries to live on their land, they will fight them off!

Two nations of ogres exist in Ansalon: Blöde and Kern. From what I hear, neither is a place any sane man would want to visit. The ogres there may be more civilized than those you’d find in the wild, but they are no better disposed toward humans. They still attack any strangers they see, but they might keep their victims alive for use as slaves. Hearing what I have about ogre homes, I’m not sure whether or not this is a kinder fate. Also, I’ve heard of some “civilized” tribes in other areas of Ansalon, so don’t think that they live only in the two nations I listed above.

If you have any other option, don’t fight ogres! They’re bigger, stronger, and sturdier than you are. They live to fight, and they’re very good at it. They use huge weapons, usually clubs that were tree limbs earlier in the day, but also frighteningly huge swords, axes, and maces. Ogres fight to the death, unless they have orders to the contrary. If they disarm you, though, death may take a while as they mangle you the same way a cruel child might torture an insect.

When combat with ogres can't be avoided, fall back and attack from a distance. The beasts are too big and clumsy to avoid arrows, and too bulky to wear effective armor. If you have enough people in your company, apply any advanced strategies you can. Ogres are incredibly stupid and fall for just about any feint.



According to many texts, not all ogres are as stupid as the author claims. In fact, most clans of fifteen or more have at least one member who has a natural gift for spellcasting. These ogre-shamans are more intelligent and creative than their brethren and usually become chieftains of their clans.

The "stories" the author refers to are well documented but, ultimately, refutable; no evidence corroborates the ogres' origins. Reputedly the first of the intelligent races to walk the world, ogres were also the most beautiful of the gods' creations. If these statements are true, then ogres have fallen farther than humans may ever climb. Perhaps these tales should be collected in one volume. I'll have to see about that on my return to Palanthis.

As Bertrem pointed out, sometimes ogres grow bright enough to learn to cast a spell or two. Although I've never seen such a thing myself, I've heard too many tales to discount them as drunken ravings. More disturbing to me than the rumors of shamans who know one or two spells, though, are the stories of a different type of ogre—one that has skin of pale blue and can cast wondrous spells.

The stories call these creatures **OGRE-MAGES** and claim that they come from an island far to the east. They are much more advanced than normal ogres in many ways, making finely crafted clothing, tools, and weapons. Their biggest advances, though, are in the field of magic.

You'd do better to talk to my son about such things, but I understand that they are highly advanced spellcasters who can create some magical effects not seen since the withdrawal of the gods.

These creatures are very rare [I have never met anyone who claims to have actually seen one] and, thankfully, they hold their lesser cousins in as much contempt as they do mortals.

Scholars assume that ogre-mages are more closely related to the Irda than normal ogres. [The Irda are a legendary lost race of uncorrupted ogres who were destroyed at the start of the Chaos War.] However, since I cannot find any reliable records of either race, this is only supposition.

OGRE: *Nonhuman.* Co 5, Ph 13, In 3, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -32, also melee weapons and thrown weapons.

OGRE-MAGE: *Nonhuman.* Co 5, Ph 17, In 7, Es 7, Dmg +6, Def -3, also cryomancy, healing, melee weapons, mentalism, spectramancy, thrown weapons, and transformamutation.

Ogres are probably the most brutal creatures the heroes could meet. They attack without provocation, but they always fight until they or their foes are dead. However, ogres are not strategists and can be made to fall for almost any well-planned ruse. If a ploy fails to knock them out in one blow, they become even deadlier, often uprooting trees, smashing buildings, and destroying anything in their paths until they find their foe.

Ogre-shamans usually know one school or sphere of magic. They use their skill as aggressively as possible, putting themselves in positions of leadership by brutalizing the other clan members. Heroes should be wary, because they like to cast spells that cause great damage over large areas.

An ogre-mage is skilled in two more areas of spellcasting [the Narrator can assign him any two schools or spheres]. Ogre-mages are extremely rare in Ansalon and will only be encountered individually.

Giants

The gods of Good did not want the foul ogres to spread their influence over the lands; they cursed them with weak, fetid blood so that ogres would not breed true. The gods of Evil favored the ogres, though. They could not lift the curse, but they made the deformed ogre children even more frightful and powerful than their parents. Though ogres usually abandon monstrous babies shortly after birth, quite a few of them survive.

Giants are a strange and varied race of ogre castoffs. Although cyclopes, ettins, and the other types of giants look completely different from one another, they consider themselves to be one race and treat one another as brothers.

In point of fact, the alarming frequency of birth defects among ogres might result from their tendency to live in insular clans and breed frequently among their little group. Oddly enough, the weakness found in ogre blood is not present in their mutant offspring. All ogrekin breed true. The progeny of a cyclops will always be a cyclops, and a hag will always give birth to more hags.

Cyclopes

Cyclopes are giants born either with one central eye instead of two, or with two tiny eyes set together in one socket. In both cases, they are hideous monsters. Usually standing at least fourteen feet tall



and weighing over three thousand pounds, cyclopes are grimy creatures who move in wild thrashing motions, swinging their arms around and shaking their bodies back and forth as they lope along. They attack anything they see as an enemy, so you can often see them uproot trees and smash boulders for no apparent reason.

Cyclopes are giants born either with one central eye instead of two, or with two tiny eyes set together in one socket. In both cases, they are hideous monsters.

The reason cyclopes have such a frantic gait is that they have very poor eyesight. The fact is, their deformity makes it nearly impossible for them to see small objects unless they are moving [anything smaller than a normal man or woman is small to them]. However, cyclopes have very sensitive ears. They can hear a man's breath [some say even his heartbeat], and this more than makes up for their poor vision.

CYCLOPS: *Nonhuman.* Co 4, Ph 21, In 3, Es 3, Dmg +10, Def -4, also melee weapons and thrown weapons.

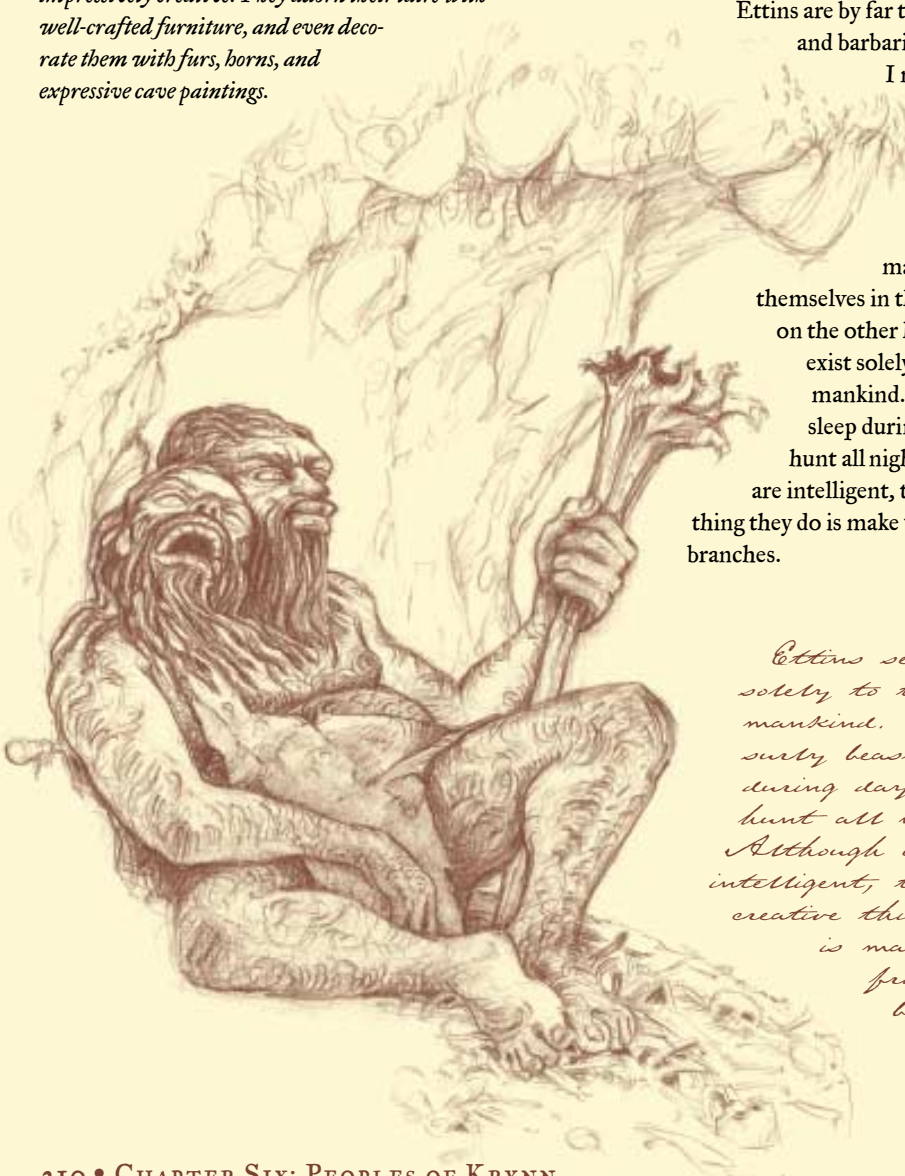
Cyclopes stay far from civilization, but they enter towns to take necessities. A cyclops guards his lair and kills or captures anyone who comes upon it.

- Heroes may need to rescue slaves of a cyclops, or they may find themselves slaves trying to escape. In either case, trying to out-think a creature whose entire view of the world is so far removed from theirs could pose a challenge.

If you end up defending yourself from a cyclops, make as loud a racket as you can so that the beast will be overwhelmed and confused—then run!

Cyclopes are the most solitary of the giants and almost always live alone in isolated regions, although occasionally a mated pair remain together to raise a lone offspring. Like most giants, cyclopes inhabit mountainous regions; however, unlike their cousins, they also frequently live in forests, plains, and even remote islands.

Several tomes in the Great Library report that cyclopes are not only highly intelligent creatures, but also impressively creative. They adorn their lairs with well-crafted furniture, and even decorate them with furs, horns, and expressive cave paintings.



A diary written by a man who was held captive by a cyclops for twelve years speaks at great length about the monster's ability to compose passionate verse and sing hauntingly beautiful dirges. Since first-hand knowledge of cyclopean ways is so rare, though, I cannot tell how common such skills are.

Ettins

A two-headed giant is called an ettin. Even other giants consider ettins to be freakish monsters that should be destroyed, and I can't say I blame them.

Ettins are by far the most violent and barbaric of the giants.

I may have no use for cyclopes and hill giants, but I have to admit that they try to make places for themselves in the world. Ettins, on the other hand, seem to exist solely to terrorize mankind. These surly beasts sleep during daylight and hunt all night. Although ettins are intelligent, the most creative thing they do is make weapons from tree branches.

Ettins seem to exist solely to terrorize mankind. These surly beasts sleep during daylight and hunt all night. Although ettins are intelligent, the most creative thing they do is make weapons from tree branches.

Usually standing about thirteen feet tall, ettins vary in skin tone as much as human skin does, but their hide is thicker and offers greater protection from attack. They have broad shoulders, are stocky, and grime usually covers them [as far as I know, ettins never bathe]. At first glance, their faces resemble a hill giant's, but once you've dealt with both types, you can easily tell the difference. Ettins have large watery eyes, pug noses, and mouths filled with large, yellowed teeth. Their thick black hair grows long and tangled, and smells like an overheated horse.

Ettins live in rocky, mountainous regions, sleeping in caves and overhangs but never making a permanent lair. They roam the area in groups of four or five, attacking and eating anything they can get their hands on [including other ettins]. When an ettin attacks, it fights to the death no matter how badly outnumbered or outmatched it is.

Unlike most other giants, ettins often attack human, elf, and dwarf settlements. Luckily, though, they don't consider civilized areas particularly good feeding grounds and attack only when their wanderings bring them within half a mile or so of a town or village.

In combat, ettins are frightening opponents. They attack with both hands and are particularly difficult to surprise since they can see someone approaching from any angle other than directly behind them. Also, one head always remains alert while the other one is sleeping, so they can stand guard and get a good day's rest at the same time.

ETTIN: *Nonhuman.* Co 4, Ph 17, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +8, Def -4, also melee weapons, and thrown weapons.

In melee combat, ettins attack twice in each exchange of blows [once with each arm] choosing to attack the same target twice or two different targets entirely.

Because of their increased peripheral vision, and the fact that one head is always awake, attempts to surprise or sneak away from an ettin are one degree more difficult than usual [an average *Agility* action would become *challenging*].

- If the heroes investigate an area being terrorized by a rampaging giant, they might eventually face an ettin.

Since ettins live in almost every mountainous region on the continent, they have a variety of names in the folklore of nearly every culture. For example, the people of Abanasinia call them "two-headed trolls," while those in Icereach refer to them as "two-headed beasts."

Although two-headed ettins are certainly the most common variety, occasionally they have three or more heads. These ettins are even more brutal and aggressive than two-headed ones, leading at least one writer to speculate that the creatures' violent tendencies spring from the eternal conflict between the heads for control over the body.

Ettins have their own language, but it consists mainly of grunts and howls. In fact, their tongue uses only eight distinct sounds and has no adjectives or adverbs.

Hill Giants

Most people know nothing about the different types of giants they might meet in their travels. To them, one giant is the same as any other, and the creature they picture when they say "giant" or "giant ogre" is the common hill giant. Luckily for them, hill giants are the most common and most civilized breed.

Hill giants usually stand about sixteen feet tall and weigh between four thousand and five thousand pounds. They have an apish look, standing stooped shouldered with overly long arms. Their heads are small and round with low, sloping brows.

Hill giants usually stand about sixteen feet tall and weigh between four thousand and five thousand pounds.

Like their cousins, hill giants live in mountains and rocky caves in foothills bordering desert plains. They live in clans of ten or fifteen giants related by blood or mating bonds, working together to hunt, build shelters, and sometimes farm. Unlike other giants, hill giants are not naturally aggressive, just territorial.

It would shock and frighten most travelers to know that as they pass along mountain roads, their every move is watched by giants armed with boulders the size of prize-winning sows. Hill giants allow

just about anyone to pass through their lands as long as they go peacefully. Platoons of soldiers, marauding bandits, and any other heavily armed or blatantly aggressive groups, though, may find themselves harassed by local hill giants.

I thought for the longest time that hill giants were nothing more than fables, but I learned different shortly after my brother's Test of High Sorcery. I found myself being chased through the Sentinel Peaks by a group of Seeker crusaders who thought my quest for knowledge of the old gods to be blasphemous. At least a dozen of them, fully armed and hot for my blood trapped me in a box canyon.

Suddenly a boulder the size of a war horse flew over my head, landing in the midst of the Seekers. Looking up, we saw eight hill giants ridging the canyon, each brandishing a colossal boulder of his own.

The Seekers, blinded by a bloodlust I've seen only in religious zealots and rabid dogs, turned their sights on the giants, who easily dispatched them. The creatures still had three or four boulders remaining, but they lowered them and looked at me curiously. I kept my hands as far from my weapons as possible and backed toward the canyon's entrance.

HILL GIANT: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph 38, In 3, Es 4, Dmg +15, Def -4, also melee weapons, and thrown weapons.

- If heroes ever develop a relationship with hill giants, the giants always welcome the heroes as friends, and possibly even as honorary members, of that particular clan. An interesting quest could center on the heroes being engaged to "save a town from giants" merely to find that the only ones in the area are hill giants. Who or what is really terrorizing the town, and why are the giants being blamed?

Then, just before I felt I was far enough away to turn and run, the largest of the giants dropped his boulder, smiled and, like a kindly innkeeper, waved good-bye to me. He and his band loped off into the mountains, and that was the last I saw of them. However, throughout the rest of that journey, I could feel them nearby, watching protectively over the small man who meant them no harm.

They have an apish look, standing stoop shouldered with overly long arms. Their heads are small and round with low, sloping brows.



Clearly, hill giants are the most highly developed of their ilk. While their level of technology and art are stunted, as a race they show a remarkable compassion that many "civilized" races could learn from.

Although I've heard that they wear crudely sewn animal hides, hill giants consider their clothing a point of pride. A giant wears hides from animals he has killed himself.

Hags

The day I first saw an ogress, I knew I would never see a more bloodcurdling sight as long as I lived. I was wrong. I'd rather take a kender's favorite spoon into battle against a dozen ogresses than face another hag as long as I live.

I've heard a shaman of the Aranashi tribe recite a legend that explains how hags came to be so terrible. Lurrhein, an ogress who lived during the last years of the Age of Dreams, saw that ogre civilization was dying. Lurrhein believed ogres had tried to grow too much, which meant that they tried new things. She felt that they had angered the gods because of this. Lurrhein preached her twisted logic across the breadth of Ansalon, convincing ogres to abandon their search for ways to improve their lots in life.

The gods of Evil grew angry by this. Many ogres who had been working on plans that would have brought the race another thousand years of prosperity fell sway to her. In the end, Lurrhein hastened the fall of the ogre races. To punish her, the gods took away the one thing that meant the most to Lurrhein—the security and protection of her faith in the old ways. They

plunged her into eternal chaos, scarring her face, twisting her body, and making it so that neither she nor any of her descendants would ever know the comfort of the old ways.

I believe that the story of Lurrhein stems from some event, but that she [or Labrrn, Lurren, or Llairn depending on the barbarian tribe] was a historical figure. However, the ease with which people abandon the tale suggests that it is apocryphal. Most likely it tried to humanize the ogres who still prey upon the barbarian tribes, making the creatures seem less supernatural and more vulnerable.



You'll find **ANNIS** lurking in the foulest, dankest parts of any region ogres roam. They look just like I imagine the first fallen ogres did—seven or eight feet tall with tough, blue, wrinkled skin covered with warts and moles. Their hair, teeth, and talons have the same dull black look you'll find on prisoners who have been locked in chains for too many years.

Annis are powerful creatures who attack mercilessly. They throw themselves at their victims, clawing and biting until they can grapple them and drag them down. If they face overwhelming odds, annis can magically summon a thick fog that swirls and clouds the immediate area. An annis has such

The day I first saw an ogress, I knew I would never see a more bloodcurdling sight as long as I lived. I was wrong.



sharp senses that it continues to move about and attack normally in this fog, while victims stand around acting disoriented and confused.

Annis attack mercilessly. They throw themselves at their victims, clawing and biting until they can grapple them and drag them down.

According to legend, Lurrbein was an annis. She spent the remaining years of her life [which were quite a few, for ogres and their kin lived long lives during the Age of Dreams] trying to find an ogre mage powerful enough to lift the curse from her body. No such mage existed, though, and she soon found herself banished from every ogre village on the continent.

Would it surprise anyone to hear that, unlike annis, **GREENHAGS** have green skin? The difference between the two creatures is mostly skin deep. These hags have deep green hair and stand two or three feet shorter than annis, but the two have nearly the same strength.

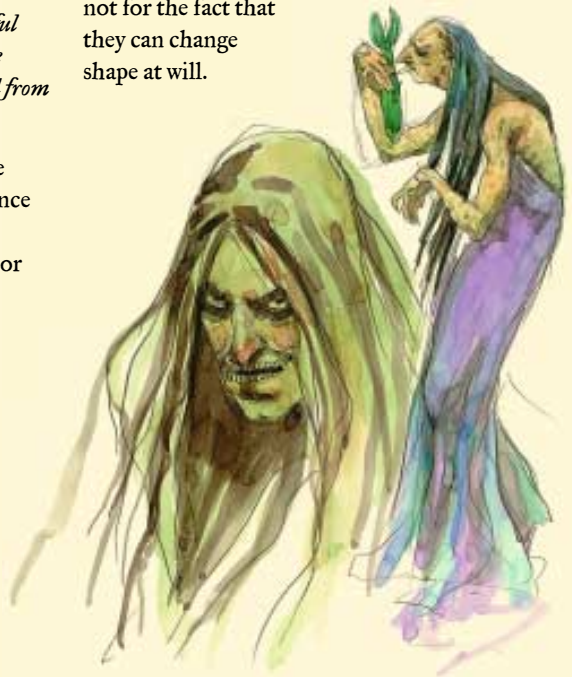
Greenhags are terrific mimics. I've been fooled more than once by a greenhag hiding in the leaves of a deep bog, shouting out like a stranded traveler or lost child.

Greenhags make up for their lack of size by being more cunning than other hags. They can move without making a sound and are terrific mimics. I've been fooled more than once by a greenhag hiding in the leaves of a deep bog, shouting out like a stranded traveler or lost child. I know that they prey on my willingness to help the needy, but when I hear a cry for help, I can't ignore it.

At first Lurrbein, in her madness, attacked and killed any creature she happened upon. However, loneliness wore on her and she took to keeping one or two victims alive as consorts. Soon these creatures soon joined her in madness.

The children of these unions were invariably hags. In fact, I cannot find records of any hag ever giving birth to a male child. According to most texts, greenhags are the offspring of an annis and one of the goblin races.

SEA HAGS are the foulest of all hags, though by no means the most fearsome. They have a sickly yellow skin spotted with patches of slimy green scales and short bony spikes, deep red eyes, and limp hair that hangs like seaweed. They can be found in any waters that are choked with plant life. It would be no effort at all to avoid sea hags if not for the fact that they can change shape at will.



I remember once walking past a lake covered in waterlilies and seeing a priest of Paladine standing chest deep in the lake. He dove under the water, rose with an annoyed look on his face, and dove again. As I waded out to see what he was doing and if I could be of some aid, he dove again but did not surface.

Sea hags have a sickly yet raw skin spotted with patches of slimy green scales and short bony spikes, deep red eyes, and limp hair that hangs like seaweed. It would be no effort at all to avoid sea hags if not for the fact that they can change shape at will.

Sure that he was caught in the lilies' roots, I dove in after the priest. Too late, I discovered that it was a sea hag, who had returned to her true form. The shock of the sight nearly froze my heart, but I gathered my wits about me before it was too late. Strangely enough, the creature simply swam away, and I could not find her. Every time I rode past that lake, from that day to this, I kept my hand on my sword and eye out for that priest.

Through the centuries, hags [both annis and green] have proliferated. However, none of the actions of Lurrhein or her offspring account for the creation of sea hags. Many scholars believe that "sea hag" may be a misnomer, and the creature is actually a species of sirine.

ANNIS HAG: *Nonhuman.* Co 8, Ph 28, In 6, Es 8, Dmg +21, Def -5, also acute senses [hearing, sight, and smell], alteration, confuse, and hydromancy [fog].

GREENHAG: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph 27, In 6, Es 9, Dmg +8, Def -6, also acute senses [hearing, sight, smell] and camouflage.

SEA HAG: *Nonhuman.* Co 8, Ph 9, In 5, Es 6, Dmg +5, Def -2, also alteration and death [glance].

Although annis occasionally live in groups as large as five, they are solitary creatures by nature. An annis attacks any sentient creature that lives or camps within a mile of her current lair. They can use their ability to create fog about once every eight hours.

Greenhags live in swamps and dense forests, usually in groups of three to five. They are extremely territorial and attack any creature that comes within a mile of their lair. Each hag can speak in three or four distinct human or elf voices.

Heroes can encounter sea hags in any large body of water, but these hags most commonly live along the shallows of great bays or large lakes. They thrive in waters that are overgrown with vegetation or whose banks are covered with thick, hanging branches. They use the vegetation for camouflage and to separate victims from their companions.

- It could be that a greenhag, wrapped in thick clothing and using her voice power, has risen to a position of authority in a town. The citizens trust their leader and refuse to hear a bad word against her. Also, the hag has done nothing to harm the town . . . yet.

Trolls

If it weren't for the fact that trolls are so dangerous, I'm sure they would be the laughing stock of adventurers everywhere. They look like withered old ogres who have been stretched on a rack. Their bodies and limbs are all long and thin, and they lope about with a stooped posture that makes it seem as though they can barely support their own weight. A troll's face has a gaunt and hollow appearance, with deep-set eyes, a long pointed nose, and a ruffled mop of dry black hair. Their skin is tough and spongy, covered with warts, blemishes, and stray, wiry hairs.

The amusing aspect of a troll disappears forever, however, the first time you see one bare-handedly tear a man in half. These creatures are incredibly strong and vicious. Luckily, though, they are not at all bright.

Trolls look like withered old ogres who have been stretched on a rack. Their bodies and limbs are all long and thin, and they lope about with a stooped posture that makes it seem as though they can barely support their own weight.

Anyone who has ever swung a sword in battle can easily hit a troll. The idea of defending itself has never occurred to any troll in the history of Ansalon. Some say they lack the brains to form even so basic a strategy as "don't let my foe hurt me." I, however, prefer to think that trolls believe themselves to be completely invincible.

Don't get me wrong, I know from first-hand experience just how absolutely stupid trolls can be. If I was twelve feet tall, covered in skin so thick that only the sharpest blades could cut it, and found every wound I suffered would heal naturally in a matter of minutes, I would believe that nothing on Krynn could possibly harm me, too.

If it weren't for the fact that trolls are so dangerous, I'm sure they would be the laughing stock of adventurers everywhere.



This healing power [my brother always called it regenerative] makes trolls so dangerous. You can hit them often and hard enough to fell ten giants, and they'll just keep coming. I've seen many a battle-hardened warrior have his spirit broken

by connecting with his mightiest blow and then find his troll opponent fully healed before three more swings have been taken.

In order to beat a troll you [and by "you" I mean you and your comrades—never, EVER face a troll alone] must resolve to fight until you can no longer lift your blade. Make every blow count. In other words, don't swing every time you see an opening. Wait half a second and the troll will give you a better opportunity. It heals so quickly that anything less than a thunderous blow is a waste of energy. Also, work to lop off one of the troll's

MEWLING TROLL: *Nonhuman.* Co 3, Ph 30,

In 3, Es 8, Dmg +12, Def -4, also camouflage, delude, and mentalism.

TROLL: *Nonhuman.* Co 6, Ph 24, In 4, Es 7, Dmg +14, Def -4, also regenerate.

Trolls are social creatures, living in groups that range from mated pairs to clans of a dozen or more. Although they are completely uneducated and terribly gullible, they are fully capable of learning and growing. They speak or understand three or more languages [although generally at the level of a young child] and can adjust their strategy to suit the current situation—they possess so much confidence in their superiority that they rarely see the need to change, though.

Mewlings can be found only in small packs of a dozen or fewer living in the abandoned ruins of castles and keeps, usually in swamps and marshes.

In battle, mewlings always use their delude ability to gain a strategic advantage. They most often create illusions of trees and rocks to hide behind. Occasionally, though, they create illusions of other creatures to distract their prey. These illusions often appear to make noise [even speaking if they consist of sentient creatures]. They accomplish this through a natural ability that closely mimics mentalism.

- Mewling social activity is a complete mystery. Sometimes they are docile and welcoming to strangers, sometimes aggressively territorial. Several expeditions have set out to solve this mystery, but none has ever returned alive. The heroes could sign on as guards for such an expedition.

hands or feet. This not only makes it tougher for the troll to attack, but it gives the beast's body something bigger to worry about—rather than heal your body blows, it focuses on growing the limb back.

I can find no source to substantiate the previous claim. We know next to nothing about the whys and wherefores of troll regeneration. While the idea that the body dedicates its resources to repair the single most serious wound is appealing, it flies in the face of all medical knowledge [although this effect, admittedly, is primarily magical and thus does not adhere to the same restrictions].

In ruins less than a day from Solace, where I grew up and now run an inn, there lives a different type of troll called a **MEWLING**.

Mewlings are stronger than trolls, but if anything, they act even dumber. They look like a hunk of the forest come to muscular life. Their skin is green and appears to be covered with vines and leaves. They have large, sad, black eyes, but bushy green hair covers the rest of their features.

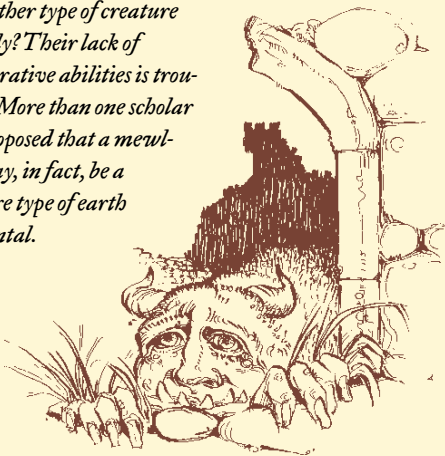
Luckily, mewlings do not heal themselves the way trolls do. However, unlike their cousins, they are sneaky and try to take their victims unawares. They can somehow create illusions that they use to hide themselves or distract their intended victims. When the target has passed by, or is otherwise engaged, the mewlings pour out gibbering at the top of their lungs.

A mewling sounds like a madman babbling to himself. I'm a little embarrassed to say it now, but when I first encountered Fizban, his mutterings reminded me of a mewling.

Although I cannot find any records of "mewlings" existing anywhere other than Abanasinia, tales from many different regions contain tales of creatures of a similar form. However, descriptions of these creatures' behavior are by no means universal.

In some instances they are like rampaging beasts, attacking and demolishing anything that stands in their way. Other reports, though, tell of a mewling protecting a lost child from attack and then leading the tot back to his family.

Are all these creatures mewlings? Are they truly a sub-species of troll or are they some other type of creature entirely? Their lack of regenerative abilities is troubling. More than one scholar has proposed that a mewling may, in fact, be a bizarre type of earth elemental.



Closing Remarks

This bestiary was written here in the main room of the Inn. In the afternoons and evenings [and usually late into the night], Bertrem would sit at the bar—something he obviously was unaccustomed to doing—and scribble down my wandering tales. Most nights we went to bed not because I had run out of stories, but because the poor man's hands cramped up so badly he could no longer write. He has put up with a lot during the course of this project and not complained once.

I could never have done this without his sharp mind and sometimes sharper tongue. I value an honest man above all others, and Bertrem never hesitated to tell me exactly what he thought of each entry.

Now that we've finished, he will return to Palanthis and see the bestiary printed, catalogued, and shelved in the Great Library. We will miss him here at the Inn.

I hope that the inside of the Library is not the only place to which the bestiary travels. The Ansalonian wilderness is an exciting place. Good luck out there, my friends.

Caramon Majere

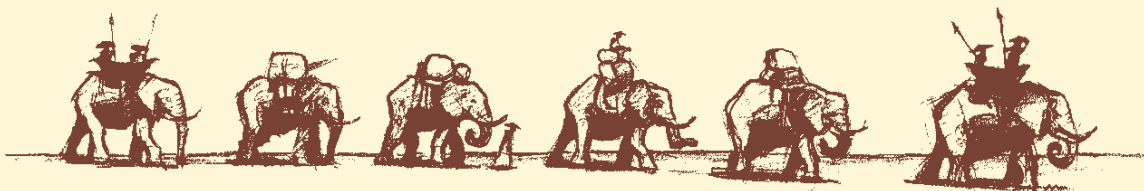
The end of a project is always the most traumatic part. Even though one knows that every "i" has been dotted, the temptation is to go through it one last time—just to be sure. There comes a time, though, when one must simply accept that every work contains some imperfections. Hopefully, they are few and far between.

On a personal note, I must say that it has been a rare privilege to work with the author. During the long days [and especially nights] of this project, I have learned much from and about him. I now understand why he has achieved such mythic stature among the bards of Ansalon.

Please note that this in no way changes the opinion I expressed in my foreword—Caramon is no different than any other adventurer. He is, however, one of the finest men I have ever known, and I am proud to call him "friend."

Only time will tell whether the manuscript we have created lives up to our goal of being the preeminent text on Ansalonian fauna.

Bertrem



*Catalogued in the
Great Library of the Ages,
Public Collection,
this third day of Paliswalt,
in the year 34 Saer Catachus.*

*Submitted by: Bertrom,
Order of Aesthetics*



ou've read the monster descriptions, examined the evidence, and perhaps even disagreed with Caramon's or Bertrem's opinions on one or another of the beasts—now what?

Some of you will use *The Bestiary* as a companion book to keep at your side as you enjoy the many novels and anthologies that make up the saga. For you, the depth this volume adds to your experience in Krynn is justification enough.

However, we rather suspect that quite a few of you will use *The Bestiary* as a Narrator's tool in playing the DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE dramatic adventure game. For you, this book is an essential reference tool. However, it can also fuel your imagination and lead you to stories you would otherwise never have imagined.

Start with the Story

Whether you're setting up a long campaign or preparing a single roleplaying scenario, the story is king. Remember that, unlike real life, things in creative media such as these do not happen in a completely random, inexplicable manner; your audience expects to find a discernible thread that ties together all the events they've experienced. While the tale you craft is certainly your own, and no one can (or should) stop you from including any beast that you wish, the player can come back to you with questions (and possibly even complaints) if the experience does not hang together as a cohesive whole.

Before you delve into *The Bestiary* to populate your setting, be sure that you have a strong idea of the course your tale

will take. Know what themes, dramatic flavors, and emotional extremes you want your audience to experience during the course of the story, and what, if any, moral you want them to take away. This knowledge can guide you through the process of selecting and individualizing the monsters and other antagonists in your tale.

If you're preparing a story about the strength of the common man, hoping to show that one person *can* make a difference even in a land ruled by a dragon overlord, you need to select mostly monsters whose abilities fall within (or only slightly exceed) the normal range for heroes. After all, if you put an ordinary man up against even a small dragon in combat, the dragon can easily crush him; the best the man can reasonably hope for is to escape with his life, which is not terribly heroic. However, that same man can have a spectacularly successful (and serve your thematic purposes) fight against an ogre or even against a giant.

On the other hand, if your adventure should capture the grand epic flavor of the *Chronicles* trilogy, you must allow the heroes to face and (hopefully) overcome foes vastly more powerful than themselves. Though bards might write songs about heroes who save a village from a pack of goblins, no one will remember them a year from now. If, however, a small band of heroes frees a town from the despotic rule of an ancient and powerful lich and his army of undead servants, people will sing a song about this feat in every tavern across the land for years to come.

Of course, no hard and fast rules exist for creating scenarios and campaigns. Let your creativity and common sense guide you. However, your job as the narrator will *much* easier if you decide ahead of time exactly what you want your story to accomplish and what emotions you want to instill in your audience. Then your choices of monsters narrows naturally.

Name that Monster

Sometimes, the idea you build your story around can be as simple as “Dracoliches are under-appreciated monsters that no one ever writes well enough for my tastes.”

Once you’ve made this decision, though, give some thought to whether your monster is an average example of his species, a paragon of everything the species can possibly be, or a unique case unlike any other member of the species the heroes will ever meet.

Something good can come from each of these approaches, though a number of creative difficulties are attached to each. Your job as the writer is to weigh these different possibilities and select the one that feels right for your tale. But, hey, that’s half the fun of telling stories!

The Generic Giant

One trend in games and fiction skews every thing and every creature to its ultimate extreme. Many designers feel that a monster isn’t *really* scary unless it’s the most frightening thing you’ve ever seen. The audience has read about giants before, the thought goes, so *my* giant must be bigger, stronger, and meaner than any giant they’ve ever seen. This, of course, leads the next author to write about an even bigger, stronger, and meaner giant—a never-ending cycle that leads away from any real visceral impact and threatens to make stories nothing more than parodies of themselves.

If your stories reach the point where an “ordinary giant” is not something to be feared, at least by the common folk of the world, you may want to re-examine your narrative technique. Go back and re-read stories with giants that used to frighten you as a child. What do they have in common? What is it about the giant that was frightening?

You’ll probably find that the fact that he’s big and strong is only one of the reasons the giant is frightening (and probably

not the major reason). Consider the other reasons the giant frightened you. Perhaps the mystery surrounding such an odd creature scared you. Or maybe the hero seemed out of place in his giant world. The giant may have been very intelligent, able to see into the hero’s mind, or possess extremely sharp senses.

Whatever you glean from this research, consider how you might take it back to your tale and use it to help keep your own giants (or other monsters) fresh and frightening without resorting to power escalation. That way, even small variances from the description presented in *The Bestiary* can have a strong effect on your audience.

The Fist-Flying, Sword-Swinging, Goblin-O-Doom

Of course, once you establish a set of expectations for your audience, sometimes you might want to take a step or two beyond them. Take, for example, the case of goblins. Heroes in Ansalon are likely to spend a great deal of time confronting goblins in one way or another. After a while, they might feel that they know everything there is to know about goblins.

Goblins are “sniveling, bootlicking whiners who cower shamelessly in the presence of superior forces”—the book says so. What would the heroes in your tale do, though, if they came across a brave, forthright, valiant goblin? Though his ability scores and special abilities varied very little from that of ordinary goblins, your audience would still surely find this one not only fascinating, but quite probably intimidating as well.

The key to successfully turning an ordinary creature into an extraordinary one is *not* by simply bumping its ability scores by a few points. Rather, focus on making a memorable monster. If the heroes need to hit the thing three or four extra times before it falls, they may not even notice. If



you introduce a noble goblin, or a zombie with free will and the ability to lead others of its kind, though, you'll grab your players' attention. They'll not only want to figure out how their heroes can defeat this threat but also be keenly interested in the turn of events that led to its creation.

An unconventional or unique version of a common monster does more than spice up an adventure. If you give a bit of thought to the beast's background and history, you might find that it suggests additional monsters or characters for the heroes to meet and possibly even lead to a follow-up story or two.

Friend or Foe?

Another way to make a monster or character pop from the pages of your story is to give it qualities completely opposite from what your audience would expect. In the section above, we talked about a valiant goblin. Well, how much more intriguing (and disturbing) would it be if the goblin wore some Solamnic armor it found? For that matter, the heroes would certainly puzzle over the story of a unicorn, a creature universally accepted as good, terrorizing a peaceful farming community.

What extreme circumstances could create either one of those situations? A good question—one that will surely be on your player's lips. If you create a creature that captures your readers' or players' imagination, then you're well on your way to telling a memorable tale.

The Big Secret

One principle guides all the advice in this section, and if you were reading carefully, you've probably already picked up on it. The big secret behind building a story around a monster is to **treat the monster like a character**.

Pretty simple, eh? Make sure that your monsters have feelings, goals, and motivations that the player understands and, if at all possible, empathizes with. If the player feels that he or she knows the

monster it becomes more real, and it therefore becomes capable of a much deeper emotional impact.

When working on a larger plot that covers several stories or adventures, try to use monsters that are in some way connected. Find a theme that runs through your overarching story and keep that theme in mind when choosing the creatures the heroes will face.

This provides a sense of continuity from chapter to chapter and leaves the players actively guessing what they will see in upcoming sections. Also, as a narrator, player anticipation can work only to your advantage.

Last-Minute Monsters

What do you do, though, when your mind is blank and you absolutely need a story idea in less than an hour? How can you turn to *The Bestiary* in your hour of need and pull out a meaningful and, more importantly, interesting idea?



Using the Habitat Guide

The Bestiary has two indices, one sorting the creatures alphabetically and one sorting them by their habitat. Although scanning the former can cause your eyes to fall across an interesting monster, most Narrators might find the latter more useful.

While it's not advisable to rely on the following strategy, a Narrator who has no idea for a creature for the heroes to encounter, or one whose prepared scenario fails to fill the allotted time, may use the Habitat Guide (page 234) and the Fate Deck to develop an instant scene. These brief scenes might possess an uncertain quality, but they can fulfill immediate needs.

When using the Habitat Guide, the first step is to decide on the setting for your tale. In some cases, the previous story or the players dictates the setting. If not, then choose a habitat befitting the mood of the story you'd like to tell. For example, if you want to narrate a light, semi-humorous story, you'd probably do well to avoid the desert habitat.

Once you select the habitat, flip the top card of the Fate Deck. Look at the card's suit, and consult the following options:

- ♣ If the card is from the Suits of Shields, Arrows, or Helms, the beast should be one that comes from the *Peoples* section.
- ♠ If the card is from the Suits of Swords or Moons, the beast should come from the *Ansalonian Beasts* section.
- ♣ If the card is from the Suit of Orbs, the beast should come from the *Magical Creatures* section.
- ♥ If the card is from the Suit of Hearts, the beast should come from the *Monsters and Other Fantastic Creatures* section.
- ♣ If the card is from the Suit of Crowns, the beast should come from the *Unnatural and Undead* section.
- ♠ If the card is from the Suit of Dragons, the beast should come from the *Dragons and Dragonkin* section

Using the Story Nuggets

If you have a slightly longer lead-time and want to develop a more cohesive story, look at the end of the shaded rules sidebars. Many of them contain story nuggets—brief, slightly unusual ways to use the creatures in your stories.

Often these nuggets give a short setting description, a curious set of circumstances, and a question or two for the Narrator to ponder. Most of them are not full adventures in and of themselves. However, with a little work, you can easily expand them into an evening worth of roleplaying fun.

For those of you who are even more ambitious, see if you can find a way to fit one or more of the story nuggets into your ongoing campaign storyline.

Using Your Imagination

If you've found this chapter at all useful to this point, you obviously have enough of an imagination to invent stories of your own. While *The Bestiary* is a useful tool, you shouldn't rely on it too heavily.

When you do use it, do so in as creative a way as possible. Pick it up every once in a while and thumb through it, paying attention to creatures you rarely see included in stories, yours or others'. Use monsters in odd combinations or in settings that have yet to be explored. Dare to strike out into new territory.

Ansalon is a wildly diverse continent. Don't let yourself or your scenarios become constrained by sin of over-familiarity. The heroes can constantly discover new and wonderful things. You should make every effort to do the same. It heightens the pleasure you get from your own experience as the Narrator.





Conversion Notes

For more than a decade, roleplayers have adventured in the DRAGONLANCE fantasy setting, first using the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules, and now using the SAGA rules. Veteran players will probably notice that many of the entries in the *Bestiary* are creatures found in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome and its various appendices. For them, we present the formulae we used while writing this book to maintain a level of continuity between the AD&D and SAGA versions of the beasts. Using these, they can bring their own AD&D monsters, heroes, and characters forward into the Fifth Age.

Players create the related ability scores and ratings for a monster by translating its AD&D game statistics. Narrators should always feel free to alter the results slightly to suit their individual campaigns or preferences.

Coordination

To calculate a monster's Coordination score, a player divides its Movement Rating by two and rounds up. Thus, an ogre (Movement Rating 9) has a Coordination score of 5 (4.5 rounded up).

Physique

To determine an AD&D creature's Physique score, players should multiply its Hit Dice score by three (ignoring modifiers). Once this is done, they can add any modifier. In this way, our ogre, with its 4+1 Hit Dice, ends up with a Physique score of 12 (3 times 4) plus 1, for a total of 13. Clearly, one should not underestimate an ogre's strength in the Fifth Age.

Intellect

To calculate a monster's Intellect score, players should take its Intelligence rating and divide by two. If the exact rating is not known, simply use the average score for the creature's listed AD&D Intelligence cate-

gory. For example, an ogre has an Intelligence rating of Low. This gives it a score of between 5 and 7. Taking the average of 6 and dividing that by two, we find that our physically horrific ogre has an Intellect score of only 3. No one ever said that ogres were especially bright.

Essence

The last of a creature's four SAGA related abilities is its Essence. Players determine this score using its Morale rating. One takes the maximum value listed for the Morale rating and divides it by two, rounding down if needed. Returning yet again to the ogre, we find that its Morale rating of Steady (11–12) yields an Essence code of 6. Ogres are clearly willful and determined creatures.

Damage Rating

To determine the amount of damage an AD&D creature inflicts in combat, a player adds together the maximum damage caused by each of its attacks, then divides by two. For example, take a creature that attacks three times in a given combat round, causing 1 to 6 points of damage per attack. It would have a damage rating of (6+6+6) 18 divided by two for a result of 9. If this monster has a Physique score of 7, it would inflict a total of 16 damage points with each successful blow using the SAGA rules.

Defense Rating

Most creatures have some form of natural or manufactured armor that protects them from injury. The AD&D game reflects this fact by giving each beast an Armor Class (AC). To translate a monster's AC into its defense rating, a player starts by subtracting the creature's AC from 10, then dividing the result by two. Our example of the ogre, with an AC of 5, has a defense rating of $\{(10-5)\div 2\}$ 2.5, or 3 after dropping the fraction. The SAGA rules express the defense rating as a negative number, so the ogre's rating becomes -3.



AD&D Monster Conversion Quick Reference

Coordination	Movement $\div 2$
Physique	(HD $\times 3$) + Modifier
Intellect	Intelligence $\div 2$
Essence	Morale rating $\div 2$
Damage rating	Maximum Damage $\div 2$
Defense rating	(10-AC) $\div 2$

Magic Use

If a creature can use either sorcery or mysticism in the Fifth Age, its description includes special information. First, its total number of sorcery (or mysticism) points appears in parenthesis after its Intellect (or Essence) score. (To find the total number

of sorcery or mysticism points, simply multiply the creature's appropriate related ability score by itself.) A creature's listing also includes the sorcerous schools (or mystic spheres) that it can employ.

Special Cases

Some creatures—like the half-man, half-cat rakshasa—have unusual entries that do not convert easily. When the system outlined above fails to work smoothly and quickly, Narrators should step in; a little common sense always resolves problems.



APPENDIX ONE

The following pages contain an alphabetical listing of all the entries found in the *Bestiary*. Superscripted footnotes (^{1,2}) are explained on page 235.

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Aarakocra	199	3	5	5	6	+3	-2	acute sense (vision), fly, dive, missile weapons (javelins)
Anhkolox	151	1	1	1	1	1	1	aura (heat); breath attack (cold); immune to mentalism, poison
Ant, Veldt	56	9	8	1	1	+4	-4	entangle
Ape, Carnivorous	20	6	12	3	3	+5	-2	
Artifact Spirit	157	N/A	N/A	²	²	N/A	N/A	mentalism; necromancy; immune to mentalism, poison
Austritch	39	9	6	1	5	+3	-2	kick, sprint
Axebeak	41	9	9	1	3	+7	-2	kick, trample
Baboon, Giant	20	6	4	3	3	+2	-2	crush
Badger	21	3	5	1	3	+4	-3	
Badger, Giant	21	5	11	1	6	+7	-4	
Banshee	158	7	6	8	7	+4	-5	death (aura); fear (aura); incorporeal; immune to mentalism, poison
Basilisk	178	3	19	1	6	+5	-3	petrify (gaze)
Basilisk, Greater	179	3	30	3	8	+14	-4	petrify (gaze), poison, rake
Bat, Common	22	3	1	1	2	+1	-3	acute sense (hearing)
Bat, Giant	22	5	12	3	2	+5	-2	acute sense (hearing), infect
Bat, Mobat	23	8	12-18	3	6	+4	-2	stun (screech)
Bear, Brown	24	6	12-24	2	5	+6	-2	acute senses (hearing, smell), climb, crush, death throe
Bear, Grizzly	24	6	13	2	2	+7	-2	crush
Bear, Ice (Polar)	24	6	18	3	5	+12	-2	crush, death throe, immune to cold/ice
Bear, Mandibear	25	8	16	6	9	+8	-2	acute senses (hearing, smell, vision), climb, crush
Bee, Giant	57	10	10-14	1	7	+2	-2	poison
Beetle, Fire	58	6	5	1	2	+4	-3	
Beetle, Giant	58	3	15	1	1	+10	-4	
Beetle, Horned	58	3	36	1	2	+17	-4	charge
Beetle, Water	59	4	12	1	2	+9	-4	overturn, suffocate
Behir	180	8	36	3	8	+7	-3	crush; lightning; swallow whole; immune to electricity, poison
Bird of Prey	40	8-18	2-8	1-3	1-4	+3	-2	acute sense (vision), dive, swoop
Bird, Common	38	6-9	1-2	1	1-3	0	0	special abilities vary

CREATURE CATALOGUE

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Boar, Desolation	34	10	14	4	4	+9	-5	acute senses (hearing, smell), charge, death thro
Boar, Giant	34	6	21	1	4	+9	-2	acute senses (hearing, smell), charge, death thro
Boar, Wild	34	8	12	1	4	+6	-2	acute senses (hearing, smell), charge, death thro
Brute	194	6	11	6	8	+8	0 (-5)	melee weapons, missile weapons, thrown weapons
Buffalo	30	8	15	2	2	+8	-2	charge, death thro, trample
Bugbear	203	5	10	4	6	+4	-3	melee weapons, missile weapons
Cattle	30	8	9	2	2	+2	-2	charge, trample
Centipede, Giant	60	9	4	1	1	+3	-3	poison (paralyze)
Cheetah	26	8	9	2	2	+6	-3,	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake, sprint
Chimera	109	5	27	2	7	+17	-3	breath attack (pyromancy), charge
Cockatrice	182	9	15	1	6	+2	-2	petrify (touch), immune to petrify
Cricket, Cave	62	3	6	1	2	0	-4	confuse, kick
Crocodile	74	5	9	1	1	+10	-3	overturn
Crocodile, Giant	75	5	21	1	2	+19	-3	kick (tail), overturn, pounce
Cyclops	209	4	21	3	3	+10	-4	melee weapons, thrown weapons
Daemon Warrior	124	9	12	9	9	+12	-8	fear aura; immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison
Darken Owl	44	12	18	8	9	+7	-2	acute sense (vision), mentalism, sensitivity, swoop
Death Knight	130	6	27	9	9	+8	-5	fear (aura); necromancy; immune to mentalism, poison, normal weapons
Deer	30	14	15	1	1	+2	-2	charge, sprint
Dog, Cooshee	28	8	12	2	6	+6	-3	camouflage, sprint
Dog, Hunting/Wild	28	6	4	2	2	+2	-2	acute senses (hearing, smell), charge
Dracolich	132	*	*	*	*	*	*	*see dragons; dragonawe; paralyze (gaze); immune to elecricity, necromancy, mentalism, poison



Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Draconian, Aurak	172	12	10–24	8 (64)	8	+10	-5	acute sense (vision), alteration (self), breath attack (blind), charm, death throe, missile weapon (energy blast), resistant to magic, sorcery (pyromancy, electromancy, divination), summoning (self)
Draconian, Baaz	173	8	6	6	7	+6	-3	death throe, glide, pounce
Draconian, Bozak	174	6	6	7 (49)	7	+4	-4	death throe, glide, sorcery (aeromancy, pyromancy), web
Draconian, Kapak	175	8	6	5	7	+2	-3	acute senses, death throe, glide, poison (paralyze)
Draconian, Sivak	176	10	12	7	7	+12	-5	alteration (self), dive, death throe, fly, resistant to magic
Dragons*	166							
Wyrmling		8	15–30	4	4	+7	-4	
Very Young		8	21–36	6	6	+10	-6	
Young		9	27–42	8	8	+12	-8	
Juvenile		9	33–48	10	10	+14	-10	
Young Adult		10	36–54	11	11	+16	-12	
Adult		10	39–54	12	12	+18	-14	
Mature Adult		11	42–57	13	13	+20	-16	
Old		11	45–60	14	14	+25	-18	
Very Old		12	48–63	15	15	+30	-20	
Venerable		12	51–66	16	16	+35	-25	
Wyrm		13	54–69	17	17	+40	-30	
Great Wyrm		13	57–72	18	18	+50	-35	
Ancient Wyrm		14	60–75	19	19	+60	-40	
Legendary Wyrm		14	63–78	20	20	+70	-45	
Dragon, Fire	126	12	70	4	4	+65	-40	dragonawe, dragon breath, dive, immune to normal weapons
Dryad	104	6	6	7	6	+2	-1	camouflage, charm
Eagle, Giant	45	24	12	2	2	+12	-2	acute sense (vision), dive, swoop
Elemental, Air	93	18	24–48	3–5	8–11	+10	-4	aeromancy, dive, fly, immune to aeromancy, incorporeal
Elemental, Earth	94	3	24–48	3–5	8–11	+16	-4	crush, geomancy, immune to geomancy, regenerate
Elemental, Fire	95	6	24–48	3–5	8–11	+12	-4	immune to pyromancy, incorporeal, pyromancy, trample

*Ability scores by age (see above); also dragonawe, dragon breath, dragon dive (see page 167)

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Elemental, Nature	96	6	54	5	10	+50	-5	crush; overturn; regenerate; immune to aeromancy, geomancy, hydromancy, pyromancy
Elemental, Water	97	3	24-48	3-5	8-11	+15	-4	crush, hydromancy, incorporeal, overturn, suffocate, immune to hydromancy
Elephant	29	8	33	2	2	+8	-4	charge, prehensile limb, trample
Emre	39	9	9	1	4	+4	-2	kick
Ettin	210	4	17	3	4	+8	-4	melee weapons, thrown weapons
Fire Minion	102	6	18	9	8	+6	-3	immune to pyromancy
Fireshadow	103	3	42	9	8	+20	-5	disintegrate; mentalism; poison; immune to mentalism, pyromancy, nonmagical weapons
Fly, Giant								
Bluebottle	63	15	9	1	4	+4	-4	acute sense (smell)
Gargoyle	86	6	16	3	6	+8	-3	dive swoop
Ghast	135	8	12	6	7	+8	-3	musk; paralyze; immune to mentalism, poison
Gholor	150	1	48	1	7	+21	-2	acid (bite); charm (aura); immune to fire, sharp weapons, mentalism, poison drain (Spirit); fear (aura); incorporeal; invisible; mentalism; immune to normal weapons mentalism, poison; resistant to silver weapons
Ghost	160	5	6	7	8	N/A	N/A	drain (Spirit); fear (aura); incorporeal; invisible; mentalism; immune to normal weapons mentalism, poison; resistant to silver weapons
Ghoul	134	5	6	3	6	+6	-2	paralyze; immune to mentalism, poison
Gnoll	196	5	7	3	5	+4	-3	light missile weapons
Goat	31	8	5	1	2	+2	-2	charge
Goblin	202	4	3	4	5	+3	-2	melee weapons, missile weapons
Golem, Iron	88	3	54	1	10	+20	-4	
Golem, Stone	88	3	42	1	10	+12	-3	
Gorgon	184	5	8	6	6	+2	-3	Petrify (gaze), poison (bite)
Griffin	46	15	21	2	6	+12	-4	dive
Hag, Annis	213	8	28	6	8	+21	-5	acute senses (hearing, sight, smell), alteration, confuse, hydromancy (fog)
Hag, Green	214	6	27	6	9	+8	-6	acute senses (hearing, sight, smell), camouflage



Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Hag, Sea	214	8	9	5	6	+5	-2	alteration, death (glance)
Hatori, Greater	186	6	18-60	3	6	+30	-5	camouflage, pounce, swallow whole
Hatori, Lesser	186	7	3-15	3	5	+15	-4	camouflage, pounce, swallow whole
Haunt	162	3	15	1	8	+5	-5	drain (Dexterity); incorporeal; resistant to silver weapons; immune to mentalism, poison, normal weapons
Hell Cat	110	6	18	3	7	+5	-3	invisible; immune to mentalism, non-magical weapons
Hell Hound	111	6	12-21	4	7	+5	-3	acute sense (hearing), breath attack (fire), immune to fire/pyromancy
Hill Giant	211	6	38	3	4	+15	-4	melee weapons, thrown weapons
Hippocampus	48	12	18	5	6	+2	-3	
Hippogriff	48	18	15	2	5	+11	-3	
Hobgoblin	204	5	4	5	5	+4	-3	melee weapons, missile weapons
Horse	31	12	6	1	2	+2	-2	sprint, trample
Horsefly, Giant	63	14	18	1	4	+8	-2	drain (strength)
Hydra	187	5	15-36	2	5	+10 to +24	-3	crush
Ice Toad	112	5	15	5	6	+6	-3	aura (cold), immune to cold/ice
Imp	90	9	8	5	5	+2	-4	alteration (self); poison; regenerate; sensitivity; immune to cold, electricity, fire, normal weapons; resistant to sorcery, mysticism
Imp, Blood Sea	91	6	21	6	6	+3	-3	alteration (self); fly; mentalism; immune to cryomancy, mentalism, nonmagical attacks
Insect	52	1	1	1	1	0	0	special abilities vary
Jaguar	26	8	13	2	2	+7	-2	acute senses (hearing, vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Kani Doll	85	varies	6	N/A	N/A	+4	0	
Kapoacinth	87	3	16	3	6	+8	-3	pounce, suffocate
Kingfisher	42	10	3	2	5	+2	-3	acute sense (vision), dive
Knight Haunt	136	5	24	4	8	+8	-4	fear (aura), sensitivity, immune to cryomancy, mentalism, paralyzation, poison

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Kobold	205	3	2	5	5	+2	-2	infravision, melee weapons, missile weapons
Kyrie	200	8	7	5	6	+3	-3	animism, fly, melee weapons (stryker +4), mentalism, thrown weapons (spears)
Leonine	26	6	20	2	5	+10	-3	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Leopard	26	8	11	2	2	+6	-2	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Lich	137	3	33-60	10	9	+5	-5	aura (cold and fear); sorcery; immune to cryomancy, electromancy, nonmagical weapons, necromancy, mentalism, poison
Lion	26	6	17	2	2	+9	-3	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Lizard, Common	76	8	1	1	1	0	0	special abilities vary
Lizard, Giant	77	8	10	1	1	+4	-3	swallow whole
Lizard, Giant Subterranean	80	6	18	1	5	+6	-3	crush
Lizard, Minotaur	78	3	24	1	5	+21	-3	pounce (crush)
Lizard, Strider	79	8	6	1	6	+7	-3	immune to pyromancy and normal fire, pyromancy
Lizard, Subterranean Lurker	80 100	6 1	18 30	1 1	5 6	+6 +3	-3 -2	crush camouflage, fly, pounce, suffocate
Lynx	26	6	8	6	2	+3	-2	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Mammoth	29	8	45	2	2	+10	-5	charge, prehensile limb, trample
Manticore	114	9	21	3	7	+7	-3	missile weapons (tail spikes)
Mantis, Giant	64	8	6-36	3	2	+9	-3	camouflage, fly, pounce
Margoyles	87	6	18	3	6	+14	-4	camouflage, dive, swoop
Mewling	217	3	30	3	8	+12	-4	camouflage, delude, mentalism
Millipede, Giant	61	12	7	1	1	+1	-4	crush, poison (acid)
Mountain Lion	26	6	10	2	2	+6	-2	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake



Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Mummy	141	3	21	3	8	+6	-4	fear (aura); infect; immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison
Naga, Guardian	188	8	30	8	8	+7	-3	Spit (poison), mysticism (meditation, necromancy, sensitivity)
Naga, Spirit	188	6	30	7	7	+2	-3	poison (bite), pounce, sorcery (geomancy, hydromancy, spectramancy), mysticism (mentalism)
Naga, Water	188	5	24	6	6	+2	-3	poison (bite), swimming, sorcery (aeromancy, cryomancy, hydromancy)
Nightmare	139	18	24	6	7	+14	-7	fly; paralyze (breath); immune to fire/heat, mentalism, poison
Nymph	105	6	9	8	4	0	-1	blind, death
Ogre	207	5	13	3	6	+5	-3	melee weapons, thrown weapons
Ogre-mage	208	5	17	7	7	+6	-3	cryomancy, healing, melee weapons, mentalism, spectramancy, thrown weapons, transmutation
Owlbear	32	6	17	3	5	+12	-3	crush
Pegasus	49	24	15	5	6	+8	-2	kick
Poltergeist	163	3	2	3	5	N/A	N/A	fear; incorporeal; invisible; immune to mentalism, poison, normal weapons; resistant to silver
Remorhaz	116	6	21-42	1	7	+12 to +18	-5	acute sense (infravision), immune to cold, resistant to cryomancy, swallow whole
Revenant	142	5	24	1	10	+8	-0	crush; paralyze (gaze); immune to acid, gas, mentalism, poison
Roc	51	15	54	1	6	+12	-3	acute senses (hearing, vision), dive, swoop
Sabertooth	27	6	23	1	5	+11	-2	acute senses (hearing, vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Sandling	101	6	12	1	8	+8	-4	pounce (entangle), immune to mentalism
Satyr	197	9	15	6	7	+4	-3	charm (music), missile weapons, mysticism (animism)
Scorpion	55	5	6	1	4	+5	-3	poison (death or paralyze)
Scorpion, Giant	66	4	8	1	1	+5	-3	crush, poison (tail)
Shadow	152	6	10	3	4	+3	-3	drain (Strength); immune to cold, mentalism, poison
Shadow Mastiff	153	9	12	2	9	+4	-2	camouflage, fear (howl) mentalism/poison
Sheep	31	6	6	1	2	+2	-2	charge
Sirine	106	9	12-21	8	6	0	-4	acute sense (sight), alteration (self), charm (song), confuse (fog), drain (Reason), invisible
Skeleton	143	6	4	1	1	+3	-2,	immune to mentalism, poison; resistant to edged weapons
Skeleton Warrior	144	3	29	8	8	+6	-4	immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison; resistant to edged weapons
Skyfisher	43	12	12	5	5	+6	-4	acute sense (vision), rake, swoop
Slig	206	5	12	5	6	+4	-4	poison; thrown weapons; swim; immune to normal fire; resistant to magical fire
Snake, Constrictor	81	5	8	1	1	+2	-2	crush
Snake, Giant	82	5	19	1	5	+6	-3	crush, pounce
Snake, Shah	82	6	13	1	5	+2	-3	poison, spit
Snake, Viper	82	8	2	1	1	+1	-2	poison
Snake, Water	83	5	10	1	4	+2	-2	crush, suffocate
Spawn, Black	177	7	10	5 (25)	7	+9	-5	breath, death throe, sorcery
Spawn, Blue	177	8	12	5 (25)	8	+10	-5	breath, death throe, sorcery
Spawn, Green	177	8	10	7 (25)	7	+8	-5	breath, death throe, sorcery
Spawn, Red	177	10	14	6 (25)	8	+10	-5	breath, death throe, sorcery
Spawn, White	177	6	9	4 (25)	6	+7	-3	breath, death throe, sorcery
Spectral Minion	164	15	12-30	5	7	0-3	-4	incorporeal; immune to mentalism, normal weapons, poison
Spectre	154	15	6	7	8	+4	-4	drain (Endurance); incorporeal; immune to mentalism, poison



Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Spider, Giant	68	2-9	8-32	1-3	1-7	+4	-3	poison, web
Sprite	98	9	3	6	6	+2	-2	invisible, poison (sleep), sensitivity
Stahnk	150	5	48	1	7	+21	-2	charge; crush; trample; immune to fire, sharp weapons, mentalism, poison
Stirge	72	9	4	1	4	+2	-2	acute senses (hearing, sight), drain (Strength)
Swarm, Insect	65	†	†	†	†	†	†	†see insect type; trample
Sylph	99	12	9	8	7	0	-1	aeromancy, invisible, summoning (air elemental)
Taer	198	7	16	5	7	+6	-2	crush, musk (fur), thrown weapons (spears), immune to cold/ice (yeti only)
Thanoi	198	6	8	3	4	+8	-3	thrown weapons (spears), vulnerable to heat, immune to cold drain (Endurance), infect
Tick, Giant	70	2	6-12	1	5	+2	-4	acute senses (hearing vision), camouflage, climb, pounce, rake
Tiger	27	6	20	2	2	+10	-2	regenerate
Troll	216	6	24	4	7	+14	-4	camouflage, pounce, sorcery (one school)
Tylor	190	8	3-39	6 (36)	8	+15	-3 to -9	confuse (gaze), acute sense (infravision), pounce, sensitivity (light)
Umber Hulk	118	3	32	5	7	+17	-4	charge; kick; immune to mysticism, poison alteration (self); animism; charm (gaze); drain (cards); entangle; invisible; pounce; regenerate; immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison; resistant to cold/ice
Unicorn	120	12	16	5	7	+12	-4	kick, trample
Vampire	145	9	27	8	8	+5	-5	acute senses (hearing, smell), charge, death thro
Wari	39	8	9	1	4	+6	-2	poison (paralyze)
Wart Hog	34	6	9	1	2	+8	-2	camouflage; suffocate; resistant to fire, heat, physical attacks
Wasp, Giant	71	11	12	1	1	+5	-3	musk, sprint
Water Weird	107	6	12	6	7	0	-3	acute sense (smell), drain (Endurance), musk, sprint
Weasel	35	8	2	1	4	+1	-2	
Weasel, Giant	35	8	12	1	5	+6	-2	

Creature Name	Pg. #	Co	Ph	In	Es	Dmg	Def	Special Abilities
Wichtlin	147	5	16	2	6	+6	-4	mysticism; paralyze; poison; sorcery; immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison
Wight	148	6	12	5	7	+4	-2	drain (Presence); immune to normal weapons, mentalism, poison
Wight, Frost	128	6	15	5	7	N/A	N/A	cryomancy, delude, incorporeal, nullify, immune to normal weapons, cold/ice, mentalism, poison
Wight, Shadow	129	6	15	5	9	N/A	N/A	delude; despair; incorporeal; nullify; immune to mentalism, normal weapons, poison
Will O'Wisp	165	9	27	8	9	+8	-9	invisible; lightning; immune to sorcery, mysticism, mentalism, normal weapons, poison
Winter Wolf	113	9	18	5	7	+4	-3	breath attack (frost), camouflage, immune to cold/ice
Wolf	36	7	9	2	2	+3	-1	acute sense (smell)
Worg	37	7	12	3	4	+5	-2	acute sense (smell)
Worm, Purple	192	5	45	1	6	+22	-2	acute sense (vibrations), poison, swallow whole
Worm, Tractor	192	3	24	1	5	+4	-4	
Worm, Tunnel	61	3	30	1	5	+4	-3	camouflage, crush
Wraith	155	12	18	6	8	+6	-3	drain (Spirit); immune to incorporeal, mentalism, poison; resistant to silver weapons
Wyndlass	122	2	36	3	8	+52	-4	aura (fear), entangle, pounce, suffocate
Wyvern	193	12	28	4	7	+11	-4	dive, poison, swoop
Yeti	198	9	15	3	7	+7	-3	crush, musk (fur), thrown weapons (spears)
Zombie	149	3	8	1	1	+3	-1	Immune to mentalism, poison

¹All abilities and special abilities as per type of undead beast.

²The spirit will have the same ability score in this category as it had in life.



APPENDIX TWO

During DRAGONLANCE: FIFTH AGE games, Narrators may at times find themselves in need of new creatures appropriate to a specific habitat or setting. The following pages contain lists of creatures the heroes are likely to encounter in different terrains, as well as a list of "special" creatures that either are not native to any particular setting, or whose appearance will greatly impact a storyline.

Coastland

Axebeak
Beetle, Water
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Bugbear
Crocodile
Crocodile, Giant
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Fly, Giant Bluebottle
Gargoyle
Ghost
Ghoul
Goblin
Hag, Annis
Hag, Sea
Haunt
Hippocampus
Hobgoblin
Horsefly, Giant
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kapaocinth
Kingfisher
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Manticore
Margoyle
Mewling
Naga, Water
Ogre
Poltergeist
Revenant
Shadow
Shadow Wight
Sirine
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Snake, Water
Spectre
Troll

Vampire
Water Weird
Wichtlin
Wight
Wraith
Zombie

Desert

Austritch
Basilisk
Basilisk, Greater
Beetle, Giant
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Boar, Desolation
Bugbear
Centipede, Giant
Cockatrice
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Emre
Fly, Giant Bluebottle
Frost Wight
Gargoyle
Ghost
Ghoul
Goblin
Gorgon
Hag, Annis
Hatori
Hatori, Greater
Haunt
Hobgoblin
Horsefly, Giant
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Manticore
Margoyle
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Mummy

Ogre
Poltergeist
Revenant
Scorpion
Scorpion, Giant
Shadow
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Snake, Shah
Spectre
Spider, Giant
Troll
Vampire
'Wari
Wichtlin
Wight
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Zombie

Forest

Badger
Badger, Giant
Banshee
Bat
Bat, Giant
Bee, Giant
Beetle, Fire
Beetle, Giant
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Boar, Giant
Boar, Wild
Brown Bear
Bugbear
Centipede, Giant
Cockatrice
Cooshee
Darken Owl
Deer
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Dryad

HABITAT GUIDE

Fly, Giant Bluebottle
Gargoyle
Ghost
Ghoul
Goblin
Grizzly Bear
Hag, Annis
Hag, Green
Haunt
Hill Giant
Hobgoblin
Horsefly, Giant
Hydra
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Lynx
Manticore
Mantis, Giant
Margoyl
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Mobat
Naga, Spirit
Nymph
Ogre
Owlbear
Pegasus
Poltergeist
Revenant
Sabertooth
Satyr
Scorpion, Giant
Shadow
Shadow Mastiff
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Snake, Shah
Spectre
Spider, Giant
Sprite
Stirge
Sylph
Tick, Giant
Tiger
Troll
Tylor
Unicorn
Vampire
Wart Hog
Wasp, Giant

Weasel
Weasel, Giant
Wichtlin
Wight
Wild Dog
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Wyndlass
Zombie

Grasslands


Austritch
Badger
Badger, Giant
Bat
Bat, Giant
Beetle, Fire
Beetle, Giant
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Buffalo
Bugbear
Cattle
Centipede, Giant
Cheetah
Chimera
Cockatrice
Deer
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Elephant
Emre
Fly, Giant Bluebottle
Gargoyle
Ghost
Ghoul
Goat
Goblin
Griffin
Hag, Annis
Haunt
Hippogriff
Hobgoblin
Horse
Horsefly, Giant
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Leonine

Lich
Lion
Lizard, Common
Lynx
Mammoth
Manticore
Margoyl
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Mobat
Ogre
Pegasus
Poltergeist
Revenant
Sabertooth
Shadow
Shadow Mastiff
Shadow Wight
Sheep
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Spectre
Troll
Vampire
Veldt Ants
'Wari
Wart Hog
Wichtlin
Wight
Wild Dog
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Wyvern
Zombie

Ice Fields

Bear, Ice
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Bugbear
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Frost Wight
Gargoyle
Ghost
Ghost
Ghoul
Goblin
Hag, Annis
Haunt
Hobgoblin





Ice Toad
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Manticore
Margoyle
Mewling
Ogre
Poltergeist
Remorhaz
Revenant
Shadow
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Spectre
Thanoi
Troll
Vampire
Wichtlin
Wight
Winter Wolf
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Yeti
Zombie

Jungle

Baboon, Giant
Badger
Badger, Giant
Basilisk
Basilisk, Greater
Bat
Bat, Giant
Bee, Giant
Beetle, Fire
Beetle, Giant
Beetle, Horned
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Boar, Giant
Boar, Wild
Bugbear
Centipede, Giant
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Gargoyle
Ghast
Ghost
Ghoul
Goblin
Hag, Annis

Haunt
Hobgoblin
Hydra
Insect
Insect Swarm
Jaguar
Kobold
Leonine
Leopard
Lich
Lion
Lizard, Common
Mandibear
Manticore
Mantis, Giant
Margoyle
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Mobat
Ogre
Poltergeist
Revenant
Sabertooth
Shadow
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Snake, Constrictor
Snake, Giant
Snake, Shah
Spectre
Spider, Giant
Stirge
Tick, Giant
Tiger
Troll
Tylor
Vampire
Wart Hog
Wasp, Giant
Wichtlin
Wight
Wraith
Zombie

Mountain

Aarakocra
Ape, Carnivorous
Basilisk
Basilisk, Greater
Bee, Giant
Beetle, Giant
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Bugbear
Cave Cricket

Centipede, Giant
Chimera
Cyclops
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Eagle, Giant
Ettin
Gargoyle
Ghast
Ghost
Ghoul
Goat
Goblin
Griffin
Hag, Annis
Haunt
Hill Giant
Hobgoblin
Hydra
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Kyrie
Lich
Lizard, Common
Lizard, Minotaur
Lizard, Strider
Lurker
Lynx
Manticore
Margoyle
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Mountain Lion
Ogre
Pegasus
Poltergeist
Revenant
Roc
Sabertooth
Sandling
Shadow
Shadow Mastiff
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Skyfisher
Spectre
Spider, Giant
Sylph
Taer
Troll
Tylor
Vampire

Wasp, Giant
Wichtlin
Wight
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Wyvern
Yeti
Zombie

Swamp

Bat
Bat, Giant
Bee, Giant
Behir
Bird of Prey
Bird, Common
Bugbear
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Fly, Giant Bluebottle
Gargoyle
Ghast
Ghost
Ghoul
Gnoll
Goblin
Hag, Annis
Haunt
Hobgoblin
Horsefly, Giant
Hydra
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Manticore
Mantis, Giant
Margoyl
Mewling
Mobat
Ogre
Poltergeist
Revenant
Shadow
Shadow Mastiff
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Slig
Snake, Constrictor
Snake, Giant
Snake, Water

Spectre
Spider, Giant
Tick, Giant
Troll
Vampire
Wasp, Giant
Wichtlin
Wight
Will O'Wisp
Wolf
Worg
Wraith
Wyndlass
Zombie

Underground

Basilisk
Basilisk, Greater
Beetle, Fire
Beetle, Giant
Behir
Bugbear
Cave Cricket
Centipede, Giant
Draconian, Aurak
Draconian, Baaz
Draconian, Bozak
Draconian, Kapak
Draconian, Sivak
Gargoyle
Ghast
Ghost
Ghoul
Gnoll
Goblin
Hag, Annis
Haunt
Hobgoblin
Hydra
Insect
Insect Swarm
Kobold
Lich
Lizard, Common
Lizard,
 Giant Subterranean
Lizard,
 Subterranean
Lurker
Manticore
Margoyl
Mewling
Millipede, Giant
Naga, Spirit
Ogre
Poltergeist
Purple Worm

Revenant
Sandling
Scorpion
Scorpion, Giant
Shadow
Shadow Wight
Skeleton
Skeleton Warrior
Spectre
Spider, Giant
Tractor Worm
Troll
Tunnel Worm
Umber Hulk
Vampire
Wichtlin
Wight
Wraith
Zombie

Special

Anhkolox
Artifact Spirit
Brute
Daemon Warrior
Death Knight
Dracolich
Dragon, Chromatic
Dragon, Metallic
Elemental, Air
Elemental, Earth
Elemental, Fire
Elemental, Nature
Elemental, Water
Fire Dragon
Fire Minion
Fireshadow
Gholor
Golem, Iron
Golem, Stone
Hell Cat
Hell Hound
Imp
Imp, Blood Sea
Kani Doll
Knight Haunt
Lizard, Giant
Naga, Guardian
Nightmare
Ogre-mage
Spawn, Black
Spawn, Blue
Spawn, Green
Spawn, Red
Spawn, White
Spectral Minion
Stahnk



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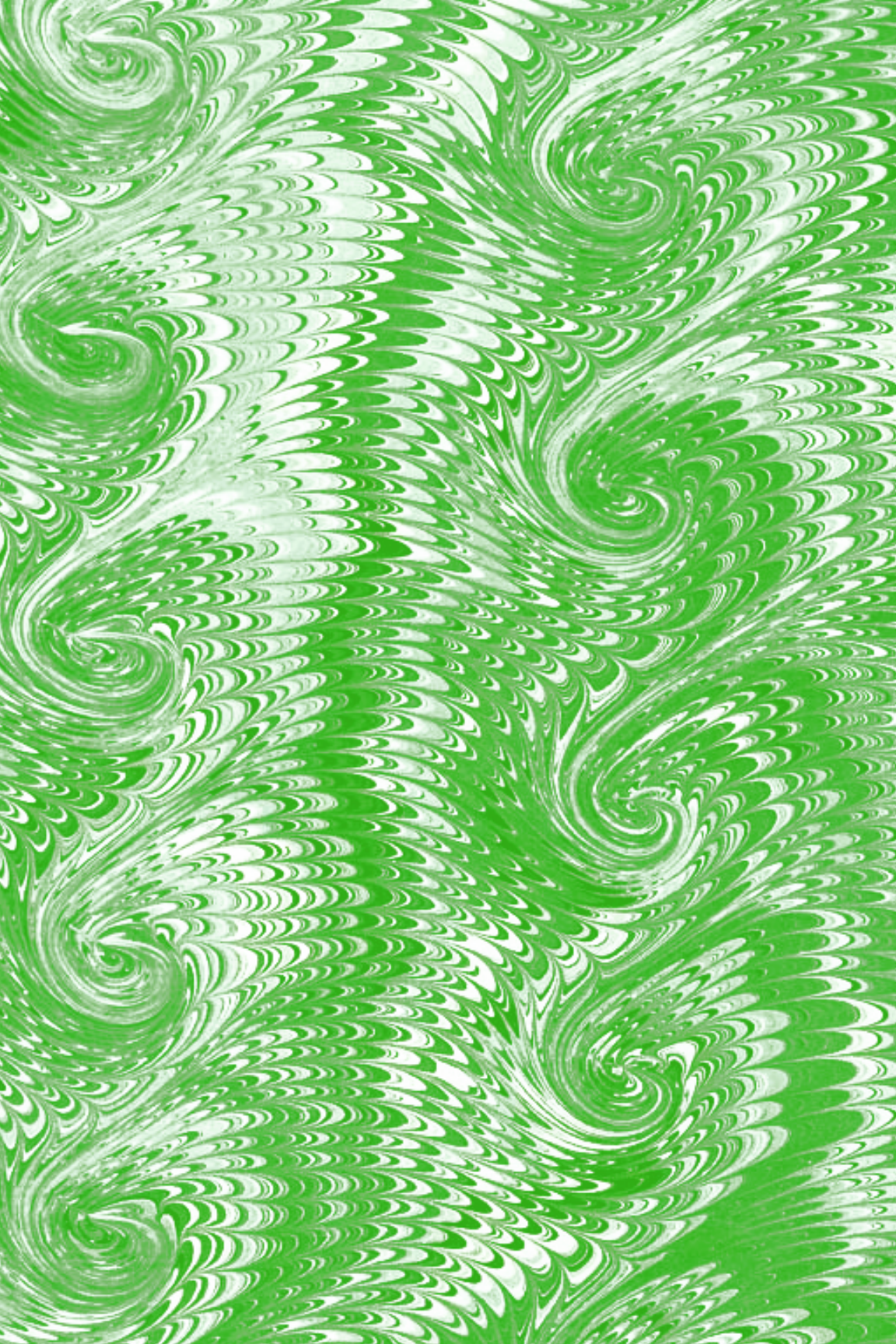
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09564

the Bestiary

By
Steven "Stan!" Brown

All Creatures Kind and Cruel

The *Bestiary* provides readers with an ultimate guide to the animals and creatures of the DRAGONLANCE® Saga — beasts from the classic tales set during the War of the Lance, as well as newer monsters from the Fifth Age of Krynn. This beautifully illustrated reference, penned from the viewpoint of Caramon Majere, a Hero of the Lance, details the habits, diets, lairs, and legends of these fantastic creatures.

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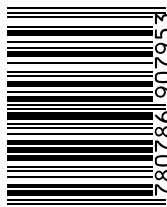
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