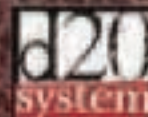


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# THE QUINTESSENTIAL DROW

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Book Eighteen

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# THE QUINTESSENTIAL DROW

The drow are evil. Sundered from their surface brethren for ams against the world, the drow have honed their hatred for centuries, developing new and more exotic types of evil. From their fiendish avatars used in the gestation of their empires to the archmagical rites used in their brands of despotic magic to the dark secrets of fleshcrafting, the drow have created evil all their own. Cursing below the surface, they brood over the fates of their enemies while formulating new types of magic and developing new martial skills. Ancient, decadent, and thoroughly vile, the drow are the ultimate enemy of any who can breathe.

This volume in the *Quintessential* series presents the drow in all their hellish glory, revealing for the first time their practices from birth to death and beyond. Contained within these pages you will find the secrets of the drow omnibus Games Masters to create dark of villains or players to design the drow characters of their darkest dreams.

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The Prestige Drow	The Gravebond
Tricks of the Drow	Religion of Horrors
Drow Feats	The Gift of Bones
Tools of the Drow	Anatomophilia
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# The Quintessential Drow

Sam Witt

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## Credits

### Editor

Matthew Sprange

### Developer

Paul Tucker

### Cover Art

Anne Stokes

### Interior Illustrations

Chad Sergesketter, Eric Bergeron, Sarwat Chadda, Stephen Shepherd, Tony Parker, Alejandro Villen

### Production Manager

Alexander Fennell

### Playtesting

Steve Mulhern, Mark Howe, Daniel Scothorne, Mark Sizer, Michael Young, Mark Billanie, Daniel Haslam, Jamie Godfrey, Alan Moore

### Proof Reading

Ashley Tarmin

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## MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

Mongoose Publishing, PO Box 1018, Swindon, SN3 1DG, United Kingdom

[info@mongoosepublishing.com](mailto:info@mongoosepublishing.com)

Visit the Mongoose Publishing website at [www.mongoosepublishing.com](http://www.mongoosepublishing.com) for additional rules and news



# INTRODUCTION

The drow are evil. Sundered from their surface brethren for sins against the world, the drow have nurtured their hatred for centuries, developing new and more exotic types of evil. From their horrific ovarisites used in the gestation of their children to the arachnurgical rites used in their brands of despicable magic to the dark secrets of fleshcrafting, the drow have created evil all their own. Lurking below the surface, they brood over the fates of their enemies while formulating new types of magic and developing new martial skills. Ancient, decadent, and thoroughly vile, the drow are the ultimate enemy of any who earn their ire.

This volume in the *Quintessential* series presents the drow in all their hellish glory, revealing for the first time their practices from birth to death and beyond. Contained within these pages you will find the secrets of the drow, enabling Games Masters to create dark elf villains or players to design the drow characters of their darkest dreams.

Character Concepts offers many options for a drow character's background. From the alchemically born drow created by parents obsessed with a particular type of child to the sac child raised by the demonic ovarisites, you will find many different character types here for use in your game. The Prestige Drow details a number of prestige classes available only to drow, each specializing in their own style of evil and gifted with different aspects of drow culture. The Blessed Master, for example, is a master at raising and training spiders for use in arachnurgy while the tithe taker is skilled at taking prisoners and the use of nonlethal means to subdue foes, capturing them for later use by drow fleshcrafters.

Tricks of the Drow, the third chapter, explores torture, the drow use of slaves in combat situations, and other practices of dark elf society. Herein, you will find the ways in which the drow use their social skills to attack one another, positioning themselves for the Game of Bones, as well as a look at the innovative and dangerous uses the drow find for even mundane skills. The fourth chapter, Drow Feats, reveals the feats necessary to capture the feel of drow society. From social and resource-related feats designed to simulate the nobility of the drow to arcane feats for practicing drow magic to the feats that mimic drow martial arts, you will find a horde of feats for use in your campaign. The next two chapters cover the drow magical arts of fleshcrafting and arachnurgy, two unique arcane arts

practiced by this race. The first is used by the drow to create slaves that perfectly fulfil their required function while the second transforms even a common house spider into an instrument of divine wrath.

The Religion of Horrors and Grave Bonding chapters delve into drow religion. The Fatespinner is the chief drow goddess, a spiderish deity renowned for her intricate plans and alien cruelty, who is attended by a host of drow deities. Grave bonding is a form of divine magic in which the drow trades his life essence for a greater connection to his gods, blurring the lines between life and death. The last chapters cover the Game of Bones and the woven lairs of the drow. The Game of Bones, an ancient and chaotic game of noble scheming, assassination, and outright murder, is played by all drow nobles as they strive for position and favour within their great cities, which are constructed from woven webs and crafted flesh. Using the rules in this chapter, players will be able to take part in the Game of Bones themselves and, if they are skilled and lucky, to build their own woven lairs to defend themselves from their enemies.

With the information provided in this book, Games Masters and players alike will be given the knowledge they need to bring the drow fully into their campaign, as enemies or protagonists. Be warned, however, that these dark elves are indeed dark – you will not find any stoic heroes or hidden saints, but rather dark creatures determined to survive and succeed, no matter the cost to themselves or others.

## THE COLLECTORS' SERIES

The Collectors' Series is a range of class and racial sourcebooks from Mongoose Publishing, all designed to greatly widen a player's options for their character within the d20 System. Slotting seamlessly into any fantasy-based campaign, each will give a comprehensive of one class or race within the game, allowing both players and Games Masters the chance to present old character types in a completely new way without overpowering or unbalancing the game as a whole. The Collectors' Series will not necessarily allow a player to create a better character, but they will be able to do a lot more than ever thought possible before.

‘You presume much, Sethok.’ Peshun curled back into the warm embrace of her living sofa, dragging her jagged nails along the gently pulsing flesh around her. ‘This is my home, not some common hall you can frequent as you wish.’

With a smirk, the young mercenary threw back his cloak to reveal the square, obsidian box hidden within its folds. ‘But Mistress Peshun, I knew you would want me to bring you the remains of your lover, fresh from the field of battle against the cursed flayers.’ With a mocking bow, the drow knelt before Peshun, his eyes downcast but his lips quirked up into a savage grin. He offered the box, extending it on his open palm without looking at the noble.

Shocked, she held her breath for long beats, let her concentration return to drown out the riot of emotions raging through her. Peshun hated surprises and she loathed youth even more. Satisfied with her composure, she reached out for the small box, closing her hands gently around its smooth black corners.

Sethok lunged as soon as he felt the box leave his palm, coiling his long, slender fingers around the fragile wrist of the noblewoman. He bore down with all his strength, grinding his thumbs along the pressure points near the narrow bones and digging his chipped and cracked fingernails into the sleek black smoothness of her skin.

‘He died like a coward, m’lady, screaming your name. It was a disgrace.’ The feral grin on the mercenary’s face narrowed to a slash, a mere slit over his clenched teeth. ‘I killed him myself to save you the embarrassment of having him return wounded like that.’

‘What do you want?’ The sofa groaned beneath Peshun, its trio of mouths gawped wide near the arm and tongues flicked out to taste her anxiety on the air. ‘My gratitude? You killed my mate and left my house without a master.’

‘Did I?’ Sethok released his grasp on her suddenly and pushed her back with the tips of his fingers. ‘I do not see it the same way, Lady Peshun. Your master died, by my hand, on the field of battle. That entitles me to certain . . . considerations.’ His eyes raked her so lasciviously her black skin paled a shade before she caught herself. When this whelp was still sucking at the teats of the milkspiders she had been plotting the overthrow of an entire dynasty. One assassination would not destroy that.

‘Ah, I see. So you have come to claim your reward, then?’ With a smouldering glare of her own, Peshun laid back into the sofa and lifted her arms free of her robes, letting the loose silk fall around her waist in a shimmering puddle. This would be all too easy. ‘I know the law as well as you, Sethok, and have used it in much the same way.’

Seizing the invitation, the warrior threw himself upon his lady, crushing her to his chest. ‘I am so glad you can see how things will be, Peshun. I will bring life back to your line and glory to your name. I have seen a son –’

His teeth clacked together so suddenly the tip of his tongue was severed and fell onto her shoulder amid a fine spray of blood. He whined behind clenched teeth, unable to open his locked jaws to curse her name. His eyes spoke most eloquently, however, and she laughed at the horror and rage she saw there.

‘Did your mother never teach you of the courtesan’s spider, little wolf?’ She pushed him off with no difficulty and sneered down at him where he fell, stiff and paralyzed by the poison racing through his veins. She flowed like oil from sitting to standing, let the robe fall away to reveal her smooth flesh from head to toe. She scooped a pair of tiny red spiders from where they crawled along her inner thigh and cooed to them, gently. ‘You will make an excellent home for the next generation of my line, Sethok. It is almost a pity you were not intelligent enough to be their sire.’

# CHARACTER CONCEPTS

The drow are fascinating in their evil. While many view them as nothing more than evil elves, they have developed a unique culture and worldview that is reflected in their outlook from early childhood on. Even a very young drow is demonstrably evil and is encouraged to fight and kill his crèche-mates should they earn his displeasure. The character concepts presented in this chapter provide a touchstone to this sort of childhood and developmental evil. Whether used to reflect the unnatural circumstances of his birth or the behaviours learned during his formative years, the character concepts included in this chapter are meant to bring context to the evil of the drow and provide a framework in which the drow character can express himself in a consistent manner.

Character Concepts are a core rule for the Quintessential series of sourcebooks from Mongoose Publishing and provide a range of templates for each character class that will allow a player to quickly and easily provide a ready background for every new character he generates. As well as providing both a small bonus and penalty to his character's capabilities, each Character Concept gives a ready base for role-playing, thus greatly decreasing the time taken during character creation, as well as granting that oft-needed inspiration so important for a player to feel 'at home' with his new character.

Any one Character Concept may be applied to a character as it is being created. The listed bonuses and penalties are applied, any roleplaying description modified and adjusted to take into account the template and then the character is ready to play! From this point forth, both the player and the Games Master should be aware of the Character Concept chosen and take steps to ensure the character is played accordingly. It must be stressed, Character Concepts are a role-playing tool, not simply a method to gain new abilities!

## ALCHEMICALLY BORN

Rumours swirl like poisonous vapours around the circumstances of your birth and many believe you are not truly a drow at all, but merely a creation of parents with great arcane talents. In truth, you were conceived naturally, but your mother did experiment with many alchemical concoctions, leaving you virtually immune to even magical disease, but strangely susceptible to poisons and other chemicals. As you grew up, you never fell ill or contracted any of the many childhood poxes common to the denizens of the Underdeep, but were often laid low by a food tainted by poisonous mushrooms or the simplest sting of the albino scorpions lairing in your bunk. Little by little, you learned to conceal the truth of your condition, capitalizing on your resistance to disease while minimizing your exposure to poisons. Thus, while you favour the unconventional weapons of plague and infection, you try to carry enough antivenin and serum antidotes to cure a platoon of soldiers at all times. While you have the upper hand against those who do not know of your condition, you live in constant terror



that one of your enemies will discover your weakness and slip nightshade into your evening wine.

**Adventuring:** You are proof that alchemical concoctions can create dramatic, permanent changes in others. You are willing to join any expedition that might uncover some alchemical lore you can use to your benefit, particularly if you believe there is any chance whatsoever your weakness against poisons could be alleviated. This often leads you on wild excursions deep into ancient and forgotten ruins, hoping against hope you will discover some ancient bit of alchemical lore to use to your advantage.

Disease is also fascinating to you and you are always on the lookout for faster-acting and more lethal diseases to add to your collection. This sometimes finds you exploring ancient crypts and rotting catacombs as you sift through the corpses for elusive plagues. Though many believe you have a healthy interest in the necromantic arts, some are beginning

to wonder what it is you are really doing. Though you hope to keep it a secret as long as possible, your research might prove useful should you need to do away with any of these inquisitive pests.

**Roleplaying:** Disease is nothing to you – even magical diseases are only marginally frightening and you are more than willing to expose yourself to them thanks to your natural immunity. While other members of your community do their best to avoid the plague-ridden or pockmarked, you have no such aversion to the afflicted and often cultivate contacts and informants amongst the sick and wretched.

Poison, on the other hand, is absolutely horrifying to you and it takes a great deal of your willpower to go anywhere near the stuff. This makes you particularly skittish at drow social events, where poison plays a common and notorious role in embarrassing guests or as the final agent in an assassination plot. Such wariness is seen as good sense amongst the drow, but

Vezieliz swaggered through the crowded fleshpit, his bare chest slick with sweat and fragrant oils. Row after row of scar tissue adorned his back, starting with jagged ridges at his shoulders and tapering to hair-fine ribbons at his waist. He moved through the crowd as if he was alone, casually sliding past those who bumped into him or stepping to the side of those who approached. His eyes seized the light from the scented candles and transformed it into the barest hint of a glowing coal deep within his pupils. Despite his easy avoidance of those around him, his gaze never wavered and remained fixed on the priestess seated on the far edge of the pit.

She watched him approach with vague amusement in her eyes, a cruel smirk twitching the corners of her lips up to reveal a pair of rune-silvered incisors. In her days, Aulchrilia had broken better men than this and left them whimpering in filth-soaked sheets of the finest spider silk. Tales of this one had reached her ears, but she disbelieved them. No man could be as enthralling as the stories, nor as indiscriminate with his affections. Men were weak and slavishly devoted to the women who dominated them, it was a fact.

He ascended the steps toward her seat without a word and she flicked her fingers quickly at his approach, signing her guards to stand down and let him approach unmolested. She had put out the word, after all, and it would not satisfy her curiosity if this famously seductive male was destroyed at her feet. Time enough for that, later.

Stopping in front of her, Vezieliz cocked his head slightly to one side and folded his hands together behind his back. He did not speak or move, but his eyes found hers and the mocking insolence she found within his gaze filled her with a sudden rage. She rose toward him fluidly, her silken armour flaring around her swing arm. The whip snaked out from the rod concealed in her palm, its braided length slashing across his face so the cheek peeled back from the bone. He did not flinch or cry out, even as the first fat drops of blood spilled from the wound and tumbled down his ebon cheeks in a crimson rush.

Aulchrilia approached him, then, her hand rising to his face, fingertips grazing the ragged edges of the wound she had created. She touched it lightly, her lacquered nails scarcely touching the surface of his skin, so the scream caught her by surprise. It was a thing of beauty, a high wailing so pure and clear it stabbed into her ears like an icy stalactite. It went on and on, changing in response to her touch, rising and falling, as the barest hint of tenderness sent jagged hooks of pain tearing across Vezieliz's nerve endings.

‘So the stories are true.’ The priestess mused quietly to herself, her ears still ringing from the screams. ‘You will come with me,’ she whispered to him and withdrew the breeding rings from within the pouch at her belt, ‘and you will live forevermore in the temple.’

## CHARACTER CONCEPTS

those who know you can see your fear goes much deeper.

**Bonuses:** You receive a +10 natural bonus to any save you make to resist the effects of disease or avoid contagion. This applies to any and all diseases, including magical or supernatural diseases or those of extraplanar origin.

**Penalties:** Poison absolutely terrifies you and with good reason – even a minor dose can prove deadly to you. When faced with a foe who possesses a poisoned weapon or a hostile creature with poisonous natural weapons, you must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + the Hit Dice or level of the poison-wielding attacker) to remain within 10 feet of the creature. If you fail this save, you must stay at least 10 feet outside the creature's reach, if possible. Though you may attack a creature in self-defence, you may not initiate an attack against a poison-wielding creature without first succeeding at the Will save noted above. In addition to your fear of poison, you also suffer a –5 natural penalty to all saving throws you make to resist the effects of poison.

## CONSORT

Sex is a wonderful thing, especially as a tool for getting what you want. Raised in a whorehouse and trained in the arts of the flesh, you are adept at using your body as a tool to sway the minds, hearts, and libidos of those who can do the most for you. Though you are not necessarily a stunning beauty, you possess a carnal air that translates easily to those around you and your wanton reputation often precedes you by a great deal. Unfortunately, you are prone to losing yourself to bouts of carnal pleasures, throwing yourself at anyone who will have you and soaking up new experiences to add to your repertoire of sexual skills. You also have difficulty stopping yourself once the sexual juices begin to flow – why stop at a kiss when you can get so much more out of someone in exchange for a wild night between the sheets?

**Adventuring:** Those who go exploring in the Underdeep often return laden with ridiculous amounts of wealth and staggering personal power. While you are not so keen on suffering disfiguring damage that could ruin your ability to use sex as a weapon, you are intrigued by the extremes of this lifestyle. More importantly, adventurers are dangerous and sexy in a way that staid nobles and boring merchants cannot hope

to match. Led by your desire, you often find yourself following an adventurer on quest after quest as you struggle to dominate him with your body, making his power your own through your sexual prowess.

**Roleplaying:** Sex lies at the core of your being and has been part of your life since before you were old enough to understand its meaning. Your experiences have taught you well, though, and you are now amongst the most proficient carnal artisans in your community, skilled in all manner of exotic and dangerous sexual acts. You are a notorious flirt in all situations, no matter the personal danger or your state of health – your relations to other people are all predicated on sexual subtext and you simply do not know how to relate to those around you in any other way. Given the opportunity, you will seduce anyone who comes near you, provided there is something they can do for you that you cannot do for yourself.

On the other hand, you bristle at the implication of prostitution on your part. You are not a mere whore, but a skilful consort who uses sex as a weapon to get what you want. There is nothing as crass or as simple as an exchange for goods for services in your relations, but rather a complex web of seduction and deceit,





through which you guide your marks until they have been milked dry for your benefit. You always leave them wanting more, desperate to earn your attentions again.

**Bonuses:** When you have the time and inclination, you receive a +2 competence bonus to any Diplomacy or Gather Information checks you make as regards a target you are currently attempting to Seduce (see *Tricks of the Drow*), having sexual relations with, or with whom you have had sexual relations with in the past day.

**Penalties:** Your diplomatic skills are awful outside of the sexual arena and you suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Sense Motive checks against any target you are not currently having sex with or have not had sex within the past 24 hours. Between the sheets, you are as charming and seductive as can be, but outside of it your difficulties in relating to others make you considerably less capable of subtle social discourse. Note that these penalties do not apply during seduction attempts, as your blatant sexuality is a benefit during such attempts.



## CRAFTED

The arcane secrets of drow magic are held close by their masters and parted with only under duress or in exchange for a horrible price. You are one who has paid the price, allowing your skin and muscle to be changed by the fleshcrafters in exchange for a scrap of arcane knowledge. Though the exchange did not work out quite as you planned, you cannot deny you received an edge in the magical arts few others can claim – sadly, the cost was a good portion of your health and a significant fraction of your mind. Though only time will tell if the exchange was a valuable one, you do your best to convince yourself that the nightmares and nervous tics, the scars and deformities are worth what you have gained.

**Adventuring:** You already proved you are willing to suffer greatly for personal power and what is adventuring but another form of suffering in exchange for expanded capabilities? You will partner yourself with whomever or whatever seems to be heading toward a worthy goal at the moment, though you always plan ways to work things out to your advantage and the detriment of others. Working as a member of a team is no problem for you, but you demand to be in charge of the team and be the one who decides how the loot is divvied up. If there is one thing you learned from your time with the fleshcrafters, it is that it is best to consider your dealings carefully and to be very

sure you know what you are getting yourself into. The readiness of adventurers to throw their lives away for sometimes meagre gains works to your advantage in this regard, allowing you to convince others to follow your lead while you reap the rewards of their effort.

You are also very interested in cures and augmentations you might find on your travels, anything to help alleviate the horrors you face on a daily basis. Though the fleshcrafters assure you a complete cure is not possible, you cannot help but wonder if there might be something, anything, out there to help you through the day.

**Roleplaying:** You are a tormented creature, willing to sell yourself for increased personal power. You contemplate new and inventive ways to become more powerful, considering even dire costs as trivialities beneath your concern. The pain delivered to you by the fleshcrafters is just one such trivial cost you willingly paid during your life and you are sure there will be many more. If there is any chance you will become more powerful by doing something or going somewhere, whatever the cost, you have no problems in enduring pain, suffering, and privation to reach your goal.

## CHARACTER CONCEPTS

This, of course, led to your current dilemma. You are not a well creature and your impaired health and mental aberrations are just symptoms of a much deeper problem. You know the fleshcrafters *broke* something inside you but you do not know what and you do not know how to fix it. You hide the fear and weakness this causes by putting on a brave front and thrusting yourself into greater and greater dangers in your quest for personal power and the salvation you believe it brings.

**Bonuses:** You are a gifted student of the arcane and possess a unique insight as a result of your time with the fleshcrafters. If you must study and prepare your spells, you may, once per day, exchange one spell you have prepared for another spell you know but did not prepare for the day.

If you do not need to study and prepare your spells, you may instead choose to 'forget' one spell you know whenever you gain a level and exchange it for a spell you have not yet learned.

**Penalties:** The fleshcrafters broke your body down and then rebuilt it. Apparently, they did not put everything back where they found it, however, and your mind and body have suffered as a result. Whenever you are in a stressful situation (as determined by your Games Master but generally any time you are in combat, feel threatened, or have pressure placed upon you to succeed), you must make a Will save (DC 15). If this save fails, you begin exhibiting a number of nervous tics and mental disturbances and, as a result, suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks made for the next 1d10 minutes.

The changes to your body also left you in poor health and vulnerable to damage from outside sources. Any time you suffer damage from an attack or spell cast at you, you suffer one additional hit point of damage. This does not affect ability damage (either permanent or temporary) in any way.

### DEMONSEED

Your family is beholden to various patron deities who offer them power and knowledge in exchange for certain sacrifices and concessions in the mortal realms. The drow have a particular fondness for revitalizing their bloodlines with the help of demonic essences, and you are the result of such practices. Conceived in the unnatural union of a drow and a demon, you

were gestated within the bloated form of a broodmare and birthed in a ceremonial rite designed to increase the glory and power of your family. Though your parents and relatives see you as a shining star in their fading constellation, you cannot help but wonder if there is not some other purpose, some more sinister motive for your existence.

**Adventuring:** There is something out there, calling to you. You do not know what it is, or where you will find it, but you can hear it just before you fall asleep, in the silence after battle, and during those moments of reflection when you wonder who you really *are*. The quest for personal identity and desire to know why you were created leads you on all manner of adventures, especially as you hope to one day face your demonic parent and unlock the secrets of your conception.

Of course, you also do your part to fulfil the destiny others have laid out for you. Your family constantly reminds you how much they sacrificed and the dangers they faced to create you and your supposed destiny of returning the house to its former glory. Though your heart is not always in it, adventuring does allow you the chance to explore the world and yourself, while still keeping your elders off your back and out of your hair.



**Roleplaying:** You are a freak and everyone knows it, including yourself. More importantly, you do not really understand where you fit into the natural order – you look like a drow and may even think like a drow, but your demonic parentage muddles all that. Your confusion over your heritage and angst over the destiny imposed upon you by your family leaves you wondering if there might not be something more in the world for you than what you have been given. Given the chance, you research demons of all types, including magic useful for summoning, binding, and even slaying such creatures, all in the hopes of understanding the Outsider half of your being. While you adventure to improve yourself, increase your knowledge, and yes, to help your family regain their former glory, you really hope to just find out what you are and why you were made.

Of course there are some upsides to being half-demon, or whatever it is you are. If you act out violently or with special cruelty, no one thinks twice about it, as everyone sort of expects it to happen eventually anyway. This does not give you free rein to rampage through the city hacking the heads off young drow, but it does tend to afford you a little more latitude than normal when dealing with your friends and family.

**Bonuses:** You have all the standard bonuses and penalties for being a drow, but you are a creature of the Outsider type. This means you are immune to spells that do not affect outsiders, both beneficial and detrimental.

**Penalties:** You have all the standard bonuses and penalties for being a drow, but you are a creature of the Outsider type. This means you are immune to spells that do not affect outsiders, both beneficial and detrimental.

### LIBERATED SLAVE

You and your siblings were all enslaved as punishment for the crimes of the preceding generation. Whether your father was found with a wood elf lover or your mother discovered sharing secrets with the flayers, the punishment was the same – the children of your generation were enslaved by the city of your birth and sold to the highest bidder. The years of harsh labour and brutal punishment shaped your body, making you stronger and more resilient than other drow, but you never received the type of specialized arcane or divine training to call upon the magical side of your heritage.



When the last guilty members of your family perished, you were released and allowed to make whatever life you could for yourself. Stronger in some ways than other drow, but much weaker in others, you must constantly struggle to adapt your vision of the world as a slave with your newfound freedom.

**Adventuring:** You are strong and tough and generally good at taking orders, which means you are quite well cut out for adventuring. The adventuring lifestyle also lets you escape from drow culture for a while, giving you a chance to explore your freedom without violating social conventions and landing yourself in even more hot water. Because adventurers tend to be a bit more rough-and-tumble than the typical drow noble, you are also given more latitude in your personal interactions with your partners, who may be willing to help you reintegrate with drow society.

Even more importantly, adventuring is a good way to increase wealth and personal ability, two things highly prized by all drow. In order to return to a state of grace in the city of your birth, you will need enough money to rebuild the shattered estates of your family and enough power to cement your hold over whatever territory you choose to take as your own. Though it

## CHARACTER CONCEPTS

will be a long and difficult road, adventuring offers the shortest path to redeeming your family name.

**Roleplaying:** The world is a confusing place to you. Slaves are expected to do only what they are told within drow culture, some have even gone so far as to starve themselves to death if not specifically commanded to eat. While you never fell to such depths of self-destruction, you are clearly not used to being master of your own destiny yet. You are likely to follow any order barked in your direction, without question or concern for the consequences, though you fight against this instinct with every fibre of your being.

Living up to the drow cultural ideals is also quite difficult without the aid of magic. Disconnected from this important facet of drow life, you do your best to minimize it when the topic rises in conversation or to emphasize your strengths in other areas. Martial training is a favourite study amongst liberated slaves, because it relies so much on their physical skills and does not require magical ability.

**Bonuses:** You receive Toughness as a bonus feat at 1st level as a result of your increased physical resilience and resistance to damage. Life as a slave did not have

many perks, but no one can deny your ability to take a beating.

**Penalties:** Your will is weak and you have no aptitude for magic, whatsoever. You may never multiclass into a class with the ability to cast spells of any type. In addition, the punishments and abuse you received while a slave greatly eroded your willpower; you suffer a -1 natural penalty to all Will saves you make.

## NOBLE BORN

You were born into the very highest levels of drow society. No petty nobles, your family actively rules over a large section of drow society, be it a single small city or a significant portion of a large city. While you may not be the firstborn or heir to the family title, you are afforded a great deal of respect and authority inside the area your family controls. On the other hand, while you remain in your ancestral lands your family holds you to a higher standard of conduct and noble responsibility than you might otherwise be forced to suffer. The family grants you important privileges, but also demands service in return.

**Adventuring:** Most nobles do not adventure, but there are always the black sheep of the family to contend with. Younger drow nobles, especially those not in line to inherit a title or holdings (or those who are relatively young and have no chance to inherit anything for many centuries, barring an assassination), do sometimes head out to the hinterlands to see a bit of the world and claim a bit of glory for themselves, but they are the exception, rather than the rule.

Some drow families, however, request specific services of their younger members, forcing them to undertake adventurous expeditions. While this is sometimes seen as a way for a family to dispose of a troublesome or useless member, it is just as often a way for young drow to prove themselves powerful and important members of their families.

**Roleplaying:** Within your family's area of influence, you have no fear and no equal. You speak to others as if they were scum and expect them to lick your boots if you feel the need to have the soles cleaned. When you want something, you are inclined to demand it rather than ask politely and constantly seek ways to use your noble birth to get things for free or at ridiculous discounts. While others are humble to your face, you know they fear and despise you, especially the



commoners you trod on as you go about your daily business.

When dealing with other nobles, you are either obsequious or arrogant, depending on the relative strength of your families. When dealing with lesser nobles than yourself, you have no problem making extravagant threats or delivering stinging insults, but you grit your teeth and bear it when such scorn and abuse are heaped upon your shoulders by those above you. You live in a world where the strength of the family is pre-eminent, and pain and suffering roll downhill from the powerful to the weak.

**Bonuses:** Within your home city, you have a great deal of personal power and influence. You receive all the benefits of your family's rank and are an acknowledged member of the aristocracy. Further details on what this means can be found in The Game of Bones chapter.

**Penalties:** People hate you, almost as much as they fear you and your family. If a commoner had a chance to kill you without being found out, they would not hesitate to rip open your throat and hide your body in the midden heap. Other nobles see you as either a useful pawn in their own schemes, or a threat to be eliminated, firmly entrenching you in the Game of Bones. See this chapter for more information on what this means to you as a character.

### SAC CHILD

The drow, like most other types of elf, have a great difficulty in conceiving and carrying children to term. The ovarisites are a breed of infernal arachnoid outsiders capable of assisting the drow in transferring their foetuses from the impregnated mother to a broodmare for gestation. As the price of their services, however, the ovarisites demand a handful of drow foetuses to keep as their own. You were one such child, ripped from the womb of your mother and brought to term in the chitinous belly of an alien mother.

Though you outwardly appear much like any other drow, your hair is thicker and rougher than others, and your eyes are wider and somewhat further apart than other dark elves. You were raised by the ovarisites in their pocket plane, a place of stranger horrors and wondrous beauties in which you learned the ways of your parents and their otherworldly surrogates. When you reached maturity, you were released back into drow society with a simple mission – explore, learn, and one day report back to those who raised you.

**Adventuring:** It is part of the mandate from your birth parents that you explore the world and take in all the information you can about it. You do your best to see as much of the world as possible, recording your discoveries in battered journals and transcribing it to a more permanent home in vast tomes whenever you have the chance. You have no specific area of interest though, and find yourself torn between various schools of study and modes of thought at the best of times. Though you may find yourself obsessed with books for a period of time, that changes to a desire to learn everything you can about gems the next week and an unwholesome fascination with ancient weapons the week after that.

**Roleplaying:** Your thirst for knowledge is insatiable, but diffuse. You study something with great zeal for a while, then switch to something else, and then you are on to the next thing. While you are quite observant and greatly enjoy discovering new things, you do have a tendency to let your mind wander after you have had your fill of a subject or particular task. This can be annoying to your companions who accompany you on long and perilous expeditions only to have you lose interest when you finally arrive at the ancient Tomb of Forgotten Secrets and demand a speedy return home.



## CHARACTER CONCEPTS

**Bonuses:** You receive an additional rank in any Knowledge skill you wish, every time you gain a level. This bonus rank may not push your current ranks in a given Knowledge skill above the normal maximum for your current level and class.

**Penalties:** Each time you gain a level you must spend one of your newly gained skill ranks in any one of the Knowledge skills you currently possess. If all of your current Knowledge skills are at their maximum, you must take a full rank in a new Knowledge skill, even if it means spending two skill ranks due to cross-class costs.

### WEAKLING

The drow believe in strength, both as a society and an individual. You were deemed too weak to be of any real use to your family when you were born. Rather than kill you outright, your relatives decided it best to simply leave you to fend for yourself, hoping it would toughen you up and make your otherwise pathetic existence somewhat useful. What they did not expect was your ability to learn and adapt to your situation, becoming sneakier, more cunning than your siblings. In the end, they did not get a stronger child, but they

did get one far more suited to a life in the shadows than anyone could have predicted.

You are, perhaps, one of the sneakiest drow alive. You excel at remaining unnoticed and are a master when it comes to surprise attacks or deadly ambushes. While others may find magic or poison to be their choice of a means to an end, you prefer the knife in the dark or the garrotte lowered from a ledge. You may not be the strongest drow, or the smartest, but you are definitely very good at getting your own way through stealth and subterfuge.

**Adventuring:** Skulking through the hidden corridors of drow society has given you a unique perspective on the world. You have heard the secrets of others and seen the powers they gain through delving into dark and dangerous places. With the suffering you experienced as a lack of your own personal strength, adventuring seems like a natural way to become the thing your family always wanted. Though you may no longer crave their approval, simply being as strong, smart, and powerful as they thought you should be will satisfy that strange ache you experience from time to time.

**Roleplaying:** Quiet is your friend. When you speak up, someone stronger might notice you and hammer at your weaknesses until you are destroyed. This is the lesson of your youth and one you still carry with you today. You will speak, if necessary, but prefer to remain silent and unnoticed until it is most advantageous to make your move. When around other adventurers you may come out of your shell but secretly believe these hardy explorers, who represent what your parents expected from you in many ways, would betray you in a heartbeat. If the job calls for stealth and the ability to keep a secret, you are the one to call. But you will never be the front man for a group, or a leader of any note given your quiet and distrusting nature.

**Bonuses:** You receive a +2 natural bonus to all Hide and move silently checks, due to your childhood experience in skulking about and remaining unnoticed.

**Penalties:** You simply are not charismatic, having rarely been in any kind of social situation, and suffer a -1 natural penalty to any Charisma-based check.



# THE PRESTIGE DROW

**D**row have learned to adapt to their environment over the years, developing roles and professions unique to their culture in their time below the earth. From the incredible power of the grave savant to the dark awareness of the blinded, the darkness and evil of drow life have created prestige classes like no other. In this chapter, you will uncover the secrets of these dark professions and those who practice them, adding a new dimension of evil to your characters and campaigns. While not everyone will have the courage to dabble in the abominable practices espoused by some of these prestige classes, those who do will find the power hidden within the shadows of evil.

**Special:** To become a Blessed Master, you must have been bitten by a venomous spider and successfully resisted its poison, suffering neither primary nor secondary damage from the bite. Many temples keep deadly spiders on hand for just such a test, allowing those who wish to pursue the path of the blessed master a chance to prove themselves worthy.

This test does not immediately allow you to begin following the path of the Blessed Master. You must first couple with one of the dark mother's infernal minions, a process that takes several days and leaves you badly wounded (at 0 hit points) and exhausted. In two months time, you will be visited by your infernal consort, who presents you with the true sign of your devotion to the goddess – a half-fiend spider child that will be your constant companion.

Females go through the same process as the males who pursue this path, though their children are taken from their wombs and gestated by ovarisites which stays on the temple grounds for two months, after which time the new Blessed Masters can retrieve their half-fiend spider children and begin their new career.

## BLESSED MASTER

The drow believe spiders are sacred creatures, manifestations of their dark goddesses' will and signs of her favour. Into each generation of drow are born a small number who are gifted with a natural affinity for these creatures. This kinship with the spiders gives the drow dominion over the spiders, along with the ability to enhance the natural strengths of the spiders with divine blessings from the Dark Mother.

Hit Die: d6

### Requirements

Charisma: 14+  
Animal Empathy: 8 ranks  
Handle Animal: 8 ranks  
Use Rope: 4 ranks

### Class Skills

The Blessed Master's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Concentration (Con), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Use Rope (Dex).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int

### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Blessed Master

### The Blessed Master

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Half-Fiend Child
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	Spider Shield
3	+1	+1	+3	+3	Fanged Assault
4	+2	+1	+4	+4	+1 Cleric Level
5	+2	+2	+4	+4	Healing Cocoon 1/day
6	+3	+2	+5	+5	+1 Cleric Level
7	+3	+2	+5	+5	Body of Multitudes
8	+4	+3	+6	+6	+1 Cleric Level
9	+4	+3	+6	+6	Reunion
10	+5	+3	+7	+7	Ward Death



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble.

**Half-Fiend Child (Su):** The half-fiend child is the first gift provided to you when you take begin taking levels of this prestige class. The child is the result of the union between yourself and the consort sent to you by the Spider Queen. The creature is much more like a spider than it is similar to a drow and possesses a form most pleasing to the Spider Queen. The half-fiend child is a Large Monstrous Spider to which the half-fiend template is applied. You and your child are bonded on a very deep level and have a telepathic rapport, which allows the two of you to communicate flawlessly (to the limits of the child's intelligence) at a range of up to one mile. This telepathic bond is a supernatural ability.

This child advances at a pace equal to its drow parent, gaining one level of the warrior class each time the parent gains a level of any class.

**Spider Shield (Su):** At this level, you gain the protection of spiders sent by your goddess. Tiny, purple and black spiders flow from cracks and holes wherever your travel, their presence largely unnoticed – unless you are threatened. Whenever you are in danger of suffering damage from an attack, of any kind, the spiders rush from their hiding spaces and cover you with their bodies. This provides you with Damage Reduction 2/–, and reduces your movement by 10 feet during your next movement action. This increases to 3/– at level 4, 4/– at level 6, 5/– at level 8 and 5/magic at level 10. You may not wear armour of any kind once you gain this ability – to do so is to show disrespect and distrust of the protection provided by the dark mother.



**Fanged Assault (Ex):** The spiders that protected you now also attack those who would cause harm to their charge. On the round after any creature attacks you, the spiders launch an attack against the assailant. This attack has a Base Attack Bonus equal to that possessed by a rogue of a level equal to your total character levels. It causes 1d6 hit points of damage and injects the venom of a Large Monstrous spider (Fort Save DC 16, 1d6 Str Primary and Secondary Damage) on every successful attack. The fanged assault attacks the first person who attacked you in the preceding round, plus one additional hostile target for every five of your total character levels (to a maximum of four additional attacks when you reach 20<sup>th</sup> level.)

**+1 Cleric Level:** You gain spells as if you had gained one level of the Cleric class, worshipping the Dark Mother. You only gain spells in this way, you do not gain any other benefits of the cleric class. This is the only way for a male drow to gain spells from the Dark Mother, as they are not allowed into her clergy.



**Healing Cocoon:** The spiders who protect you and harm others are now able to heal your wounds by sacrificing themselves. Use of this ability requires a full hour, during which time you are completely covered in a living cocoon formed from the bodies of your purple and black spiders. At the end of this time, the spiders fully merge with your body, transforming any hit point damage you have into subdual damage. This power may be used once a day.

**Body of Multitudes (Su):** This radical ability may be used only three times per day, but is very useful for escaping dangerous situations or reaching otherwise inaccessible areas. When you use this ability, your body is consumed by hordes of tiny spiders. These spiders then scamper away, travelling as you direct them. The spiders may travel up to 1,000 feet at 30 feet per round. They can crawl up walls, across ceilings, and along any area a very small spider can normally climb. They can fit through pinholes, though if they must move through spaces smaller than 1 inch square, their speed is reduced to 10 feet during that round. When you are satisfied with the location of your spidery carriers, you may order them to stop and reconstitute your body, a process requiring 1d4 rounds. This process does not heal your injuries or cure illnesses or poison, however, as the spiders reconstitute your body exactly as it was at the time this ability was invoked. Likewise, any magical effects in effect at the time this ability is used remain in effect after your body is reconstituted.

While travelling in the bodies of your spiders, you are only affected by attacks affecting an area at least 10-foot square and centred on the 5-foot square filled with your spidery minions. Normal melee or missile attacks cause no damage as the tiny spiders simply flow away from such attacks and go about their business. You are allowed normal saving throws against area of effect spells, however, and suffer damage normally. If you are killed while travelling in the bodies of your spiders, you are utterly destroyed.

While the spiders are reconstituting your body after the use of this ability, you may be attacked normally and are considered flat-footed. You may remain in the bodies of your spiders for a number of hours equal to the number of levels you possess in this prestige class.

**Reunion (Su):** You are now able to absorb your child back into your body in order to heal its wounds. This process requires a full 10 minutes and inflicts 1 point of temporary Constitution damage to you. At the end of this time, the child emerges from your body full healed and ready for battle once again. Note that this

ability heals only hit point damage – it cannot remove spell effects, return the dead to life, or repair damage of any other type.

**Ward Death (Su):** You are now able to avoid death, provided your half-fiend child is within 10 feet of your body at the time the death would have occurred. Instead of dying, your body falls to the floor but your spirit leaps into the body of your half-fiend child. You then take control of the child's body and may use any of its abilities as if they were your own. If you return to a temple of the Dark Mother within one week of this ability being used, you may restore your body by resting atop the altar for a period of three days. At the end of this time, your body is fully reformed and your spirit leaves your child to return to its home.

If you does not return to a temple of the Dark Mother within one week of this ability's use, however, you become trapped within the body of your child and may only be separated by a *wish* or similar magic. The use of Ward Death requires the expenditure of 500 xp every time.

## BLINDED

The drow dwell in the dark, in the black spaces below the earth where light never shines and the strange and twisted creatures pray to their alien gods. For the drow, then, the absence of light is nothing new and can be comforting to those born and raised in the comforting embrace of darkness.

The blinded take this even further, forsaking their sight for the ability to bring darkness to their enemies. Devoted to the destruction of light in the world above, the blinded have trained themselves to function without the benefit of any illumination and embrace the darkness so fully it becomes part of them.

**Hit Die:** d8

### Requirements

**Wisdom:** 14+

**Intuit Direction:** 5 ranks

**Listen:** 10 ranks

**Move Silently:** 7 ranks

**Feats:** Blind-Fight

### Class Skills

The Blinded's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

### The Blinded

Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Eye of Darkness
2	+1	+1	+3	+1	Cloak of Shadows
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	Choke the Light
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	Mantle of Night
5	+3	+2	+4	+2	Stolen Sight
6	+4	+2	+5	+2	Drown the Light
7	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sightless Death
8	+6	+3	+6	+3	Environmental Senses
9	+6	+3	+6	+3	Shroud of Darkness
10	+7	+3	+7	+3	Blinding Aura



Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (None)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int bonus per level

### Class Features

The following are class features for the Blinded prestige class.

#### Weapon and Armour Proficiency:

You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble.

**Eye of Darkness (Su):** You are at home in the darkness and have no trouble navigating without sight. You are aware of all creatures within 30 feet, even those who are invisible, though not those who are hidden. Beyond 30 feet, however, you are truly blind, unable to detect any environmental details or creatures. In addition, you are unable to use the Search skill – your awareness is not complete and is far from perfect. The Spot skill can be used, but only to detect moving creatures. You may still be fooled by illusions, though not illusions which have only a visual component. You are immune

to spells that require sight to affect their target (such as gaze attacks and some of the pattern spells), because you cannot see. You are also not affected by the standard drow light blindness, which makes them ideal combatants for attacks on the surface.

**Cloak of Shadows (Su):** Light shies away from you as if afraid to offend. Shadows swirl around you at all times, creating a 5-foot circle surrounding you. This circle provides you with the equivalent of cover at all times.

**Choke the Light (Sp):** As a full-round action, you can extinguish a single non-magical light source no larger than a small (3-foot diameter) campfire. The light source must be within 30 feet of you at the time it is extinguished.

**Mantle of Night (Su):** At this level of ability, the shadows surrounding you increase in density, providing concealment, instead of cover.

**Stolen Sight (Sp):** You can temporarily blind a target within 30 feet. This is a standard action and the target is allowed a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per level of this prestige class) to avoid the effect. Targets who fail the save are blinded for 1d4 rounds. Stolen sight may be used once per class level, per day.

**Drown the Light (Sp):** This power allows you to extinguish all non-magical light sources within 30 feet of you current location. This will only extinguish fires if they are less than 5-foot in diameter. Alternately, this power may be used to suppress a single source of magical light – as long as the light remains within 30 feet of you, it provides no illumination, but will begin providing light again if it is ever more than 30 feet from you.

**Sightless Death (Su):** Use of this ability is a full-round action. You may make a full-round attack against a single, blinded target. This attack causes an additional 3d6 hit points of sneak attack damage, which stacks with any sneak attack damage you may possess as a result of a previous class.

**Environmental Senses (Su):** You become much more aware of your surroundings than is possible with Eye of Darkness. You are now treated as always taking 20 when making Search checks, which may be used to detect hidden creatures, traps, or other hidden things within 50 feet of your current location.

**Shroud of Darkness (Su):** Shadows surround you at all times, providing you total concealment.

**Blinding Aura (Sp):** You are able to call forth the power of darkness to blind targets within 20 feet of your current location. This is a full-round action, at the end of which all creatures within 20 feet are allowed a Will save (DC 25). If this save is failed, the creature is blinded for 1d10 minutes; targets who succeed at the save are blinded for 1d4 rounds.

## CRYPT WARDEN

The drow take the security of their cities and the safety of their dark and sacred places very seriously. The crypt warden is a male drow who has given his life over to serve as a sacred protector, a creature touched by the dark mother and embraced by the shadowy wings of death. Though they begin their service little different from other drow, crypt wardens change over time, forsaking the world of the living for the endurance and strength of the undying. While they are not truly undead, the crypt wardens who attain the pinnacle of their training are certainly no longer truly living, with all the benefits and penalties attending the transformation.

In drow society, the crypt wardens are viewed with respect and fear. They represent a selflessness and desire for duty few drow truly understand. Given their attachment to the dark mother and their willingness to forsake temporal pleasures for an enduring ability to slave away in the defence of other drow, the crypt wardens are seen as alien and fearsome to most drow. Thus, they are avoided as often as possible, though it is rumored these cold and violent men are the favoured consorts of the priestesses of the Filtheater for their inability to father children (due to their undying state).

More disturbing than their altered life patterns are the spirits that cling to the bodies of the crypt wardens. These ancient drow souls slowly accrete around the bodies of the crypt wardens, providing them with skills and knowledge they would not otherwise possess, though exacting a terrible cost in exchange for their advice and assistance.

**Hit Die:** d12

**Requirements**  
**Strength:** 15+

**Feats:** Cleave, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

### Class Skills

The Crypt Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), and Spot (Wis)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int/Level

### Class Features

The following are class features for the Crypt Warden prestige class.

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble.

**Dead Flesh:** After your successful initiation into the Order of Grave Defenders, your skin and muscles become much thicker and tougher than normal and the blood vessels constrict down to narrow threads of crimson hidden within the unliving flesh. Your skin grows chill to the touch and its ebony colour fades to an ashy grey, taking on a corpse-like pallor. Though you are no longer able to sire children, you are much hardier than other drow now that you are nearly one of the unliving. You suffer no damage from natural cold, regardless of how low the temperatures fall, and receive a +2 natural bonus to any saving throw needed to resist a cold-based spell or other attack. In addition, you suffer only one-half normal damage from attacks which cause subdual damage. You do not gain any of the other benefits of being undead, nor do you take on the Undead type.

**Sluggish Blood:** The flow of crimson, life-giving blood in your body slows to a near halt, though this causes you no ill effects. You gain a +4 natural resistance to all poisons, however, as toxins spread much more slowly and are unable to affect your unliving tissues. Additionally, you automatically stabilize on the round after you are reduced to fewer than zero hit points because you do not bleed like others.

**Bonus Feat:** When indicated on the table below, you gain a bonus feat. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge (Mobility, Spring Attack), Exotic Weapon Proficiency\*, Expertise (Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Whirlwind Attack), Improved Critical\*, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike (Deflect Arrows, Stunning Fist), Mounted Combat (Mounted Archery, Trample, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge), Point Blank Shot (Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run), Power Attack (Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder, Great Cleave), Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting (Improved Two-Weapon Fighting), Weapon Finesse\*, Weapon Focus\*, Weapon Specialization\*.



**Crypt Warden**

Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Dead Flesh
2	+2	+3	+1	+3	Sluggish Blood
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Bonus Feat
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Armour of Death
5	+5	+4	+2	+4	Lifeless Courage
6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Bonus Feat
7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Skeletal Jaws
8	+8	+6	+3	+6	Corpse Grip
9	+9	+6	+3	+6	Bonus Feat
10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Eternal Stand

**Armour of Death:** A strange and unsettling aura shrouds you at all times, quietly whispering like the susurrations of scales over stone. This visible gift from the dark mother provides you with a natural armour bonus of +1. This bonus increases to +2 if you are ever fighting on ground sacred to the drow (such as a temple or graveyard holding their bodies) or when facing enemies of the drow. If you are fighting on sacred ground and fighting an enemy of the drow, this bonus becomes +3.

**Lifeless Courage:** You no longer feel fear, in any way. Any spells or spell-like effect which would cause fear leaves you unfazed, with no need for a saving throw. You are similarly unaffected even by dragon fear, the goddess has purged you of your ability to experience such a weakening emotion, much to your delight.

**Skeletal Jaws:** Your jaws elongate and expand slightly, protruding from your face just enough to be unsettling. Your teeth do not change in appearance, but gain sharper edges and the muscles in your jaw become strong enough to bite with great force. You are granted a natural bite attack, which inflicts 1d6 hit points of damage and may be used in addition to your normal attacks. Any attack made with your bite attack is made at your full attack bonus.

**Corpse Grip:** The strength of your hands and arms is magnified enormously as the power of the grave surges through your limbs. You are considered one size category larger than you actually are when grappling, and two size categories larger than your actual size when battling on ground sacred to the drow or while grappling the enemies of the drow. You do not gain

additional effective size categories when battling on sacred ground and fighting enemies of the drow – the bonus remains at an effective size increase of two levels. You may inflict twice the normal damage when grappling, as well.

**Eternal Stand:** When defending a site sacred to the drow, you become a truly unliving creature unable to die and unwilling to allow oblivion to claim you. As long as you do not leave sacred ground, you do not age, are granted a +1 divine bonus to all attacks, damage rolls, and saving throws, and gain Fast Healing 4. These bonus do not apply when you are not on ground sacred to the drow, however.

**DIRGE SINGER**

The drow favour music which excites their demented passions and sends thrills of discomfort racing across their nerves. Their music is a combination of wild lamentation and intricate, disturbing instrumentals that few outside of their culture can tolerate for more than a few seconds. The dirge singer is a master of the darkest songs of the drow, a student of the depths of drow depravity, and a performer of no little skill. The combination of all of these elements allows him to stir drow and repel others with his musical talents, presenting drow culture in all its dark glory through the sound of his voice and instruments.

**Hit Die:** d6

**Requirements**  
**Charisma:** 15+  
**Perform:** 8 ranks



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

**Spellcraft:** 8 ranks

**Feats:** Skill Focus (perform)

**Special:** Bardic Music

### Class Skills

The Dirge Singer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Read Lips (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (None), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex), Use Magic Device (Cha)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier

### Class Features

The following are class features for the dirge singer prestige class.

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble.

**Dirge Singer Levels:** Levels of the dirge singer prestige class stack with bard levels for purposes of determining the number of bardic music attempts you may make each day. Note that all special abilities of this prestige class (other than +1 caster level) are treated as uses of the bardic music special ability.

**Seduction Song:** This song requires a successful Perform (DC 15) skill check to initiate, but can be maintained for a number of minutes equal to your total ranks in the Perform skill. Any creature who hears the seduction song must make a Will save (DC 15 + 1 per level of this prestige class) or immediately fall under its sway. Drow affected by the Seduction Song become much easier to seduce and suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to all skill checks or saving throws they make to avoid a seduction attempt. Members of other intelligent races who hear the song must also make a Will save (DC 15 + 1 per level of this prestige class) to avoid being affected by the music. Those who fail this save are overwhelmed by the collision of violence, sexuality, and hatred, and suffer a -2 penalty to all Skill checks made while the song persists. Those who succeed are unaffected by the song, though they are likely still deeply offended by its sound and content.

**+1 Caster Level:** You gain new spells as if you had gained a level of a prior spellcasting class, but gain no other benefits of that spellcasting class. The previous class may be either arcane or divine, but it applies to only one of your previous classes, chosen at the time this ability is gained.

**Cry of Hate:** This ululating vocal is of short duration but powerful effect, capable of stirring drow to feats of great violence and shattering the resolve of their enemies. The Cry of Hate requires a successful Perform skill check (DC 15) to initiate and persist for 1 round per level of this prestige class if the skill check is successful. All drow within 60 feet (provided they can hear his Cry) gain a +4 morale bonus to all saving throws against charm or fear effects and a +2 morale bonus to all attack and damage rolls. Members of other intelligent races must make a Will save (DC

### The Dirge Singer

Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Seduction Song
2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+1 Caster Level
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Cry of Hate
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	+1 Caster Level
5	+3	+2	+4	+4	Whisper of Truth
6	+4	+2	+5	+5	+1 Caster Level
7	+5	+2	+5	+5	+1 Caster Level
8	+6	+3	+6	+6	Unhealthy Fascination
9	+6	+3	+6	+6	+1 Caster Level
10	+7	+3	+7	+7	Song of Shadows

15 + 1 per level of the Dirge Singer prestige class) or immediately suffer a –2 morale penalty to all attack and damage rolls made against drow and must make an additional Will save to approach within 30 feet of you. At the beginning of their turn during each round they are within 30 feet of you (while the Cry of Hate persists), non-drow must make an additional Will save or immediately move away from you at their normal movement rate.

**Whisper of Truth:** This ability requires you to spend at least one round speaking with a creature, imparting to them the truths of the world as seen by the drow (evil is strength, the drow will rule the world, etc.). At the end of this time, you must make a Perform skill check (DC 15) opposed by the target's Will save. If the Dirge Singer wins the check, the target is immediately consumed by a crisis of faith and may take no action for the next 1d4 rounds + 1 round per level of this prestige class rounds as he ponders the ultimate futility of his life. Targets who are attacked or otherwise placed in danger immediately snap out of their reverie and suffer no further ill effects from this ability as they realize the trickery of the drow and its effects upon them. If a target remains contemplative for the entire duration of the effect, he is allowed another Will save (DC 15 + level of the dirge singer who inflicted the Whisper of Truth upon him). If this Will save fails, the target immediately gains one negative level as he is deeply unsettled by his own experiences and finds his skills and talents suspect, at the very least.

**Unhealthy Fascination:** This ability affects a number of targets equal to the dirge singer's Charisma modifier, minus one for every target with more hit dice or levels than the dirge singer possesses. This ability requires a successful Perform skill check (DC 20) to perform and requires the dirge singer to be able to dance and move freely. Targets are allowed a Will save (DC 15 + 1 per level of the Dirge Singer prestige class); those who fail are fascinated by the dirge singer and may take no action other than watching the singer until he stops dancing. This fascination persists

as long as the drow dances, or until the drow makes an attack against one of the fascinated targets. This attack is treated as a coup de grace attempt against a helpless target and should be resolved as such.

**Song of Shadows:** This mystical ability allows you to transfer yourself from shadow to shadow without crossing the intervening space. You must croon quietly while doing so this can be detected by any creature within 30 feet, provided they make a successful Listen skill check (DC 20). While this ability is in use, you are aware of all shadows within 25 feet of your current location and can move to any of these – even if you cannot see the shadow in question. You can move into or out of any area you choose, unless that area is warded against *teleportation* spells or similar magic, or contains another creature.



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

Aegolius roared and threw himself into the attack, his greatsword scything through the air in front of him as he strove against the black-skinned evil before him. The drow hopped back three steps, her rapier dipping and swirling defensively as she evaded the larger, clumsier weapon. Her mouth was pulled tight into a snarling grin and her eyes glinted blood-red in the torchlight.

‘Come then, warrior of a weak god, dance with me.’ She chuckled and swirled past him, her silken cloak flowing out to blind him as her weapon darted in below his defences. Pain blossomed under his arm, where the rapier’s tip had slipped through the plates of his armour. As he turned to slice at her, she laughed and struck at him with her foot, driving him away from her with surprising strength. ‘The dark mother has guaranteed my victory, surface dweller, what has your god promised you?’

In answer, he sprang forward again, but his attack was clumsy and faltering. Her eyes never wavered from his own and he saw much there, pity and sorrow and amusement and hate, all mingled together and swirling with distracting power. She ducked below his weapon and rose inside his guard, her face inches from his own. She slashed the length of her weapon against his wrist and his hand went numb immediately, so that his grip on the greatsword was suddenly one-handed. ‘You fight for good, you do battle against we creatures of evil – yet you can never win, paladin, you can never undo what is done.’

Her head darted forward then and her mouth closed over his with hungry anger, her teeth biting into his lips with savage force before she tumbled back away from him. He staggered after her, curses dead on his bleeding lips, unable to speak, his spirit in turmoil. With a blinding burst of speed she slid past him again, this time slashing through the tendons in the back of his leg. Without another word she left him and walked on, disappearing into the gloom.

The truth of her words clawed at him, chewed through his mind and left him gasping and hopeless in the strange realm beneath the earth. He cursed the gods who had made him and wept bitter tears for the truth he had seen.

## FLESHCRAFTER

The ability to mould flesh and bone into more pleasing (or more disturbing) shapes is highly prized by the drow. Available only to those trained in the secret arts, this skill is not only very useful, but also highly dangerous. While the fleshcrafters are able to create phenomenal results with time and care, they can also wreak terrible havoc on the bodies of their enemies. With the ability to call upon flesh and bones to reform at their direction, the fleshcrafter is a fearsome foe indeed.

**Hit Die:** d4

### Requirements

**Alchemy:** 13 ranks

**Appraise:** 5 ranks

**Concentration:** 13 ranks

**Craft (flesh):** 13 ranks

**Heal:** 4 ranks

### Class Skills

The Fleshcrafter’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Heal (Wis), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int Modifier

### The Fleshcrafter

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Flesh Call
2	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1 Caster Level
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bone Call
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 Caster Level
5	+2	+2	+2	+4	Wrack





### Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Fleshcrafter

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble.

**Flesh Call (Sp):** By exerting your will, you can disrupt the flesh of your enemies. This is resolved as a ranged touch attack against any target within 60 feet – if the attack succeeds, the subject suffers 1d6 hit points of damage, plus one hit point of damage per 3 ranks you possess in the Craft (flesh) skill. This ability may be used up to three times per day.

**+1 Caster Level:** You gain new spells as if you had gained a level of a prior spellcasting class, but gain no other benefits of that spellcasting class. The previous class may be either arcane or divine, but it applies to only one of your previous classes, chosen at the time this ability is gained.

**Bone Call (Sp):** By reshaping the bones of the target, you are able to inflict tremendous damage. This is treated as a touch attack – if the attack succeeds, the subject suffers 1d6 hit points, plus one hit point of damage per rank you possess in the Craft (flesh) skill. This ability may be used up to three times per day.

**Wrack:** The most powerful of your offensive capabilities, the wrack causes an explosive change in the target's body. To resolve this attack, you and the target make opposed Will saves (DC 20). If you succeed, the target suffers 5d6 hit points of damage, plus one hit point of damage per rank you have devoted to the Craft (flesh) skill. This ability may be used against any target you can see – the target is always aware he is under attack when this ability is used, even if the attack fails. If

the target can see you, he is also immediately aware of the source of the attack. This ability may be used up to three times per day.

### GRAVE SAVANT

The grave bond is a powerful secret of drow magic. Used by all manner of drow, the power of the grave bond is studied most intently by secret cabals of alchemists who use their dark knowledge to create necromantic concoctions. Known as the grave savants, these drow belong to the most secretive orders and protect their knowledge viciously. Admittance to the cabals are traditionally hereditary, though younger or more rebellious cabals can be convinced to allow other drow into their ranks. Officially, the grave savants have heretical beliefs and do not operate openly - in practice,



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

many noble families use their influence with the church to protect their members who are grave savants.

**Hit Die:** d4

### Requirements

**Alchemy:** 15 ranks

**Concentration:** 12 ranks

**Profession (Undertaker):** 10 ranks

**Feats:** Brew Potion, Scribe Scroll

### Class Skills

The Grave Savant's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 2 + Int Bonus

### Class Features

The following are class features for the grave savant prestige class.

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble.

**Prepare Bone Paste (Su):** By crushing the bones of a deceased individual and combining it with some of your own blood, you are able to create the diabolical bone paste. This paste is smeared onto your body in intricate patterns to provide a boost to the energy provided by the gravebond. See the Gravebond chapter for full effects.

Bone paste requires fresh bones to work, preferably bones taken from a victim killed by your hand. The bones must be removed from an intelligent creature (Int of at least 6) no more than one hour before the paste is prepared. Preparing the paste requires an alchemy check (DC 15 + 1 per hit die or level of the creature from which the bones are removed) and 300 gp worth of rare herbs, spices, and other alchemical supplies (see Tools of the Drow for more information). Removing enough bone to do the job takes 1d4 minutes and the preparation attempt an additional 5 minutes to complete. A mortar and pestle is necessary to create the paste, as well. If the paste is successfully created, it can be worn immediately or stored for later use (it retains potency for up to one year after its creation). Creating the paste requires the expenditure of two points of gravebond energy (see Gravebond for more information).

The paste may not be used until it is painted onto your body. This requires a full round action, after which the paste remains ready for use for up to 24 hours. All of the paste from a given preparation must be applied at once in order to provide its energy. Thereafter, one point of gravebond energy can be liberated from the bone paste each round as a free action. As



### The Grave Savant

Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Prepare Bone Paste
2	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1 Caster Level
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bone Etching
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 Caster Level
5	+2	+2	+2	+4	Soul Infusion

the energy is used, the paste turns to ash and flakes off amidst a sparkle of purple flames.

**+1 Caster Level:** You gain new spells as if you had gained a level of a prior spellcasting class, but gain no other benefits of that spellcasting class. The previous class may be either arcane or divine, but it applies to only one of the grave savant's previous classes, chosen at the time this ability is gained.

**Bone Etching (Su):** This painful process trades your health for increased facility with gravebond energy. You must cut away the flesh from your limbs to reveal the bones beneath. You then inscribe various arcane sigils on your bones and fill them with a bone paste (see above). The entire process takes eight hours, during which time you must be uninterrupted and working alone. The procedure requires 3,000 gp worth of supplies, including ritual chisels, stencils, and other tools. These materials are destroyed in the process. Once the bone etching is complete, you may draw upon your gravebond with less fear than before. You are allowed a Will save (DC 20) when drawing upon your gravebonds, if you succeed, you lose no Constitution from using the Gravebond.

**Soul Infusion (Su):** You have learned to distill the power of the grave bond into potions. These potions destroy the soul attached to the gravebond, but allow you to store the distilled energy indefinitely. To create a soul infusion, you must make a successful Craft (alchemy) check (DC 25). This check requires 8 hours of time, during which you must be able to work without interruption, and consumes 1,000 gp worth of supplies. If the check succeeds, one of your gravebonds is immediately destroyed and its energy is transferred to the soul infusion. Note that gravebonds destroyed in this way do not have a negative impact on the grave savant and no Will save is required to avoid gaining a living corpse attribute.

If a soul infusion is consumed, it refills your gravebonds, transferring its energy to the gravebonds

as you direct it. However, the process is very draining, and you suffer 1d3 hit points of subdual damage per point of energy so transferred.

### TITHE TAKER

The drow believe in the superiority of their race and the inherent weakness of others. The dark elves feel nothing but contempt or hatred for other races and are willing to take inordinate, useless numbers of slaves just to prove they can. There are tales of drow cities so filled with slaves they used the unfortunates as living furniture, neglecting to feed or clothe them until the surplus died off.

The tithe taker is the slave master of the drow, given the task of keeping the human chattel flowing into the city without interruption. Trained in the art of subduing others, the tithe taker is renowned for his ability to cripple without killing and injure without marring the bodies of his victims. Though a fearsome combatant, the tithe taker is even more feared for his ability to deliver a creature to masters who will make death seem far preferable.

**Hit Die:** d8

#### Requirements

**Heal:** 10 ranks

**Intimidate:** 10 ranks

**Use Rope:** 5 ranks

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse

#### Class Skills

The Tithe Taker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), and Use Rope (Dex)

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int bonus



## THE PRESTIGE DROW

### Tithe Taker

Class Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+0	Subduing Strike
2	+1	+3	+3	+1	Nerve Knowledge
3	+2	+3	+3	+1	Improved Subduing Strike
4	+3	+4	+4	+1	Debilitating Attack
5	+3	+4	+4	+2	Crippling Wound
6	+4	+5	+5	+2	Nerve Stab
7	+5	+5	+5	+2	Dislocate
8	+6	+6	+6	+3	Fracture
9	+6	+6	+6	+3	Anoxic Impact
10	+7	+7	+7	+3	Enervating Attack

### Class Features

The following are class features for the grave savant prestige class.

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** You gain no new weapon or armour proficiencies. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble.

**Subduing Strike:** You have learned to inflict the maximum pain possible on your target without causing serious or lasting injury. By attacking nonessential, pain-producing areas of the body, you are able to temporarily incapacitate targets. You do not suffer the normal  $-4$  penalty to attack rolls when attacking to subdue, but rather a reduced  $-2$  penalty.

**Nerve Knowledge:** Trained in the ways of flesh, you understand where vulnerable nerve clusters lie and are adept at attacking them to incapacitate targets. When you attack a target and inflict subdual damage, you cause an additional 2 points of subdual damage. You may increase this to an additional 4 points of subdual damage by accepting a  $-2$  penalty to your attack roll.

**Improved Subduing Strike:** You no longer suffer any penalty to your attack rolls when you make an attack to subdue a target.

**Debilitating Attack:** You are adept at temporarily reducing a target's ability to fight, move, or defend itself. Before making any subduing strike, you may

choose to reduce any one of these three abilities, but must accept a  $-4$  penalty to your attack roll when doing so. If your attack succeeds, you cause one-half the normal subdual damage, but your target suffers one of the following penalties, as determined by your choice before the attack was made:

- †  $-1$  circumstance penalty to attack rolls
- † A five-foot reduction in his movement speed
- †  $-1$  circumstance penalty to its Armour Class

The penalty types stack with one another, but the effects of each type do not stack with themselves. Thus, you may not apply the first penalty type twice to a target to achieve a  $-2$  circumstance penalty to his attack rolls, but may inflict a  $-1$  penalty to his attack, a five-foot movement speed reduction, and a  $-1$  penalty to Armour Class.

These penalties remain in effect for a number of rounds equal to your current levels in this prestige class.

**Crippling Wound:** This attack temporarily renders a target unable to attack by targeting the major muscle centers of the chest or arm. To use this type of subdual attack, you suffer a  $-2$  penalty to your attack rolls and a successful attack causes only one-half the normal subdual damage. If this attack succeeds, however, your target is unable to attack for a number of rounds equal to your Intelligence modifier. This attack may only be made against humanoid creatures.

**Nerve Stab:** When successful, this subdual attack disrupts the nervous system of the target and prevents them from concentrating for a few seconds. This subdual attack is made as a full-round action. If successful, your target is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your levels in this prestige class). If the save fails, the target is unable to use any skills or cast spells for a number of rounds equal to your Intelligence modifier. If the save is successful, the target is unable to use any skills or cast spells for a single round.

**Dislocate:** Useful only against humanoid targets no more than two size categories larger than yourself, this ability is used to pop a limb from its joint. The attack suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to the attack roll and, if successful, causes only one-half the normal amount of subdual damage. If the attack succeeds, the target's arm or leg is removed from the socket. If an arm is dislocated, the target may not use the arm for any action and may not hold anything in that hand. If a leg is dislocated, reduce the target's current movement speed by one-half. These effects can be removed by a successful Heal check (DC 15 if performed by someone else, DC 25 if you attempt the check on yourself).

**Fracture:** This more serious version of dislocate actually breaks the limb in question and causes actual damage equal to the amount of subdual damage inflicted by the attack. The limb cannot be used until this damage is healed, either through natural healing or spells.

**Anoxic Impact:** This subdual attack may be used against any living creature and is targeted at the respiratory system, typically the throat or solar plexus. If the attack succeeds, the target is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your levels in this prestige class) to avoid its effects. If this save fails, the target suffers 1d6 points of subdual damage each round for a number of rounds equal to your levels in this prestige class.

**Enervating Attack:** By carefully attacking the nervous system of the target, you are able to render him completely insensate. To initiate this attack, you must first succeed at a successful Heal check (DC 10 + HD or levels of your target). This is a full-round action and requires you to carefully observe the target to determine the optimum striking point. If this check succeeds, you must execute a full-round attack during the next round, with a -4 penalty to your attack roll. If this attack succeeds, it causes subdual damage as normal and your target must immediately make a Fort save (DC 10 + your levels of this prestige class + your Int modifier). If the save is successful, the target suffers no further damage. If the save fails, however, the target is immediately rendered unconscious (but is not reduced to 0 hit points) and will recover in 1d4 rounds.



# TRICKS OF THE DROW

The desperate and dangerous lifestyle of the drow, coupled with their callous disregard for life in general, have led them to develop a number of tricks and skills used to further their individual position in their society and to facilitate the destruction of their many enemies. Ranging from the sophisticated arts of seduction to the brutal process of dark elven torture, you will find a selection of these skills detailed in this section.

## SEDUCTION

The drow enjoy sensual pleasures as much as the next twisted elf, but they really enjoy their sexual relations only when the sex is a means to a greater end. Humiliating or degrading their partner can be

satisfying, to be sure, but the drow are happiest when they use sex as a way to exploit the weaknesses and affections of another creature to their detriment. Knowing this, the drow also know the only way they can get another of their kind into such a compromising position is to bait their intended partner with the potential to harm them in one way or another, or by offering a significant benefit outside of the act itself. This gives drow seduction a rougher edge than most races are comfortable with and puts the desire of both parties to gain pleasure from the possible pain right out on the table. Because of this, however, drow suffer a -2 insight penalty when attempting to seduce members of other races, as their views toward sex are a bit more blatant than members of most other races are comfortable with.

Seduction relies on the use of the Bluff and Gather Information skills. Bluff is used primarily to get others into the sack, while the Gather Information skill is used once both parties are involved in order to extract the needed information. Typically part of the 'pillow talk,' this use of the skill involves providing misleading information while attempting to glean the truth from your partner – with the drow, even the afterglow of passion is tainted by ruthless competition and struggle for dominance.

Before you can get to the point where a sated partner can be pumped for information, however, you must first get through the target's defences and lure him to your bed. This requires a series of Bluff skill checks to slip past the natural social defences of the target.

The first Bluff skill check requires only seconds – you approach your target with a suggestive smile or coy remark and attempt to engage the target in idle conversation. This Bluff skill check is opposed by the Sense Motive skill check of the target. If you win the opposed skill check, you are able to initiate the seduction attempt and are momentarily inside the guard of your target. If you lose the opposed skill check, however, you are rebuffed and may not make another seduction attempt against the same target for at least five days.

Once the seduction is initiated, it takes considerably longer to seal the deal and move onto gathering information (or spreading misinformation). You are allowed one Bluff skill check (opposed by the target's Sense Motive skill check) per hour and the seduction continues until you succeed in the seduction, grow weary of the



attempts or lose two of the opposed skill checks in a row. The seduction attempt succeeds if the seducer wins three opposed skill checks before failing two such skill checks in a row.

When the seduction succeeds, it is customary to retire to some private place with your conquest. In drow culture, public displays are not unheard of, but it is much more difficult to glean information from your target if just anyone can hear your conversations. Noble drow often maintain a variety of apartments around the city for just such trysts, while less affluent dark elves bring their targets to secluded inns where they can avoid notice.

At this point, you and your target make a series of opposed Gather Information skill checks. Each check requires a half-hour of time and is assumed to occur during or immediately after the physical consummation of the seduction. When either you or the seduced wins two of the skill checks in a row, they have discovered a piece of information their target possessed. While you must know what information you are searching for, going into the seduction, the target generally lucks into a random bit of knowledge, though it is always damaging to you in some way. Seduction is not without its risks, but a wise seducer can greatly increase his odds of coming out the victor by stacking up the following modifiers.

† Intoxicated. An intoxicated character suffers a -2 insight penalty to Gather Information and Sense Motive skill checks during the seduction.

† Renowned. For every three full levels by which the seducer's level exceeds the level of his target, the seducer gains a +1 circumstance bonus to all Bluff skill checks.

† Noble. If the seducer is noble born and his target is not, the seducer gains a +2 circumstance bonus.

† Sex. Females are the dominant sex in drow culture and the males know it, which makes their seduction attempts more likely to succeed. A female drow receives a +2 circumstance bonus when attempting to seduce a male drow.

† Submissive. Drow enjoy inflicting pain and suffering during their carnal affairs and are much more likely to engage with a partner who is willing to let them cause such suffering. If the seducer is willing to take the brunt of the pain and makes this clear from the outset, he receives a +2 circumstance bonus to all Bluff

skill checks. For every half-hour he allows his partner to mangle his body, he receives a +1 circumstance bonus to the Gather Information skill check for that half-hour. Note that this is a cumulative bonus – as the dominant partner becomes more excited, he or she becomes much more likely to let something slip. However, every half-hour after the first requires the submissive drow to succeed at a Will save (DC 15 + 1 per half-hour passed so far) or refuse to accept any more punishment. The submissive drow also suffers 1 point of temporary Constitution damage for every hour of punishment he endures.

† Drugs. Various types of drugs provide bonuses and penalties to Bluff or Gather Information skill checks and can greatly assist in any seduction attempt. See the Tools of the Drow chapter for more information.

Overall, seduction is one of the single most valuable tools used in the Game of Bones. See the Game of Bones chapter for more information on how it is put to use in the struggle for dominance in drow cities.

## TORTURE

The drow love inflicting pain and the more pain they are able to inflict, the happier they become. This fascination with cruelty and suffering led the drow to perfect their torture techniques. Given the pleasure they take in their work and the skills developed over generations, the drow torturers are greatly feared by those who cross their paths.

Torture involves getting specific information from a subject through the use of pain, or threat of the same. In the world of the drow, where a torturer may also be a priestess of their spider goddess, even death may enter the equation, allowing torturers to perform all manner of heinous acts on their victim in order to get him to cough up what he knows.

Torturing a victim is a relatively simple task, relying on the Sense Motive, Bluff, and Heal skills. Before the torture can begin, however, you must know what information you are looking for. This comes in the form of a direct question such as, 'Where did you hide the artifact you stole?' or the more general, 'Tell me what you know about the House Baelirn's upcoming troop movements.' The key here is that torture is not a blind fishing expedition – you must have at least a general idea of the information you want from the target, or you will have difficulty sorting out anything useful from the ravings and weeping pleas of your victim.

## TRICKS OF THE DROW



Once the question is formulated, you give the victim a chance to answer before the torture begins. An important element of torture is hope: if the victim believes you will leave off with the pain once he answers the question, he is more likely to give up the information than if he does not believe he can end his suffering.

If the subject refuses to answer, the torture begins in earnest. Most torturers display the tools of their trade openly to their victims, watching their reaction as the purpose of each item is explained in graphic detail. This normally takes fifteen minutes to a half-hour, depending on the type and number of implements displayed. At the end of this time, you are allowed a Sense Motive skill check (DC 10 + level of target) to determine which type of torture the victim fears the most. If this skill check succeeds, you are granted a +2 insight bonus to all Bluff checks made during the next hour. After this time, another Sense Motive skill check (DC as determined above) is allowed to decide the next torture to use, with the same bonus provided by a successful skill check as above.

Each torture attempt requires 15 minutes time and is resolved through the use of an opposed Bluff skill check. The torture victim suffers a -2 morale penalty

to all Sense Motive skill checks for every full hour of torture he has endured. If you succeed, you have convinced your target the worst is yet to come and the torture will increase in intensity and horror from this point on. The target is then allowed a Will save (DC 15), with a cumulative -1 penalty for every hour of torture he has endured thus far. If the Will save fails, the target gives up the information he knows. If it succeeds, the target is able to resist the urge to make the torture stop, and the process continues.

You can increase your odds of getting information out of your target through the use of extremely violent means. While these can lead to, or even require, the death of the target, they are quite useful in breaking the wills of particularly recalcitrant victims. Some available options are:

† **Dismemberment.** Going beyond simple tortures, dismemberment moves on to the removal of an entire limb. This causes a -5 circumstance penalty on the victim's next Will save, but also immediately causes the permanent loss of 1 point of Constitution damage (see below for the effects of lost Constitution on torture victims).



† **Poisoning.** The administration of poisons can be used to sap the vitality of the torture victim and make him more likely to talk. In addition to the normal damage caused by the poison, poisoned targets receive a –4 circumstance penalty to their Will save to avoid talking if the antidote is offered in exchange for the information.

† **Death.** The victim would not talk, now he has to pay. Actually killing a torture victim inflicts a –10 circumstance penalty to his next Will save, but actually provides a +4 bonus to all Sense Motive checks made to resist the effects of torture. The victim has already seen the other side and is less prone to crack under the stress of mere torture now.

† **Rewards.** It is possible to reduce a victim’s resistance to torture by providing him with periodic rewards. When compared to the torture he has been enduring, the reward seems much more substantial than it otherwise would. The reward must be a creature comfort – food, water, sex, or healing are all used extensively by the drow. A reward can only be provided once per day, as additional rewards lose their impact when not coupled with intense bouts of torture. A subject who receives a reward suffers a –2 penalty to his next Sense Motive skill checks to resist the effects of torture.

For every full hour of torture the victim endures, he suffers 1 point of Constitution damage and 1d10 hit points of damage, unless the torturer succeeds at a Heal skill check (DC 10 + 1 per hour of torture beyond the first). Whenever the target suffers Constitution damage, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1 per hour of torture) to remain conscious. If he fails the save, he immediately succumbs to his pains and is rendered insensible for 1d4 hours. The torturer can

bring the victim around with a successful Heal skill check (DC 15 + 1 per hour of torture).

When a victim suffers his 5<sup>th</sup> point of Constitution damage from torture, he is in danger of dying immediately. The victim is allowed his normal saving throw to avoid becoming unconscious (as detailed above) but, if he fails, he dies immediately rather than passing out. Of course, a dead victim of torture can always be resurrected and put back under the tender mercies of the torturer.

## TAILORING POTIONS

The drow came to the understanding that magic is a very personal experience and by tailoring magical items, particularly potions, to an individual, the magic would become more potent. Though difficult, the alchemical process needed to fine tune a potion proved so effective they have been handed down through the magical traditions of the drow, both arcane and divine, for generations.

At its core, the concept involves transforming the aura of a potion to resonate with the mystic aura of the individual who will use it. The process allows the potion’s effects to suffuse the imbiber more fully, increasing one or more aspects of the potion beyond their original creation. While quite effective, the process also has its dangers – a failed attempt is virtually impossible to detect until imbibed, at which point the deadly poison created by the alchemical process may kill the drinker. An additional problem is the instability of the potions thus altered. After a few days, the potion becomes inert and useless, even to the drinker for whom it was originally tailored. Given the impressive increased effects possible, however, there

**Tailored Potions Table**

Augmentation Type	Alchemy DC	Cost	Initial Poison Damage	Secondary Poison Damage
Empower Spell	25	100 gp	1d4 Strength	2d4 Strength
Extend Spell	20	50 gp	1d2 Constitution	1d6 Constitution
Heighten Spell	20*	50**	1 Dexterity***	1 Dexterity ***
Maximize Spell	30	150 gp	1d6 Intelligence	2d6 Intelligence

\*Increase the DC of the Alchemy skill check by 5 for each level of increase after the first.

\*\*Multiple the total number of increased levels by the 50 to determine the cost.

\*\*\*The damage is equal to 1 Dexterity for every level by which the spell is heightened.





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are those who believe the risks and drawbacks are well worth the effort.

Tailoring a potion for a specific drinker requires the Spellcraft and Alchemy skills. In addition, one ounce of blood must be taken from the intended drinker for every dose of potion to be augmented; the blood helps attune the potion properly, binding it to the individual for whom it is tailored.

Mechanically, a tailored potion has one or more metamagic feats applied to its effects. These metamagic feats do not stack with any identical metamagic feats already held within the potion at the time of its creation. The feats are identified during the tailoring process, however, so the alchemist will be able to determine which augmentations will work with a given potion.

To tailor a potion, you must first analyze it. This requires one hour per potion, as well as 20 gold pieces worth of testing materials. This does not identify the potion in question, but does reveal the metamagic feats used in its creation and its overall composition. The analysis requires a successful Spellcraft skill check (DC 10 + 1 per caster level of the potion). You will know if the analysis fails and may make another attempt on the same potion. If the second check fails, however, its composition is beyond you until you gain additional ranks in the Spellcraft skill.

Once successfully analyzed, the potion is ready for its tailored augmentations. The blood of the drinker is mixed into the brew and you throw in your own reagents (the cost of which is determined by checking the table below) to bring about the desired results. After two hours of brewing, you must make a successful Alchemy skill check, with the DC determined by the table below. If successful, you succeed in augmenting the potion for its intended drinker. If the skill check fails, however, the potion becomes a poison (Fort Save DC 10 + caster level of the potion) that causes damage as indicated on the table below. Note that this potion does not register as poison to any *detection* spells, as the damage is caused by the mismatch between the potion's aura and the aura of the intended recipient. Drow have attempted to intentionally botch potions to create undetectable poisons to use against their enemies, but efforts thus far have been in vain.

An augmented potion that is ingested by someone it is not tailored for has no effect at all – the changes to the aura of the potion make it inert when taken by anyone but the intended user.

## SLAVE TRAINING

The drow love their slaves, or at least they love the things they make their slaves do. But breaking and training slaves can be a taxing process, best suited to those who spend their lives mastering the art of bending a slave to the will of a master. These drow pass their skills down by word of mouth from generation to generation, hoarding their secrets in an attempt to maintain the quality of their slaves and prevent others from raising slaves of their own. Most drow cities have two or three noble houses involved in the slave trade, with each specializing in a specific type of slave training.

Most of the slaves used by the drow do not need any special training. Condemned to lives of vile servitude or backbreaking labour, these unfortunates need nothing other than their health and a healthy desire to avoid the lashing whip of their overseers to perform their duties. Others, however, must receive intensive training to ensure they do as they are commanded to do and to prevent them from becoming dangerous to their masters.

### Warslaves

The most common special slave is the warslave, a creature trained to follow the orders of a military commander instantly and without question, acting even as the commands are uttered. While often lacking in originality or real skill, the warslave acts as an extension of its master, who may direct it and its companions to great martial victories.

Training a warslave is a difficult task, since most of the candidates for this type of slavery are powerful and spirited fighters. The drow do their best to crush the hope from these slaves, grinding their willpower down until they are ready to instantly obey the commands spoken by their leaders. This takes two months of time, during which the slave trainer must spend at least 3 hours per day with the slave. At the end of this time, the trainer may make a Handle Animal skill check (DC 20 + level or HD of the creature being trained). If the check succeeds, the warslave is ready for sale and will follow orders as commanded. If the check fails, however, the warslave is too difficult to deal with and will require an additional 2 months time before another Handle Animal skill check can be made to break his spirit.

A warslave costs a number of gold pieces equal to ten times its levels and hit dice. Warslaves without a fighter level gain one level of fighter during their training and normally are trained in the use of single-



Spellthralls are essentially living scrolls for their masters. At the time of their creation, they are imprinted with a single spell of up to 3<sup>rd</sup> level, which they may then cast a number of times per day equal to their Intelligence modifier. A spellthrall may always cast at least one spell per day, regardless of their Intelligence modifier. A spellthrall may only cast his spell when ordered to do so by his master, however, a process which treated exactly as if the master had used a scroll with the spell the spellthrall casts inscribed up on it.

Spellthralls are difficult to train and many prospects are destroyed when their training fails and they trigger the spells with which they are bound. It takes three months to train a spellthrall, at the end of which the trainer may make a Handle Animal skill check (DC 25 + level or HD of the creature being trained). If the check succeeds, the spellthrall's training is complete and it is ready to be sold and used in the field. If the check fails, however, the spellthrall rebels and is painfully destroyed by its own magic.

Spellthralls normally cost 20 gp times the number of spells they can cast per day.

### USING SLAVES

Drow have slaves like other races have pets. Even drow of modest means will have one or two slaves on hand and noble families prefer to have dozens of them scampering about.

Most slaves simply do as they are told, leaping to do what their masters command without a second thought. Domestic slaves, for example, know what their tasks are and perform them without hesitation or thought, cleaning, cooking, or pleasuring their masters according to their daily schedules or orders.

Warslaves and spellthralls, however, require a little more deft handling and are normally owned only by wealthy individuals or drow noble houses. Dangerous to have around, these slaves are very useful in combat against other houses, and most drow nobles have some training in leading their slaves in battle.

Warslaves are fielded in battle and kept under lock and key at all other times. Their master may attempt to direct them in combat as long as he remains within 100 feet of them and they are able to hear his commands. The slaves from each drow house are trained to respond to commands in a variety of code languages,

handed weapons, shields, and medium armour. The exact feats the slaves gain are based on the noble house doing the training, but Power Attack and Cleave are very popular choices.

### Spellthralls

These creatures are perhaps the most unfortunate of all the drow slaves. They are allowed to retain a good measure of their self-control and awareness, while constantly dealing with the fact that their existence hinges on obeying their masters. Because they are often gifted with extraordinarily dangerous spellcasting ability, the spellthralls are also bound with exceedingly lethal spells. Disobeying their masters does not bring the pain of the lash, it brings a torturous death taking several days to come to an end. Few spellthralls dare go against their masters, as a result, and those who do end up tortured and dead.



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which allow them to respond very quickly to the orders issued by their master.

In combat, a drow may command a number of warslaves equal to his current level plus his Charisma modifier. The skill with which his commands are carried out, however, is determined by his Base Attack Bonus, which encompasses his general skill in combat. To issue a command, the commander makes an Attack roll against an Armour Class equal to 15 + 1 per warslave so commanded. This is treated as a standard attack action and, if successful, each of the warslaves is able to carry out the command with efficiency and a certain amount of expertise. Warslaves are considered to have a Base Attack Bonus equal to the Base Attack Bonus of their commander – 5.

Warslaves are able to follow a number of commands as directed by their master. These commands include:

**Assist.** One or more warslaves may be given the command to assist one of their allies. The warslaves so commanded then use the Aid Another action (as detailed in the Combat section of *Core Rulebook I*) to assist their ally in attacking a foe.

**Attack.** The warslave will launch itself at the directed target and attack to the best of its ability. When this command is issued, the commander may also dictate which feats or special abilities the warslaves should use. The warslaves so commanded will use the full attack action if they can, but will otherwise use the standard attack action.

The grimlocks surged through the tunnels, their eyeless faces twisted into rictus masks of fear and hatred. Behind them, the flayers hooted and warbled with excitement as they drove their troops ahead of them, inciting the grimlocks to a murderous rage with their psionic goads. As they burst free from the tunnels surrounding the ancient drow city of Verzatrazail, the voices of the grimlocks rose to a crescendo of bestial fury and the massed forces spilled out into a widening cone of anger.

Mizrel yawned impatiently and raised her hands overhead, flashing finger signs to the drow commanders surrounding her in a tight semicircle. Before she had finished her orders, the commanders were barking their own demands to their warslaves and spellthralls, urging them forward to meet the rushing tide of unwashed grimlocks. Though armed only with naked steel and relatively feeble spells, the combat slaves obeyed without protest, their eyes set in stony stares and their faces impassive.

The battle erupted below her position, flesh and bone exploded under the impact of steel and stone weapons as the warriors collided and fell in tangled heaps. Blood burst from rent bodies with such force it created a dense cloud of crimson droplets over the tightest knots of conflict, filling Mizrel with a lust for battle herself. She longed to be down in the fray, her mace crushing the bones of her foes and her lips coated with the blood expelled with their dying breaths. With a sigh, she tore herself from the bloody reverie and turned her attention back to the battle.

The warslaves had backed the grimlocks to the mouths of the tunnels, pushing them back against the advancing flayers and their ogre bodyguards. But the progress of the drow slaves was halted there as they collided with the powerful mental forces commanded by the enemy. Mizrel frowned and signalled to the lead captain of the spellthrall commanders, *'What are your spellthralls doing?'*

The female grimaced and wriggled her fingers in response, *'We cannot get closer and the warslaves are too close to the flayers for our spells –'*

Mizrel clenched her fists angrily and slashed one finger across her throat, cutting her captain off before shooting back her own hateful response. *'The warslaves are slaves, you fool. Burn them all, if you must.'*

Seconds later, balls of flame punched through the warslaves ranks, exploding into brilliant orbs of fiery destruction that sent the grimlocks shrieking and fleeing from the battle despite the control the flayers exhibited. Warslaves surged forward, some still burning from the spells cast by their allies, intent on carrying out their orders to destroy the threat to their masters. The flayers gave ground instantly, tentacles waving wildly in the air as they struggled to avoid the grim and burning warslaves, but they never had a chance. Held in place by the massed bodies of the warslaves, the flayers could only psionically shriek their fear and rage as the lightning bolts and fireballs continued to fall, turning warslave and enemy alike into roaring bonfires.

**Block.** When given this command, warslaves attempt to block the movement of a specific target. They will attack normally when blocking, or may be given the order to grapple the target.

**Fall back.** If ordered to fall back, warslaves retreat from their current target and move toward their commander at their standard movement rate. They do their best to avoid attacks of opportunity and other hazards, but take no other actions save moving toward their commander.

**Guard.** Guarding warslaves do their best to protect a specific target as directed by their commander. They will attempt to prevent the approach of enemy forces toward the target, but will not pursue enemies who use ranged weapons or who retreat from the guarded target.

**Move.** The commander of the warslaves may order them to move on the battlefield. Warslaves are trained to move precisely as ordered and deviate from their commanders' directions only to avoid attacks of opportunity or other obvious hazards.

Warslaves are unable to follow commands other than the five outlined above, as their will is simply too crushed to allow them the freedom to interpret

commands beyond those with ingrained responses. This makes them useful in battle, as they will respond in predictable ways under the direct supervision of their commanders. When not fighting, however, the warslaves are kept penned up and allowed out only to exercise and to reinforce their training.

Spellthralls are ordered about just as are warslaves, but do not respond to attack commands. Instead, they have a cast command, which allows their commander to specify a target at which to unleash their barrage of magical artillery.

A group of eight is the standard for both warslaves and spellthralls, and the two types of slave are rarely mixed within the same group. Male warriors tend to lead the warslaves into battle, while the spellthralls find themselves under the command of the harsh and unforgiving priestesses of the Fatespinner. As the warslaves advance, spellthralls are used to soften up opposition and provide boosts to the fighting capabilities of the warslaves. As the battles wind down, spellthralls are also used to mop up enemy forces with area effect spells, particularly *fireball*, which is very handy for taking out large groups of injured enemy troops in short order.



# DROW FEATS

**D**row culture is insular and bound by traditions and rituals passed down from jealous gods and tyrannical priesthoods. Despite their lack of cross-fertilization with other cultures, the dark elves have developed a surprising number of special abilities and unique talents for which they are rightly feared and respected. This chapter provides a selection of drow feats, including those geared toward their political struggles, fighting styles, and unique magical talents.

## Blood of the Arachnid (Drow)

You are especially blessed by the dark mother and wear her blessing with pride. Though others may view your special features with displeasure, none can deny your blessing.

**Benefit:** You gain a +3 natural bonus to any Climbing skill checks you make, as long as your hands or feet are not covered with gauntlets or boots. Having either hands or feet exposed allows you to make use of the tiny, stiff hairs covering these parts of your body to assist in your climbing. You also gain a +1 natural bonus to all Fortitude saves made to resist poison.

## Death Trance (Drow)

There comes a time in every fighter's life when he knows he has two choices – die cowering from his enemy or die with his weapon in his hand and the last of his life's blood spilling out from his many wounds. This feat is for those who adopt the latter posture, giving them the ability to survive hideous wounds in their efforts to destroy their enemies.

**Prerequisites:** Endurance, Constitution 15+, Fortitude save 7+

**Benefit:** When reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, you may make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 per round you have been at fewer than 0 hit points). If this save succeeds, you are able to continue acting as normal during the current round. At the beginning of the next round, and in every subsequent round, you must make a Fortitude save (DC determined as above). If this save succeeds, you may continue acting as normal, even if reduced to below –10. If, however, one of these Fortitude saves is failed while you have zero or fewer hit points, you die immediately. You may choose to stop the use of this feat at any time, but if you are at –10 or fewer hit points, you immediately die. As an added benefit to willingly ending the use of this feat, you immediately stabilize if you do not die.

You must rest for a solid hour after the use of this feat, as your system is taxed beyond its normal limits. Additionally, you may not benefit from magical healing until you have rested for at least 8 hours – your body is simply unable to repair the damage you caused while under the effects of the death trance.

## Diabolic Allure (Drow)

You are attractive in a dark and somewhat depraved way. Though others are clearly aware of your unpleasant nature, they still find themselves drawn to you and the dangerous aura of sexuality you exude.

**Benefit:** Whenever you attempt to use the Gather Information or Diplomacy skills in a seduction attempt (see *Tricks of the Drow*), you gain a +2 competence bonus to skill checks. This stacks with similar feats, such as *Skill Focus*.



### Fearsome Reputation (Drow)

Everyone knows the drow are pure evil, with the ability to curdle the blood in your veins or stop your heart with one glance from their milky eyes. This reputation has stood the drow in good stead, allowing them to cow others who might be in a stronger position than they believe.

**Benefit:** When dealing with any non-drow, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to all Intimidation skill checks. This bonus increases to +6 when dealing with anyone from a culture that has been brutalized by the drow in the past, but is reduced to +2 when dealing with other natives of the Underdeep.

### Fertile (Drow)

You are one of the few drow males (or females) with the ability to create progeny with any regularity. This ability to bring on the next generation grants you a certain amount of status within drow culture.

**Benefit:** You gain a +2 natural bonus to any Gather Information or Diplomacy skill checks you make within drow culture. This bonus increases to +4 during any time period in which you have a child in an ovarisite.

### Necromantic Affinity (General)

You are very skilled at the necromantic arts and any spells you cast from this school of magic are increased in effectiveness.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to cast at least 3<sup>rd</sup> level arcane or divine spells

**Benefit:** Whenever you cast a spell from the necromantic school (either arcane or divine) you are treated as if your level is one greater than it actually is for purposes of determining all level-dependent elements of the spell, such as duration and damage.

### Politically Active (Drow)

You are very well-connected in the political arena and are able to perform very well in your home city. Note that this feat must be taken once for every city in which you wish to be politically active.

**Prerequisite:** Gather Information 10+ ranks

**Benefit:** You receive a +4 bonus to any skill checks made while acting as Lieutenant for a noble house or



other organization. This bonus applies only to actions taken in the Game of Bones.

### Reverse Stroke (Drow)

You have mastered the art of attacking on the backswing, striking at your opponent even as you bring your weapon back around to the ready position after an attack. Though the attack is not as strong as it might otherwise be, it is a very fast attack and one that is likely to catch your foes off their guard.

**Benefit:** If you successfully strike a target in melee combat, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to the next attack you make in this round, provided it is made against the same target. You suffer a -2 penalty to your next damage roll made against this target, however, as you are attacking on the backstroke of your weapon, a rapid, less powerful attack. This feat is not effective against an opponent with Combat Reflexes.





## DROW FEATS

### Shadow Strike (Drow)

You are skilled in the art of attacking where least expected, and are able to whip your weapon around in order to strike at an opponent from an unexpected angle.

**Prerequisites:** Reverse Stroke; Power Attack

**Benefit:** If this attack is made in the same round as, and following, a Reverse Stroke that successfully strikes the same target, it receives a +4 circumstance bonus to the attack roll and a +2 circumstance bonus to the damage roll as your attack slips through the defences of the target to strike at a vulnerable area. This feat is not effective against an opponent with Combat Reflexes.

### Transmogrification Expertise (General)

You have mastered one of your fleshcrafted appendages and are now able to use it with the same facility as the limbs with which you were born.

**Prerequisite:** You must have a fleshcrafted appendage for at least one month before you can take this feat.

**Benefit:** You suffer no penalty when using one of your fleshcrafted appendages.

**Normal:** You are normally unable to use a fleshcrafted limb with the same ease as a natural limb, suffering a penalty to all attacks made when using the limb.

### Venomous Affinity (Drow)

Your time spent with the spiders of the drow proved very enlightening, giving you insight into the nature of poisons others lack.

**Benefit:** You are able to create poisons with much greater ease than others, and gain a +2 competence bonus to all Craft (alchemy) checks made when attempting to make poisons. This bonus stacks with Skill Focus (craft - alchemy) and increases to +4 when creating spider venom poisons.

Firianis spread his limbs wide against the wall, digging his fingers into the tiny crevices they found in the stone. He could feel the slender, bristly hairs on his fingertips and the soles of his feet finding their way into the stone, sliding into pores and cracks in the wall he could not detect with his eyes. He marvelled at his facility with climbing, grinning with delight as he passed over the heads of those on the street below. They never looked up, never saw him crawling spider-like across the Great Spine of the city while they went about their business. So far below him, they seemed no more consequential than ants, tiny creatures with no regard for anything beyond the tips of their noses.

But he, he was made of finer stuff. He crawled through the darkest places and made his way where others could not follow. As he slithered up the side of a massive stalactite, it was all he could do to keep from laughing out loud at the fools who thought they were safe just because they lived up so high. True, he could not fly, but he could climb, and their magical defences could not defeat his natural talents. Where a wizard using magic would be thwarted, Firianis had no difficulty at all.

The men of this house were weak, their seed so feeble the women despaired of ever having need of the ovarisites that clung to the shadows of their home. Though the men could not sire children, they had managed to seize control of the tiny noble house by spreading lies and carefully misdirecting attention toward the women of the family. They were clever, and their words had poisoned the reputation of the women, so they were considered barren and worthless.

Firianis was here to change that perception, once and for all. He crept in through a window and made his way through the house by crawling along its ceiling. The construction webbing was tightly woven, but had yet to calcify and gave him excellent handholds. He could smell the thick scent of perfume in the air, drawing him closer to his goal.

A young man of the house walked below him and paused, tilting his head and listening intently. But he never looked and Firianis made his way unmolested to the sleeping chambers of the house matriarch. She smiled at him as he dropped from the ceiling and growled low and angry in her throat. Her glance pointed out the thick sack of coins lying on the table and Firianis let himself nod with approval. It was not the safest way to make a living, but the blessing of fertility bestowed upon him by the filtheater had certainly given him the tools he needed to earn his keep, and then some.



# TOOLS OF THE DROW

The drow have developed numerous specialized pieces of equipment as a result of their unique heritage and lifestyle circumstances. After dwelling underground for countless generations and waging war against dozens of vicious enemy races, the drow developed weapons, armour, and tools to protect themselves and destroy their enemies. In addition, their unique magical and religious rituals have given rise to some pieces of equipment best suited for their practice. A selection of these tools have been provided here for addition to your campaign, though it should be noted that the drow will not release these to an outsider under pain of death in most cases. Regarded as relics of their heritage and suitable only for use by drow, the equipment found in this chapter is jealously guarded and finds its way to the surface only under rare circumstances.

## WEAPONS

The drow love their weapons and have designed a number of killing tools specially tailored for their tastes. Specifically engineered to cause the most horrific injuries possible, some of these weapons are not as efficient as others, but have a psychological impact that cannot be denied. These weapons cause 1d6 subdual damage to those targets who fail a Will save (DC 5 + damage caused by the attack). Actual damage is inflicted regardless of the saving throw result.

**Blood Spigots:** These ingenious and devilish devices are used by ramming them into the flesh of a target and standing back. Their clever design forms a vacuum which sucks the blood and other fluids from the body of the target at an alarming rate. The spigot can be removed with a successful Strength check (DC 20). If the victim wishes to remove the spigot himself, he must make a successful Will save (DC 20) in order to build up the nerve to tear it out, but no such roll is necessary if the subject is willing to let someone else tear the weapon from his flesh. Removing the spigot causes 1d6 hit points of damage.

**Collapsing Steel Bow:** This steel bow is actually three weapons in one. In its primary form, it is a steel composite bow. It can also be twisted and opened into a pair of short swords with curved blades and handles. Collapsing or reconstructing the bow is a full-round action. Collapsing the bow into the pair of blades can

be done as a move action, provided the user does not care if he snaps the string.

**Dire Fang:** This weapon is wielded by strapping it to the forearm so the tip of the weapon extends over the hand of the wearer. When the tip is rammed into a target, a tightly coiled spring in the base of the weapon drives a steel spike forward through the hollow tip and into the target. A large poison reservoir allows the weapon to contain up to 10 doses of any single poison, though the weapon does require a full round action to reset once it has been used.

**Fanged Axe:** The blade of this axe is bifurcated vertically, giving it a pair of long, narrow cutting surfaces reminiscent of spider fangs. The blades are designed to enter the flesh point first then tear down and out of the body to create a nasty-looking wound.

**Fanged Web:** This drow improvement over the standard net incorporates dozens of jagged blades and crystalline fibres to make an effective, dangerous capturing device. Individuals caught in the fanged web are wise not to struggle, as doing so can inflict very serious wounds.

**Impaling Blade:** These massive spears sport a massive, jagged blade almost two feet in length at their tip. Though the weapon is useless for slashing, it is perfect for its primary purpose: impaling an enemy and keeping them from moving around the field of battle. Whenever the weapon scores a critical hit, the target is allowed a Fortitude Saving throw (DC 5 + damage caused). If the save is successful, the target is not impaled and may continue to act normally. If the target fails his save, however, he is impaled and immediately loses his Dexterity bonus and may not move freely. If an impaled character attempts to move, he must succeed in an opposed Strength check (DC 15), with a -5 circumstance penalty. If he wins, he may move up to one-half his normal movement, but if he fails he may not move at all (though this is still considered a move-equivalent action). If the impaled creature attempts to attack, he suffers a -4 penalty to all attack and damage rolls while he remains impaled. Similarly, creatures who attempt to cast a spell or manifest a psionic power while impaled require a successful Concentration check (DC 20) at a -4 circumstance penalty in order to successfully cast the spell - failure on this Concentration check does not result in a lost spell, as the caster was simply unable to even attempt to cast the spell due to the horrible pain. Creatures who manage to move while impaled on a weapon are no longer considered impaled and may move normally during their next action.



## TOOLS OF THE DROW

### Weapons Table

Martial Weapons - Melee							
Weapon	Size	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Blood Spigot	S	100 gp	1d4*	X3	--	1 lb	P
Collapsing Steel Bow (Swords)	S	150 gp	1d6	19-20/X2	--	8 lb	P
Serrated Bone Cutlass	M	100 gp	1d6	19-20/X3	--	5 lb	S
Spiderhair Blade	M	300 gp	1d6*****	19-20/X2	--	5 lb	P
Martial Weapons – Ranged							
Weapon	Size	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Collapsing Steel Bow (Bow)	M	150 gp	1d6+2	X3	80 ft.	8 lb	P
Shard Thrower	M	100 gp	1d8****	X3	20 ft.	5 lb	S
Shard Load	--	1 gp	--	--	--	--	--
Exotic Weapons - Melee							
Weapon	Size	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Dire Fang	S	300 gp	1d4**	X3	--	2 lb	P
Fanged Axe	M	50 gp	1d6	18-20/X2	--	5 lb	S
Impaling Blade	L	100 gp	1d6	X3	--	10 lb	P
Ripper Chain	L	100 gp	2d6	X3	--	15 lb	S
Spine Hammer	L	350 gp	2d6	19-20/X3	--	15 lb	P/B
Exotic Weapons – Ranged							
Weapon	Size	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Inc.	Weight	Type
Fanged Web	M	50 gp	1d6***	--	10 ft.	10 lb	P

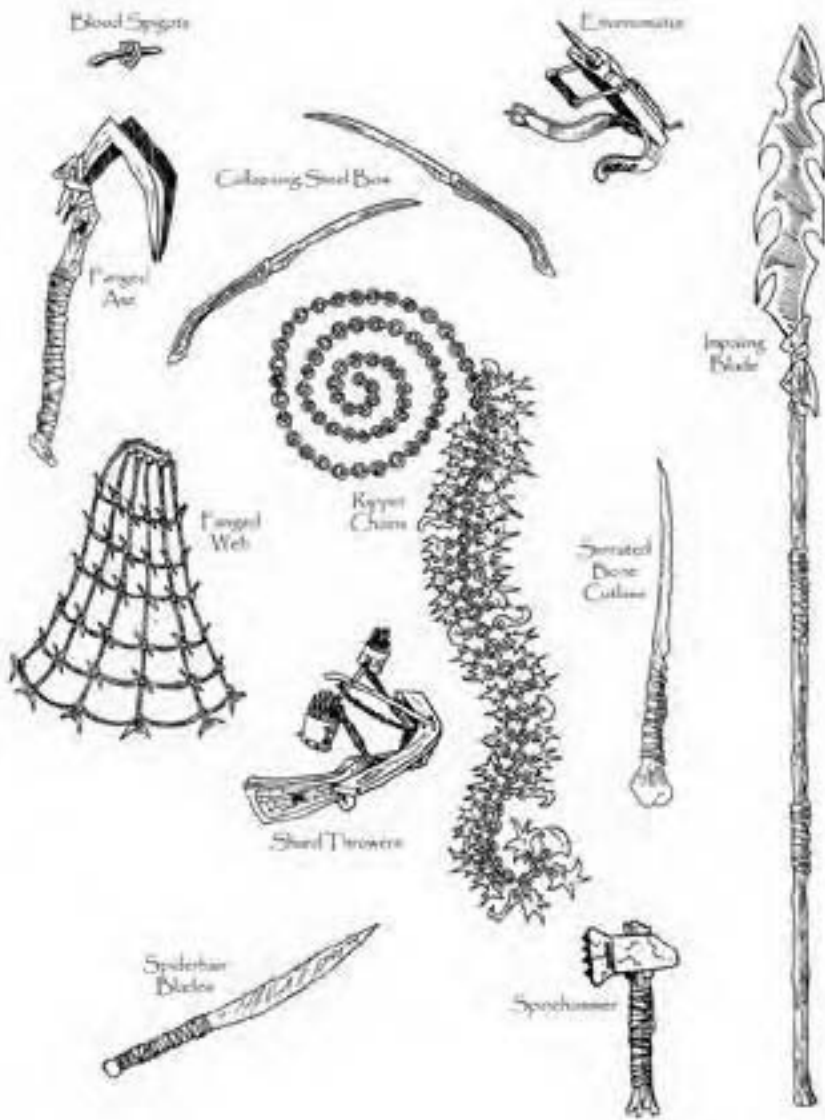
\* The Blood Spigot inflicts 1d4 hit points of damage on a successful strike. If it scores maximum damage or a critical hit, it is stuck in the body of the victim and begins siphoning his blood out at the rate of 1d4 hit points of additional damage per round. Note that this ability does not work on undead, plants, constructs, or other creatures without a circulatory system.

\*\*Any type of poison can be placed in the envenomator and injected upon a successful, damaging strike with the weapon.

\*\*\*The fanged web causes no damage until it has entangled a target. Entangled targets suffer 1d6 hit points of damage each round they remain entangled in the web, including rounds in which they attempt to escape. This weapon is otherwise treated as a normal net.

\*\*\*\*The shard thrower fills a 20-ft. long cone with deadly shards. One attack roll is applied to all targets in the area of effect.

\*\*\*\*\*Any creature hit by a spiderhair blade must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC 15). Those who succeed at the save suffer no additional ill effects, those who fail suffer 1d3 hit points of extra damage from the weapon. If the target fails its first Fortitude save, it must make an additional Fortitude save each round or suffer 1d3 hit points of damage. Once a target succeeds at the Fortitude save, no additional damage is caused by that particular injury, though the target could suffer a subsequent injury from a Spiderhair Blade and begin taking aggravated damage again.



**Ripper Chains:** Similar to spiked chains, these weapons are lighter and more flexible. In use, they are built to wrap around a limb or other body part and then are yanked back to the wielder. This causes horrific wounds as the jaggedly barbed chain rips furrows through the flesh of the target.

**Serrated Bone Cutlass:** Fashioned from the leg bones of a fallen foe, the serrated bone cutlass is treated with various alchemical mixtures to give it a ragged, terribly sharp edge. Though not as deadly as a keen blade, the serrated bone cutlass is a fast, dangerous weapon that tears through flesh more than it cuts.

**Shard Throwers:** These weapons do not cause a significant amount of damage, but their ability to pepper a cone with shards of envenomed crystal is used often in drow combat tactics. The weapon looks like little more than a 3-foot-long rod of steel mounted on a complex tangle of springs and canisters. When fired, the weapon uses a spring-driven piston to hurl dozens of tiny crystal shards, each steeped in poison, into a cone-shaped area. It requires one full round to reload a shard thrower after it has been fired.

**Spiderhair Blades:** While these short swords look much like any other small, bladed weapon, they create horribly painful injuries. While being forged, the swords are repeatedly dusted with crystalline fibres (see below). This makes the blade weaker, overall, but also causes the weapon to shed these irritating fibres into any injury they inflict. As the fibres worm their way down into the injury, they cause terrible pain and copious bleeding, making these weapons much feared by the enemies of the drow.

**Spine Hammers:** These massive weapons are favoured by the priestesses of the drow and find much use in their hands. Constructed much like a standard warhammer, the striking surface of the weapon is lined with row after row of pyramidal spikes and is capable of ripping through skin as well as crushing bone.



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## TOOLS OF THE DROW

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### TOOLS

The existence of the drow is owed not only to the patronage of their spidery gods, but also their ability to conquer and control their environment. This mastery over their territory was made possible through drow ingenuity and inventiveness, which spawned a number of tools to make their lives easier. A selection of these tools can be found below, along with information on how the tools are used.

**Breeding Rings:** The drow view of the impregnation process is, at best, brutal. It is based around the subjugation of the partner and only one of the involved parties ever experiences any real pleasure with the experience. Pain and suffering, from the moment of their conception, is built into the drow psyche. The drow priestesses designed the breeding rings to keep their male partners in line and to make sure any struggles were met with the maximum pain. The hooks are jagged rings of steel, their inner surfaces lined with dozens of barbs, attached to lengths of steel chain. The barbs on the rings are angled forward, allowing a hand to slide into them easily, but preventing it from sliding back out without suffering grievous injury. When the chains are affixed to wall posts, the breeding hooks hold the victim's body immobile and spread-eagled, so that any motion causes intense pain as the flesh of the hands and wrist are torn.

These hooks are also used to control slaves while they are moved. While a slave might escape if he is truly determined, his hands would be destroyed in the process. The breeding hooks come in small, medium, and large sizes, for restraining creatures of the appropriate size. When a creature who is wearing the rings wishes to move, he must make a successful Will save (DC 15) in order to overcome his fear of pain to do so. Any movement made while wearing the rings inflicts 1 hit point of damage to the wearer and causes excruciating pain.

**Crystalshroud Cloak:** There are times when the drow wish to travel inconspicuously, either through hostile territory or simply to avoid notice when doing something they would rather not be caught doing. The cloak is a deep black in colour and has a voluminous hood capable of completely covering the face of its wearer. Crafted from polished crystalline fibres, the cloak acts as a one-way window – the wearer can see through the hood covering his face, but others cannot see in. The cloak also contains two dozen tiny, hidden pockets, each of which can hold a tiny object. The pockets seal almost invisibly thanks to the interlocking

weave of the crystalline fibres and require a successful Search check (DC 20) to find.

**Dreamspittle Poison:** Derived from a variety of fungi and distilled along with a healthy dose of spider venom, this poison is useful for relaxing a subject and is fatal only in very large doses. When injected, the poison immediately disrupts the ability of the target to control his muscles with any accuracy. The subject is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid the effects of this poison. If the save is failed, the subject instantly loses his Dexterity bonus against any attacks directed against him. The secondary effects of the poison kick in 1d4 rounds later, at which time the subject suffers vivid hallucinations and collapses to the ground, unable to move. This effect lasts for 1d6 hours. A successful Healing check (DC 15) can be used to maintain this state in a subject indefinitely, keeping them in a paralyzed stupor for as long as the medic wishes. This requires an additional dose of poison every 1d6 hours, but only one Healing check per day.

The poison builds up quickly in subjects if additional doses are given within a few minutes of one another. Each additional dose injected into a target within a 10 minute time frame increases the DC of the Fortitude save to resist the poison by one. Thus, if a subject is struck twice by weapons coated with dreamspittle, the DC of the first Fortitude save is 15 and the second is 16.

Dreamspittle is a favoured recreational poison for the drow, who use the poison during their mating rituals and in a bar game involving self-inflicted injuries and injections.

**Essence Injectors:** These flat metal vials are generally positioned between the shoulder blades of a drow and fastened into place with a pair of leather straps that wrap around the shoulders. A thin needle runs from the vial and under the skin of the drow, while a thinner wire runs up and over the drow's shoulder to dangle over his chest. When the wire is pulled, as a free action, the contents of the essence injector are forced into the body of the drow. The essence injector is normally worn as a way for a drow to quickly consume an emergency potion.

**Instrument Gloves:** The drow are quite skilled in the creation of delicate tools and the instrument gloves are the height of their expertise. Instrument gloves contain tiny lenses, screw drivers, cutting blades, scissors, and even small hammers, all integrated into the design of

Tools Table

Item	Cost	Weight
Breeding Rings	100 gp	5 lb
Crystalshroud Cloak	100 gp	7 lb
Essence Injectors	300 gp	2 lb
Dreamspittle (per dose)	150 gp	.1 lb
Instrument Gloves +1	200 gp	1 lb
Instrument Gloves +2	400 gp	1 lb
Instrument Gloves +3	800 gp	1 lb
Locking Collar	50 gp	3 lb
Swing Lines	20 gp	2 lb

the glove. The wearer can then use any of the tools without needing to switch hands and each tool can be very finely controlled due to their placement on the glove. A single instrument glove provides its bonus to a single type of trade skill only, as the tools must be customized for not only the wearer, but the Craft skill he chooses to practice. These gloves can be used with the Craft (flesh) skill and typically contain scissors, skinning blades, pliers, and other tools used to rip the skin up to make it easier to refashion with magic. Gloves come in +1, +2, and +3 circumstance bonus varieties.

**Locking Collars:** The locking collar is a jointed device constructed from woven steel wires. A complex locking mechanism is used to put the collar in place and it is this device which makes the collar so lethal. When snapped around the neck of the target and locked, the collar is snug but not painful or dangerous. If the target attempts to remove the collar, in any way, a set of intricate gears within the locking mechanism begin tightening the collar. A key can be used to unlock the collar, which can be broken with a successful Strength check (DC 40), or opened with a *knock* spell, but will otherwise continue tightening until the target is choked to death.

A locking collar can be used as a weapon, provided the target is grappled or otherwise immobilized. If a drow wants to attach a collar to a target he is grappling, he can do so with a successful grappling check, but suffers a -4 penalty to the check as he struggles to hold his victim immobile and get the collar on.

**Swing Lines:** A specialized variant of the construction webbing used to build drow structures, swing lines allow drow to make their way around or over



## TOOLS OF THE DROW

the numerous crevasses and pitfalls found in the underdeep. The lines are stored in leather canisters, in which they soak in a watery adhesive solution. One end of the lines is coated with a glob of extremely sticky glue, which will stick to virtually any surface and is strong enough to support up to 500 pounds of weight. The line can be thrown up to 30 feet and will stick to whatever surface it touches – if aiming for a particular spot, rather than simply trying to hit a wall, the thrower must succeed at a ranged touch attack. Once the line is in place, the drow can swing on it, climb it, or otherwise use it to make their way across, around, or over the obstacle.

Swing lines can be used in combat, as well. Hitting a target with a swing line requires a successful ranged touch attack. Targets suffer a –1 penalty to their Armour Class for every swing line stuck to them, as their movement and ability to dodge incoming blows is greatly restricted. The wielder of the swing line must maintain their grip on the swing line in order to inflict this penalty on the target, if the swing line is dropped or otherwise allowed out of their grasp, it is no longer a cause for concern. Pulling a swing line off its target requires a Strength check (DC 25). Pulling a swing line out of the hands of its wielder requires an opposed Strength check (DC 15).

The wielder of a swing line may attempt to deprive a foe of their Dexterity bonus during a round by yanking on the swing line. This requires an opposed Strength check (DC 15) – if the wielder wins, the target loses its Dexterity bonus for this round and is considered flat footed until the beginning of the next round. If the target wins the Strength check, however, the wielder of the swing line loses his grip on the silk rope.

Regaining control of a swing line requires a successful Dexterity check (DC 15), after which the wielder may begin using it as normal.

Swing line adhesive retains its strength for 8 hours, after which time it decays into a dry paste and flakes away. The swing line itself is a 30-foot length of silk rope and may be used as such indefinitely.

## ARMOUR

Because drow society is so violent, its nobility rarely go anywhere unarmoured, and even commoners tend to wear whatever protective equipment they can afford when going into the rougher neighbourhoods. Because of this, the drow have created a variety of armour types, from the surprisingly strong and ornate spidersilk, to the woven crystal armour favoured by



Armour Table

Armour	Cost	Armour Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armour Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed 30 ft.	Speed 20 ft.	Wt
<b>Light Armour</b>								
Bloodthirster Armour	500 gp	+0**	+6	0	5%	30 ft.	20 ft.	10 lb
Mummified Armour	300 gp	+2	+5	-2	5%	25 ft.	15 ft.	5 lb
Scrollsheath Robes	150 gp	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Venomsoaked Armour	200 gp	+2	+6	-2	10%	25 ft.	15 ft.	10 lb
<b>Medium Armour</b>								
Spellsplinter Armour	500 gp	+5***	+3	-4	40%	25 ft.	15 ft.	30 lb
Spidersilk Armour	300 gp	+5	+5	-4	30%	25 ft.	15 ft.	15 lb
<b>Heavy Armour</b>								
Blackened Bone Armour	250 gp	+6	+3	-5*	35%	25 ft.	15 ft.	35 lb
Silkshell Armour	3,000 gp	+9	+2	-5	35%	20 ft.	15 ft.	40 lb
Woven Crystal Armour	5,000 gp	+10	+2	-7	50%	20 ft.	15 ft.	60 lb

\*The noise made by the clacking bones of this armour imposes a -10 Armour Check Penalty on all Move Silently checks.

\*\* See the description of this armour for information about how this bonus changes during combat.

\*\*\*See item description for information about this bonus and how it is depleted by absorbing magical energy.

the strongest drow warriors. This section provides information about this armour and its creation.

**Blackened Bone Armour:** A drow version of splint mail, blackened bone armour is crafted from the arm bones, leg bones, and rib cages of the slave races. Molten iron and other metals are drizzled over the bones as the armour is created, which makes the armour both light and resilient. The largest problem with the armour is the clacking noises it makes during battle and while the wearer is moving at more than half their normal speed.

**Bloodthirster Armour:** The drow revel in the pain of their enemies and slaves, relishing the exquisite sounds, smells, and sights of carnage and torture in the same way other races delight in the smell of a fresh-cooked meal or the perfume of a lover. This armour

type shares the lust and taste for blood of the drow who created it and functions most efficiently when it is soaked in the crimson fluid. Constructed of hollow pitch leech fungus fibres, the armour provides only modest protection when dry, but forms a slick, nearly seamless coat of protection when drenched in blood. The armour starts with the Armour Bonus shown in the table below, but this bonus increases by +1 in every round in which the wearer injures a living creature, to a maximum +8 circumstance bonus. Note that the armour bonus decreases by one for every hour that passes without blood splashing onto the bloodthirster armour.

**Mummified Armour:** Spellcasters favour this type of armour, which is crafted from the cured flesh of fallen slaves, typically half-orcs or dwarves. Though the armour is actually little better than simple cloth robes,





## TOOLS OF THE DROW

its appearance is quite horrific and provides arcane spellcasters with the sort of grim visage the drow favour.

**Scrollsheath Robes:** Drow wizards do their best to scrape out every advantage they can, no matter how minor it may seem on the surface. The scrollsheath robes are one such example – robes with scroll cases built into the sleeves for quick access. Further refinements were added over time, culminating in armour that allows two scrolls to be stored in each sleeve of the armour, allowing the wizard to retrieve the scroll as a free action, unrolling it from the edge of the sleeve itself so it is ready for immediate use.

**Silkshell Armour:** This plate variant is constructed by weaving metal threads with silk fibres. When the fitted armour is complete, the whole is heavily lacquered and cured with spider ichors. The result is a strong and light armour fitted perfectly to the form of the wearer.

**Spellsplinter Armour:** Amongst a race so well-known for its magical skills, it is only natural the drow would develop armour designed to protect them from the spells of others. While spellsplinter armour does require frequent repairs and a steady supply of reagents to keep it working efficiently, it also provides one of the few effective safeguards against magical attack. When the wearer is targeted by a spell and fails his saving throw, he may gain another saving throw by activating his armour as a free action. The armour bonus for the armour is then reduced by an amount equal to the level of the spell saved against, as the crystals used in the armour's creation are destroyed by the flow of magical energy they absorbed.

Repairing spellsplinter armour is not difficult – it simply requires five pounds of spellbane crystal and a successful Craft (armoursmithing) check (DC 15 + 1 per point of armour being repaired). This process requires one full 8-hour day per point of armour restored. If one of the skill checks fail, the armour is not only left unrepaired, it actually suffers an additional 1d4 points of Armour Reduction. If the armour bonus is ever reduced to 0 or less by such a failure, the armour is destroyed and cannot be repaired.

**Spidersilk Armour:** This lightweight, resilient armour is crafted from the same silk used to create drow buildings. Though heavier than the gossamer threads of a smaller spider, the cords of silk are perfect for protecting the wearer from injury.

**Venomsoaked Armour:** This armour is woven from silk and cured in a variety of deadly toxins, which gives it a shimmering, oily appearance. The wearer of this armour may drag his weapon across the armour to coat its edge or tip with poison (this is a full round action, the poison has a Fort save (DC 15) with Initial and Secondary Damage of 1d3 points of temporary Strength damage). While the armour is not built for heavy combat, drow spies and assassins make good use of it in their business. Each suit of this armour contains enough venom for five applications. Poison can be reapplied to the armour by a successful Craft (alchemy) check (DC 20), which requires 8 hours of work and 100 gp worth of poisonous reagents.

**Woven Crystal Armour:** Incredibly heavy due to the density of the crystals used in its construction, woven crystal armour is highly prized by those strong enough to wear it for the protection it offers. Unlike metal armours that seek to turn aside or absorb the impact of attacks, woven crystal armour actually disperses the force of impact through the resonation of the crystals. This creates an eerie moaning sound during battle, as the crystals become excited from impact and spread the vibrations to other parts of the armour.

## MAGICAL ITEMS

Given the dangers of their environment and the number of enemies they possess, the drow spend a great deal of time and effort researching new ways of dispatching their foes and protecting their territory. In this section, you will find several such items, ready for use in your campaign. As with the other gear found in this chapter, it is not normally available for sale to non-drow, though those who work as mercenaries for drow masters may be able to get their hands on some of these items.

**Blackened Orc Spine Belt:** Orc slaves are a common site in drow cities, and the dark elves are loathe to let even these least of their servants go without extracting the last bit of usefulness from their bodies. By removing the spine of an orc and treating it with various magical rituals, the dark elves are able to create a belt which provides the wearer with a +2 natural bonus to Strength and a +2 natural bonus to all Intimidate checks.

*Caster Level:* 8<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *bull's strength*, *speak with dead*; *Market Price:* 6,000 gp; *Weight:* 4 lb.



**Breastplate of the Necrotic Grasp:** This breastplate is composed of the ribcage of a large creature and the arm bones and sinews of a smaller creature, both of which are enchanted to create a gruesome, but highly effective piece of armour for drow warriors. Once per round (during combat) the *breastplate of the necrotic grasp* reaches out and makes a touch attack against a creature adjacent to you. The *breastplate* has an attack bonus of +10; if the *breastplate* succeeds in its touch attack, it casts the *ghoul touch* spell on its target (Save DC 15). The *breastplate of the necrotic grasp* is otherwise treated as a *breastplate +1* for its protective qualities.

*Caster Level:* 9<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Arms and Armour, *ghoul touch*, *animate dead*; *Market Price:* 45,000 gp

**Dwarf-Skull Helm:** These helms are made by treating the skull of a dwarf with a variety of alchemical solutions that make the bones more pliable so that it can be worked into the proper shape. When worn, the helm provides the wearer with a +2 insight bonus to all Craft checks related to stone or metal, all Appraise checks related to rare or exotic items, and a +2 natural bonus to all saves against spells, spell like effects, or poisons.

*Caster Level:* 10<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *neutralize poison*, *speaking with dead*, *spell immunity*; *Market Price:* 5,500 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb.

**Flensed Gnome Hide Robes:** With their use of gravebond magic, it was only a matter of time before the drow discovered ways in which the corpses of their enemies could be put to good use. The flensed gnome hide robe is a perfect example of this – the connection between the living and the dead is facilitated by incorporating the skin of a gnome into a ceremonial robe that provides a +2 natural bonus to the wearer's Constitution, and a +2 insight bonus to all Craft (alchemy) checks made while the robe is worn. The robe is normally loose enough it can be worn comfortably over Medium or Light armour.

*Caster Level:* 8<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *endurance*, *speaking with dead*; *Market Price:* 6,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lb.

**Stoneflame Potion:** This potent weapon was designed specifically for use against dwarven mines. When poured onto an area of stone, the stoneflame quickly soaks into the surface, spreading out to form a 10 ft. square area that appears slightly damp. In 1d4 rounds, the entire area bursts into flames and begins consuming the stone onto which it was poured. The solution burns for

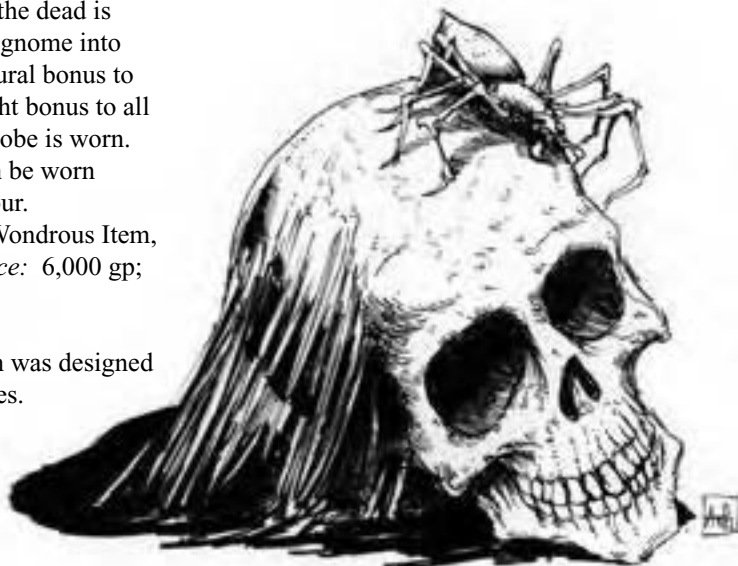
1d10 x 1d6 minutes, and burns away a 10-ft. x 10-ft. x 1-ft.-thick slab of stone during each of those minutes. Anyone standing in or passing through the flames suffers 3d6 hit points of damage. Those unfortunates caught in the area when it catches fire are allowed a Reflex save (DC 20) to partially avoid the damage, and suffer only half-damage if the save is successful.

The most dangerous aspect of the stoneflame potion is the way it turns the stone itself into a soupy morass, making travel through the area difficult. Those who fail their save when the area ignites, or those who attempt to move through an area affected by the stoneflame potion, must make a successful Strength check (DC 25) in order to move at all within the mess. Those who fail the save check are stuck in the affected area until their next round, when they can again attempt to tear themselves free from the fiery embrace.

*Caster Level:* 12<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Potion, *fireball*, *stone shape*; *Market Price:* 2,000 gp

**Tanned Halfling Hide Boots:** The soles of halfling feet are carved off, tanned, and sewn into the bottoms of supple boots to create this item. When worn, the boots provide the wearer with a +2 natural bonus to Dexterity and a +2 insight bonus to all Move Silently checks. These boots provide no protection themselves, nor may they be worn over other footwear.

*Caster Level:* 8<sup>th</sup>; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace*, *speaking with dead*; *Market Price:* 6,000 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb.



# DROW SPELLS

The drow have developed their own magic over the years, including the potent gravebond and the power of fleshcrafting. In this section, you will find several spells favoured by the drow, generally unknown elsewhere. While these spells may certainly be learned by others, the drow would not willingly teach them to outsiders and will do their utmost to track down and destroy any non-drow who learn these arcane and divine teachings.

## Crystalsilk Shroud

*Abjuration [Force]*

**Level:** Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 hour/level (D)

The magic of this spell comes from the special connection that drow possess with arachnids; it draws off the essence of the special webbing that one species of these tiny creatures creates to weave a special protective cloth of magical force over the caster. When the spell is cast, one of its components (a living crystalsilk spider) moves around the caster's body, leaving a fine pattern of webbing all around him. When the casting time ends, this webbing charges with magic and expands into a flaring, dimly glowing field of abjorative energy. The light from this shroud does grant opponents a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls against the caster, but it blunts the force of any attacks that do successfully hit. A crystalsilk shroud grants its wearer DR 5/magic in all directions and prevents him from being affected by any form of grapple or entangling effects.

The material components for this spell is a living crystalsilk spider, a pinch of diamond dust valued at 25 gold pieces, and a drop of *oil of slipperiness*. This drop is not enough to consume the oil in any appreciable fashion, but it must come directly from a vial containing the potion as the drop loses its potency if separated for more than a few moments.

## Dire Gestation

*Necromancy [Death, Evil]*

**Level:** Clr 5, Sor/Wiz 5

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft/2 levels)

**Target:** One living creature

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Save:** Fort negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Though the power of this spell builds slowly, if it reaches its ultimate end the result is quite spectacular. When cast, the spell infuses the target with the essence of the caster. If the target fails its saving throw, this essence begins growing within the target, causing 1d6 hit points of damage at the time the spell is cast and an additional 1d6 hit points of damage per round thereafter, for the duration of the spell. The target is allowed a new saving throw at the end of each round and, if any of these saves succeed, the spell immediately ends and no further damage is caused.

While the spell is active, the caster loses 1d4 hit points at the beginning of each round of its duration as his



essence is pumped into the target. If the spell lasts within the target until its duration has expired, the target immediately dies as the caster bursts from its guts in a shower of blood and viscera, having grown a new body for himself within the body of the target. The caster is fully healed and free from any disease, harmful magical effects, or poisons when he emerges from the body of his target. The caster's previous body, regardless of its condition or any magical effects upon its person, disintegrates immediately upon the successful completion of this spell. All of his equipment and possessions remain where they were, with anything being worn simply falling through the dust of his old body.

The real risk to this spell comes if the caster runs out of hit points before the target does or before the duration of the spell elapses. At 0 hit points, the caster dies and disintegrates as above. He will be reborn if the target suffers the full duration of the spell, but if the target makes a successful saving throw after the caster dies and ends the spell prematurely, the caster is gone permanently and will require a *true resurrection*, *wish*, or similar magic to bring back.

### Dark Denial

*Necromancy [Death, Mind Affecting]*

**Level:** Clr 7

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One living creature

**Duration:** 1 day (D)

**Save:** Fort negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes (drow resistance does not apply)

There are prisoners that the drow must keep alive, despite their urges to the contrary. Perhaps a captive has information that magic cannot reach or they may be valuable as ransom, but for whatever reason, they must remain alive for the time being. As anyone with experience in the under caverns learns very quickly, the prisons of the drow are vile places with death a heartbeat away and degradation even closer. Some captives are wise enough to realize that a clean death by their own hands is preferable to what awaits them in these caves of hopeless gloom.

To that end, this spell was created by drow priestesses to ensure that their favorite pets and prisoners did not take their own lives before the time came to savor their murders. When cast, this spell makes it impossible for the target to kill himself. He may suffer any amount of damage or inflict any kind of terrible wound he

wishes on himself, but the damage can never take him below -9. At -1 hit points, the target passes out despite any other magical or feat effect he might possess that would provide him with an ability to stay conscious. Then, this spell stabilizes the target and sends a mental signal to the caster that the fool under its effects is near death.

The *dark denial* spell also roots its victim to their cells, not allowing movement more than 10 feet from the spot where it was cast. The victim is physically capable of being moved, but he cannot willingly move farther than this distance nor take any action that would cause him to be so moved. This aspect of the spell makes it a perfect compliment to any incarceration and lends itself well to the captivity of powerful victims. Its only drawback is that it does not provide protection from any spell that does not inflict direct damage expressed in hit points, so a victim could conceivably *power word*, *kill*, or *disintegrate* himself, but prisoners with access to that level of magic are more likely to use it on their guards.

### Envenomed Blood

*Transmutation*

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 6

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. per caster level)

**Target:** One living creature

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Save:** Fort negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The drow are known for their communion with venomous spiders, and it is through this communion they discovered this spell. If the target fails its save, its blood is transformed into a deadly poison. Even worse, if the victim dies, its body bursts into a geyser of venom that showers a 10-foot radius sphere with a dangerous contact venom. The poison inside the target's body immediately causes 1d4 points of temporary Constitution loss and an additional 1d2 points of Constitution loss for the remainder of its duration.

Those splashed with the poison from an exploding target are treated as if they had suffered an injection of medium-sized spider venom (DC 14, Initial damage 1d4 Str; Secondary Damage 1d6 Str).

The material component for this spell is a sac of small spider venom (20 gp in most drow cities).





## DROW SPELLS

### Eternal Death

*Necromancy [Death, Evil]*

**Level:** Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 9

**Components:** V, S, F (special)

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft/2 levels)

**Target:** One living creature

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Save:** Fort Partial

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell is one of the most puzzling spells in a powerful drow priest or wizard's arsenal as it couches eternal destruction in the seemingly paradoxical form of new life. To cast this spell, the mage or priest clutches the focus in one hand and targets his opponent with a ray of black light with the other. This beam requires a ranged touch attack and fades away with an undying shriek of soul-wrenching horror if it misses. If it hits, the victim must make a Fortitude saving throw or be instantly and irrevocably slain. A victim killed in this manner cannot be raised or resurrected, even by the power of a *wish*, *miracle*, or similar magic. If the saving throw is successful, he loses 1d6 per caster level in hit points. This damage may also kill the victim, but it does not cause permanent death as noted above.

The new life aspect of this spell occurs if a target is irredeemably slain through a failed save. The focus of the spell, an unborn fetus of any sentient, humanoid race, is suffused with the fading life essence of the victim and as that unfortunate dies, the fetus comes to life and is brought instantly to full term. It is this recovery and instant use of the victim's life energy that prevents them from being raised later as, in a way, they have been reincarnated. The new fetus is a normal, healthy baby of its race, but it has no magical protections and will die if not attended to. Though the fetus, as it matures, may exhibit some of the characteristics and mannerisms of the victim that gave it life, it is its own creature and aside from some odd dreams will remember none of the target's previous life.

### Gravebond

*Necromancy [Death]*

**Level:** Brd 5, Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3, Evil 3, Death 3

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One Dying Creature

**Duration:** Permanent

**Save:** None

**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell is used to forge the bond between a spirit and another creature that is necessary for gravebond magic. See The Gravebond for more information about this spell and its uses.

### Kiss of Crimson Doom

*Transmutation [Death]*

**Level:** Clr 2, Sor/Wiz 2

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One living creature

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Save:** Fort negates

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

A spell used by the women in drow cities to bring pain and cruelty to even the softest of acts, the *kiss of crimson doom* enchants the caster's lips to carry a deadly magic. Once cast, the caster's lips begin to very slowly bleed. This causes them to turn a shade of deepest crimson (or whatever colour the blood of the caster should be) and drip slowly down the sides of her chin. If she can successfully kiss a living target on any exposed skin, an act that requires a special touch attack that takes the Armour bonus of a target into account but not any enhancement bonus that armour might grant or bonuses granted due to force, the victim must make a successful Fortitude saving throw. Failure inflicts 1d4 damage for the duration of the spell or for as long as the blood remains on their skin.

Cleaning the blood off requires a full round action and either water, alcohol, or use of the spell *prestidigitate*. Other creative methods of removing the blood may also work, at the Games Master's discretion. Once the *kiss* is delivered successfully, the caster's lips stop bleeding and the attack cannot be used again without recasting the spell. Unlike other touch attacks, this one does not occupy one of the caster's hands and other spells can be cast before it is discharged.

### Malevolent Shade

*Illusion [Shadow]*

**Level:** Sor/Wiz 7

**Components:** S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round/level

The caster imbues his own shadow with the power to move at his command and may control it out to a range of 10 feet times his Wisdom score. Line of effect is not required, but line of sight is. *Scrying* of any kind, including spells like *clairvoyance* or *arcane eye*, will

suffice for line of sight, though the outer range of control does not change. A *malevolent shade* has the same statistics as the caster, is incorporeal, has a 15 Armour Class (which can be modified by the caster's Dexterity), and possesses one hit point per caster level. It can make unarmed attacks for 1d6 cold damage without drawing an attack of opportunity, cannot cast spells, and may not carry any form of equipment without the *ghost touch* property. If the caster also has an active *sword of the night unending* spell or casts one during this spell's duration, the *shade* gains one as well. There is no special connection between the *malevolent shade* and the caster; he is unaffected if the spell ended prematurely for any reason.

The *malevolent shade*'s most insidious ability is to feed from killing. If the spell's manifestation kills a living creature of at least 1 hit die, its duration is immediately increased by the hit dice of the victim. It also gains 10 feet of additional control range and 1d4 additional hit points. A *malevolent shade* cannot be healed, but it can gain hit points of healing from *inflict* spells as undead can.

### Sword of the Night Unending

*Conjuration [Death, Force]*

**Level:** Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

**Components:** V, S, DF

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Personal

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)

Calling to their deities of darkness, the caster conjures forth a blade of negative energy forged out of elemental energy and patterned after his own soul. This sword is different for every caster and once a form is chosen, it cannot be altered. If the caster has any feats related to swords, this weapon takes the shape of a sword applicable to those feats (caster's choice). If not, the sword becomes the caster's choice of bladed weapons (even a double sword if the caster wishes). The only limitations of form are that the weapon must be slashing and it cannot grant reach. Regardless of form, the caster may wield the *sword of the night unending* without any non-proficiency penalty.

This weapon acts as a +1 magical weapon of pure force, giving it the *ghost touch* power by default. It vanishes and the spell ends prematurely if it leaves the caster's hand. In addition, it inflicts a permanent hit point of damage each time it successfully injures an opponent. Every time it does this permanent infliction (lost hit points can be restored completely

by any *restoration* spell, but not by normal or magical healing), the weapon's bonus increases by one but cannot rise above +5 nor can it improve to higher than every three full caster levels of its creator.

The arcane or divine focus of this spell is a *blessed* or *baned* black gem of any sort worth 250 gold pieces. While the spell is active, the gem vanishes. It reappears if the weapon has not left the caster's hand during its duration. If it has (such as if the *sword* was disarmed, etc.), the gem permanently disappears and is lost.

### Spawn Sanguine

*Necromancy [Death, Evil]*

**Level:** Clr 5

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft/2 levels)

**Target:** One spider egg sac

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Save:** None

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

By whispering words of purest corruption taught to them by the dark gods that watch over the evil the hearts of drow, this spell seeps the very heart of darkness and negative energy into its material component, an egg sac from a Huge spider of any sort. The spell sets to work immediately on the small creatures squirming within the sac, driving them to consume each other in an orgy of violence and hunger until only one survives. That one is the sole inheritor of the black energies waiting to suffuse it and change it into something monstrous, a vampire spider. One hour after the spell is cast, the egg sac bursts open and the vampire spider emerges fully formed and ready to serve.

A vampire spider is utterly devoted to its creator or any one other sentient being designated by its creator at the time of spellcasting. If its master is not the same as the one who casts the spell, the vampire spider will seek to move to its intended master and bite him for 1d8 damage and a temporary Constitution drain of 1 point. This attunes the spider to its new master and that individual need never worry about its attacking him again. Vampire spiders can only serve one master, that individual can never be changed, and the creatures go rogue and masterless if that being dies. Unbound vampire spiders are a threat to any living being except drow priestesses of the Great Mother, whom they will flee from at every opportunity.



## DROW SPELLS

### The Dance of Stalactites

*Transmutation [Earth]*

**Level:** Clr 6

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Unlimited

**Target:** You

**Duration:** 2 rounds

This spell empowers the caster to step into a natural stalagmite or stalactite larger than she is as a full round action and emerge one round later from another such structure anywhere in a cavern known to her. The target cavern must have been visited by the caster for at least one hour previously or have been studied by

*screying* or similar magic for elapsed time equal to a day or more. The target stalactite or stalagmite may also bear an *arcane mark* cast by you, in which case prior study is unnecessary. This travel cannot be blocked by spells designed to bar extradimensional travel, but it can be stopped by a *magic circle*, which it cannot cross.

If the stalactite does not exist or is damaged to the point of no longer being larger than the caster in any one contiguous piece, the spell fails. If *transmute rock to mud* affects either the entry stone or the exit stone while the caster is transiting between them, the spell inflicts 6d6 points of subdual damage and expels her immediately from where she entered.

### Vampiric Web

*Conjuration (Creation)*

**Level:** Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 round

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Effect:** Webs in a 20-ft. radius spread

**Duration:** 10 minutes/level

**Save:** Reflex negates (as per the *web* spell)

**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell is treated exactly as the *web* spell, with one important difference. Any attempt to move within, or break free from, the web results in painful stings as thousands of fangs sink into its captives' flesh, causing 1d6 hit points of damage. When this damage is caused, the caster of the spell gains one-half the number of hit points the web caused as the life essence is transferred from the unfortunate to the spellcaster. This spell will not work on any members of the drow clergy, as they are protected from its effects by their dark gods.

This spell requires a bit of spider web for its material component.



# FLESHCRAFTING

To the drow, all the world is but a tool or plaything for their personal use. Perhaps the ultimate expression of this belief is the art of fleshcrafting, in which subjects' bodies are changed to better conform to the needs of the drow who requests the crafting. Whether as a means of punishment or in order to augment the abilities of a slave or gladiator, fleshcrafting is a popular art in many drow cities within entire guilds dedicated to the perfection and preservation of this ancient magical art.

At its most basic, fleshcrafting is the use of magic to transmute subject bodies. Increases in sophistication of the art, however, also led to enhanced complexity. Now, subjects may appear unchanged, while their nervous systems or sensory organs are actually completely handcrafted. The inclusion of foreign objects (especially weapons and armour) is another favourite of the drow and their slaves, with gladiators often resembling bizarre patchworks of man and metal.

Drow with any say in the matter prefer not to undergo visible fleshcrafting to any significant extent. The changes wrought by this magical art can be somewhat unpredictable and easily lead to disgusting side effects. While a drow might willingly change the way his eyes work or implant a wand between the bones of his forearms, the more radical transformations are inflicted only upon slaves, gladiators, and the occasional adventurer with more power-hunger than sense.

In this chapter, you will find the systems you need to add fleshcrafting to your campaign. Everything from simple cosmetic changes to complete body transmutations are presented here, along with the rules needed to handle the changes and the possible side-effects resulting from such body sculpting.

## FLESHCRAFTING SKILLS

The primary skill of the fleshcrafter is the Craft (flesh) skill; this skill can only be taken by those who also take the Fleshcrafter feat, which indicates a natural ability to mould the flesh of others. Any fleshcrafter with fewer than five ranks in this skill is considered an apprentice. Apprentices spend most of their time pulling people apart and sticking them back together in unfortunate ways, a popular punishment in drow society and a good learning experience for fleshcrafters as they quickly pick up the way *not* to do things. While most apprentices progress on to working on

patients who actually want the fleshcrafting (and therefore demand an experience which does not leave them screaming in horror at the results), a few never get over their fascination with the destructive aspects of their art. These find work with drow governments, serving as torturers and feared executioners.

In addition to the Craft (flesh) skill, fleshcrafters can benefit a great deal from the Disguise and Healing skills. A fleshcrafter with at least 5 ranks in Disguise receives a +2 synergy bonus when performing any cosmetic operation, while those with at least 5 ranks in the Healing skill receive a +2 synergy bonus to all Craft (flesh) checks.

Note that fleshcrafters may not Take 10 or Take 20 on Craft (flesh) skill checks unless they possess the appropriate feat or class ability (see Drow Feats and The Prestige Drow for more information).

## FLESHCRAFTING BASICS

All fleshcrafting, regardless of how extreme it is, follows the same basic steps. First, the subject is restrained and the fleshcrafter spends some time familiarizing himself with the flesh. This normally takes a full day – the subject must remain restrained and available for the poking and prodding of the fleshcrafter. Very often, the subject is given a powerful sedative and muscle relaxant (such as dreamspittle, see Tools of the Drow) in order to allow the fleshcrafter to go about his business without interruption or resistance from the subject. Because most fleshcrafters believe they are entitled to the entire body of the subject during the time of the operation, the subjects are often quite grateful to be sedated. Slaves are almost never given the option of sedation, while those who pay for their own fleshcrafting usually pay for their sedatives, as well.

Once exploration of the subject's body is finished, the fleshcrafter gets to the real work. Depending on the type of fleshcrafting performed, the actual operation takes anywhere from a few hours to a few days to accomplish. More intricate or extreme operations take much longer to complete, and cost commensurately more. Not every fleshcrafting experience is successful, either, making this stage very risky for those who cannot afford the very best fleshcrafters available.

After the operation is completed, whether successful or not, the subject is given a few days of convalescence during which the injuries caused by the operation are healed up and the subject's body is watched for signs of reversion. If the subject evidences no complications





## FLESHCRAFTING

at the end of this time, the process is complete and the subject is allowed to return home.

In some cases, infections occur, which is the most common problem faced during the process. If an infection presents itself during convalescence, local clerics or healers can easily heal it and save the subject from a horrible, rotting agony. A few infections do not present themselves until much later, or until after a subject suffers an injury to a transmogrified portion of his body. These types of infections often go unnoticed until the subject is seriously ill and can be much more difficult to treat without the aid of magical intervention. The fleshcrafted are warned against such possibilities and many take infusions of various plants and fungi throughout their life to stave off this risk.

Reversion is a much more serious problem – there are times when the will of the subject’s flesh is simply too strong to tolerate fleshcrafting and the magic used in the transmogrification is undone by the subject’s own vitality. While the pain from the experience is quite intense, there are no other ill effects – other than the wasted time and money. Fleshcrafters often offer a discount to subjects who suffer reversion, but only for their next attempt at fleshcrafting. There are no guarantees with this art, and the more extreme modifications are sometimes simply blown apart by the flesh of the subject. While repeated transmogrifications can erode the ability of the body to resist fleshcrafting, doing so can lead to even worse side effects than normal.

The following sections describe the various types of fleshcrafting and the rules needed for each. They are presented in the following format:

**Type:** The type of fleshcrafting discussed, with a brief description.

**Possible Transmogrifications:** The types of changes a fleshcrafter can perform using this type of fleshcrafting. A sample list is provided along with Difficulty Classes to be used as a guideline.

**The Process:** Discusses the manner in which the fleshcrafting is performed, the time required to complete the operation, required skill checks, and the results of successful or failed skill checks.

**The Cost:** This section details the fee for the fleshcrafter (usually a function of the time required to perform the operation and the skill of the fleshcrafter), as well as any additional costs associated with the fleshcrafting operation. These costs can consist of

additional gold needed to pay alchemists’ fees, side effects of the operation, or anything else which is not beneficial and comes as a result of an operation. Review these carefully before surrendering your character into the none-too-tender ministrations of a fleshcrafter.

**Reversion:** This section details the chance of a subject suffering reversion and the effects if reversion does occur.

## COSMETIC FLESHCRAFTING

Drow can be very petty. Noble houses have been toppled because of a dress worn at the wrong time or a favourite slave injured during inter-house games. Fortunes have been lost on whimsical bets, and political careers sabotaged because a drow simply did not look the part. Because of this, drow spend a great deal of time thinking about and altering their appearances to conform to the ideal drow appearance. This can be very tricky – in cities where fleshcrafting is common, fashionable drow can expect at least two bouts of fleshcrafting each year to make sure they are in tune with the latest fashions. One year may require ears tapering to a ridiculously high point while the next season calls for scalloped edges and elongated lobes. These types of changes can be very important to drow who watch such things, and many of the bored and jaded nobles do indeed pay careful attention to the styles of the day.

### Possible Transmogrifications

Fleshcrafting can also be used to entirely change the face of a subject, but there has been virtually no success in duplicating another face. The fleshcrafters’ art is able to radically alter existing features so they appear completely different than their original shape, but the fine control needed to craft an identical set of features to those possessed by an existing face has proved elusive. That in mind, cosmetic fleshcrafting is capable of doing the following. Note that these are examples that show the sorts of things that it can accomplish, but is not all-inclusive. Games Masters should use the information listed here as a guideline for the difficulty of making other types of cosmetic changes.

† Change eye colours, even to those not found in nature. DC 5



- † Change facial appearance drastically, in a decidedly unnatural way (adding twisting runes of bone, creating additional pairs of lips, etc.). DC 10
- † Create superfluous extra digits and/or appendages. Note that these appendages are incapable of doing anything useful and are for appearances only. Examples include spider fangs, extra fingers on each hand, a pair of bat-like wings. DC 15
- † Sculpt specific portions of the body to desirable standards. DC 15 each body part must be done individually, however.
- † Change facial appearance completely, while retaining a natural appearance. DC 20
- † Change essential body shape, removing fat, adding 'muscle' or generally slimming or increasing the body size. DC 20
- † Create raised patterns, similar to ritual scars but smoother and more elaborate. DC 20
- † Increase the overall attractiveness of the subject. DC 20
- † Create additional joints in arms or legs, including reverse-knee configurations (like those found in canines and other animals). DC 20
- † Change the sex of the subject, for appearances only. DC 25

### The Process

Cosmetic fleshcrafting requires one hour for every 5 full points of the DC. At the end of this time, the fleshcrafter must make a Craft (flesh) check against the listed DC. If he succeeds, he has performed the operation adequately and the cosmetic change is made and looks good. If he succeeds by more than 5, his work is good enough to pass for natural, regardless of how horrible the change might actually be – even horns and a tail could be made to look as if they grew from the skull and spine of the subject naturally.

Failing by fewer than 5 indicates an aborted operation. The fleshcrafter realized he was going to about to make a horrible mistake and stopped before things got out of hand, and undid the work he had started. In the unfortunate event the failure is by 5 or more, a horrid mistake has been made and the subject suffers a visible disfigurement. Misaligned eyes, jutting jaws, and other unpleasant physical characters result, with the precise deformity decided upon by the Games Master as

appropriate for the type of fleshcrafting being done. In general, this deformity should tie directly into the type of work being done – if eye color is being changed, perhaps the character loses the whites of his eyes, if the fleshcrafter is attempting to switch the physical gender characteristics of the character, the result is a hermaphroditic mess.

### The Cost

Fleshcrafters normally charge 10 gp per rank they possess in the Craft (flesh) skill per hour required for the operation. Thus, a fleshcrafter with 14 ranks in the Craft (flesh) skill adding a three-pronged tail to a drow dominatrix will charge 140 gp (14 ranks times 10 gp) for three hours (DC 15 divided by 5), for a total of 420 gp for the operation. The price is paid whether the operation succeeds or fails – the fleshcrafter's time is his commodity and few will part with it unless well paid. If the operation is particularly difficult (in general, if the fleshcrafter cannot succeed with a roll of 10 on his skill check), the fleshcrafter demands payment up front to avoid having to deal with those who attempt to stiff him when an operation does not turn out as desired.

### Reversion

The chance for reversion is very minor when cosmetic fleshcrafting is performed. Immediately after the operation is completed, the subject must make a Fortitude save (DC 35). If this save is successful, the target will suffer reversion in 1d3 days. See the section on Reversion, below, for more information. For every successful Fleshcrafting procedure the subject has endured in the past (which did not result in a reversion), the DC of this save is increased by 5.

## FUNCTIONAL FLESHCRAFTING

Aside from cosmetic fleshcrafting, which is indulged in by all manner of drow in order to look as they wish, functional fleshcrafting is the most common type of operation performed. In this case, the body of the subject is not simply changed cosmetically, but becomes functionally different in one or more areas. Fleshcrafting operations of this type can vary from the relatively minor and inconspicuous to disgustingly overt. Subjects who undergo this level of fleshcrafting exhibit side effects, both mental and physical, and suffer reversion much more regularly than those who are subjected to cosmetic fleshcrafting. As deeper and more profound physical changes take place, the



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## FLESHCRAFTING

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‘It hurts.’ Serotha arched her back, the pain dragging its claws through her flesh stretched her body like a bow until she remained on the stone slab only because of the chains around her wrists and ankles. The fleshcrafter smiled down at her with cold eyes and teeth like chisels, then pushed the subject back down with the fingertips of one hand.

‘Of course it hurts. Only a few more days.’ The fleshcrafter slid her hands over Serotha’s stomach, pushing her palms flat against the blue-black skin and grinding her knuckles along the ridged lines of muscle. ‘When this is done, it will be like being born again.’

With a sudden thrust, the fleshcrafter’s hand punctured the wall of Serotha’s abdomen, her fingers disappearing through a bloody slit that sucked at her hand in a futile attempt to stop the flow of blood and stop the pain. Serotha’s eyes shot back into her head and her heels drummed an erratic, spastic tattoo against the stone, the chains rattling in counterpoint to the tremors wracking her small frame.

The fleshcrafter slid her other hand into the slit, spreading her palms to open the injury and expose the organs within. The pink and gray tissue swirled up from Serotha’s abdomen, pushing its way through the fleshcrafter’s hands in a knotted clump. The slime-coated tissue spread out, flowing slowly to slump over the edges of Serotha’s body. Satisfied, the fleshcrafter removed one of her hands from the slit and gingerly took a flesh spreader from the tray floating at her elbow. With practiced ease she slid the spreader into the wound and locked it in place against the flesh, holding the abdominal slit open like a gaping mouth.

Serotha’s shock broke, then, and her scream rattled the instruments on the metal tray. Her voice broke quickly, reduced to a whimpering screech. The fleshcrafter stroked the exposed organs gently before moving to Serotha’s head and whispering. ‘It’s all right, dear. I’ll be back to see you tomorrow.’

subject's body is much more likely to reject the effects entirely.

## The Process

Functional fleshcrafting requires one day for every 5 full points of the DC. At the end of this time, the fleshcrafter must make a Craft (flesh) check against the listed DC. If he succeeds, he has performed the operation adequately and the transmogrification occurs and works as intended. Functional fleshcrafting never looks natural, regardless of the skill of the fleshcrafter, most often appearing decidedly alien and raw, even at a distance.

Failing the Craft (flesh) skill check by less than 5 indicates an aborted operation. Realizing the operation is going poorly, the fleshcrafter stops the process, leaving a visible scar but otherwise causing no harm to the subject. In the unfortunate event the failure is by 5 or more, a horrid mistake is made and the subject becomes hideously disfigured. The transmogrification permanently scars the individual, as with a cosmetic fleshcrafting botch, see above.

## The Cost

Fleshcrafters normally charge 500 gp per rank they possess in the Craft (flesh) skill per day required for the operation. Thus, a fleshcrafter with 15 ranks in the Craft (flesh) skill adding a set of poison filters to a drow assassin (15 ranks times 500 gp) for three days (DC 15 divided by 5), for a total of 300 gp for the operation. The price is paid whether the operation succeeds or fails – the fleshcrafter's time is his commodity and few will part with it unless well paid. If the operation is particularly difficult (in general, if the fleshcrafter cannot succeed with a roll of 10 on his skill check), the fleshcrafter demands payment up front to avoid having to deal with those who attempt to stiff him when an operation does not turn out as desired.

## Reversion

The chance for reversion is moderate when functional fleshcrafting is performed. Immediately after the operation is completed, the subject must make a Fortitude save (DC 35). If this save is successful, the target will suffer reversion in 1d3 days. See the section on Reversion, below, for more information. For every successful Fleshcrafting procedure the subject has endured in the past (which did not result in a reversion), the DC of this save is increased by 5.

## Possible Transmogrifications

In some ways, these transmogrifications are much more localized than those available through cosmetic fleshcrafting. Each operation is only able to add a single, very specific type of functionality to a subject, and this functionality is tied to a specific body part. Thus, only one transmogrification is available for each of a subject's hands, one for each eye, one for the head, and so on. The sections below detail the number of transmogrifications available for each body area, as well as the types of transmogrifications that can be applied to those areas. Immediately following these sections are descriptions of the available transmogrifications.

**Acidic Mucus:** The flesh surrounding the subject's wrist is crafted to include several tube-like orifices, into which are grafted mucus membranes removed from the bodies of giant slugs. The skin of the subject's hands are toughened through forced calcification, protecting them from the acid that constantly flows across their surfaces. This transmogrification enhances the subject's hand-to-hand combat abilities and all unarmed attacks the subject makes cause an additional 1d4 hit points of acid damage in addition to any other damage caused by the melee attack.

*Location:* Hands

*DC:* 20

*Penalty:* The subject suffers a –2 penalty on any actions taken that require fine dexterity or motor control, such as picking pockets, disarming traps, opening locks, or certain Craft skill checks decided upon by the Games Master. In addition, the subject may not wear gloves of any type, as the acid corrodes normal materials (such as leather and cloth) within 24 hours. Metal or magical gloves or gauntlets do not allow the acid to flow freely, causing the corrosive substance to build up and begin consuming the flesh of the subject, who suffers 1 point of temporary Constitution damage each day. This damage may be magically healed but does not heal naturally, as the acid prevents the flesh from restoring itself naturally.

**Web Glands:** Once per day per level, the subject may vomit a web from a pair of glands inserted inside his mouth and neck. This web has a range of 30 feet and is treated as an attack with a net. It is capable of affecting a creature up to one size larger than the subject. The subject is not considered proficient with this attack form unless he takes the Transmogrified Expertise feat.

*Location:* Head



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*DC:* 20

*Penalty:* The subject's orifices (including his mouth, nostril, and ears) emit spurts of webbing at irregular and unpredictable intervals. This is very distracting, to say the least, and the subject suffers a -2 natural penalty to any Concentration or Spot skill checks.

**Grappling Arm:** The subject's limb becomes supple and rope-like. Though it retains some natural strength, the bones in the limb are replaced with flexible cartilage and the entire limb is elongated. The subject receives a +2 natural bonus to any grappling checks he makes, other than those used to escape from a grapple. If a subject with this fleshcrafted modification takes the Transmogrified Expertise feat, he no longer suffers attacks of opportunity when attempting a grapple.

*Location:* Either arm

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* Because the limb is not as sturdy as an arm with normal muscular and bone structure, the subject suffers a -2 natural penalty to his Strength for all actions not related to grappling.

**Constricting Hand:** This modification is made to both of the subject's hands- elongating the fingers, increasing the width of the palm, and increasing

the muscle mass and strength in the hands. When grappling, the target can use can inflict 1d4 (plus his Strength modifier) hit points of damage in addition to the damage normally caused by grappling.

*Location:* Hands

*DC:* 20

*Penalty:* The subject suffers periodic muscle spasms and uncontrollable tremors as a result of the transmogrifications performed on his hands. This results in an overall lack of muscular control and minor seizures. The subject suffers a -2 penalty to all Dexterity related skills as a result of these muscular tremors.

**Venomous Blisters:** The salivary glands in the subject's mouth are replaced with poison-producing blisters that constantly leak a small amount of venom. Once per day, per level, the subject may rupture a few of these blisters to generate a substantial quantity of poison. This venom may either be delivered through a bite attack (provided he has the Biter feat) or used to smear a weapon. The poison must be injected, so is only useful with slashing or piercing weapons and persists for one round per level or until the subject damages a target, at which point the poison is removed from the weapon.



**Poison Damage**

Character Level	Poison Damage	Character Level	Poison Damage
1	1/1	11	1d8/1d8
2	1/1d2	12	1d8/2d4
3	1d2/1d2	13	2d4/2d4
4	1d2/1d3	14	2d4/2d6
5	1d3/1d3	15	2d6/2d6
6	1d3/1d4	16	2d6/2d6 (+2 DC)
7	1d4/1d4	17	2d6/2d6 (+4 DC)
8	1d4/1d6	18	2d6/2d6 (+6 DC)
9	1d6/1d6	19	2d6/2d6 (+8 DC)
10	1d6/1d8	20	2d6/2d6 (+10 DC)

The poison causes a variable amount of damage based on your current level as shown on the poison table.

The poison begins with a DC of 15, which increases as shown on the table above, beginning at level 16. The damage caused by this poison must be applied to Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution and the affected ability must be determined at the time the transmogrification occurs. The initial damage caused by the poison is the first number listed in the table above, while secondary damage is shown after the slash in the above table. The affected ability may be changed by another fleshcrafting operation on the same location, replacing the existing poison ability.

*Location:* Head

*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* The flesh of the subject is covered in suppurating sores caused by the course of poison through his system. As the poison moves through the surface capillaries, it breaks down the tissues, necrotizing skin and muscle. This causes 1d6 hit points of damage at the beginning of each day and prevents any natural healing.

**Glide Membranes:** The subject's flesh is stretched and its flexibility increased by treatment with alchemical substances to form membranes extending from his wrists to his ankles, allowing him to glide. Subjects who undergo this type of fleshcrafting are unable to wear armour heavier than light armour and even this must be custom-tailored (doubling the cost of new armour or requiring the expenditure of 150% of the value of existing armours to tailor them; magical armour may not be tailored in this way after its creation). The distance a fleshcrafted subject may glide is based on his starting altitude – for every 10 feet of movement, the glider drops by 10 feet, as well. Gliders can travel at speeds between 20 feet and 40 feet per round, but cannot hover. Gliders have a manoeuvrability class of good.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* The subject can only wear modified armour, as noted in the description above.

**Leaping Legs:** The muscles in the subject's legs are infused with the ichor of giant spiders and other insects, strengthening the muscles and increasing their size. This modification grants the subject a +10 natural bonus to all Jump skill checks. In addition, subjects who take the Transmogrification Expertise feat may make an attack at the end of their jump (provided they leap at least 10 feet). This is treated as a charge, with a +4 bonus to the attack roll rather than the standard +2 bonus.

*Location:* Legs

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* The subject has difficulty moving normally and periodically hops, leaps, and shuffles rather than walking normally. This causes a –5 penalty to all Balance and Acrobatics skill checks.

**Bone Blades:** Applied to either an arm or the legs of the subject, this transmogrification provides a natural weapon of reinforced bone and cartilage. The bone blade may be of either the slashing or piercing damage type, and causes 1d6 hit points of damage on a successful strike. The weapon is considered small for all purposes, but may not be broken or disarmed (unless, of course, the limb to which it is attached is severed). This weapon is treated as a martial weapon for purposes of proficiency – targets without the martial weapon proficiency feat may instead take the Transmogrification Expertise feat to become proficient with this weapon. Subjects with a bone blade who wear armour must have the armour tailored around their blade, with the same costs as those listed for the Glide Membrane, above.

*Location:* Either arm or legs

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* In order to harden the bone and provide it with the proper sharpness, the structure of all the bones in the subject's body were altered. From time to time, the sharpened edges of the bones slice through



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the surrounding flesh, injuring the subject. Whenever the subject rolls a 1 while making an Attack roll, he immediately suffers 1d6 hit points of damage as the vigorous motion causes one or more bones to saw away at tissues.

**Spell Storage:** This nodule of magically altered flesh contains a spell matrix capable of temporarily holding a spell of up to 3<sup>rd</sup> level. The spell must be cast into the nodule by a willing ally of the subject and remains contained within the flesh until it is cast or the subject loses consciousness. For each day the spell remains in the node after the first, the subject suffers 1d6 hit points of damage that cannot be healed until the spell is released. When released, the spell acts just as if it were cast by the spellcaster who originally stored it in the subject's nodule, though the subject must make any attack rolls (either ranged or touch attacks) needed to target the spell.

*Location:* Any

*DC:* 35

*Penalty:* While a spell is stored in the nodule, the subject becomes much more susceptible to harmful magical effects. During this time the subject suffers a -2 penalty to all Saving throws required by any spell affecting the subject.

**Toxin Filter:** Thick, fungal membranes are grown in crucial portions of the subject's body and are used to filter the blood as it flows through the veins in tissues. This provides a +2 natural bonus to any saving throws made to resist any poisons entering the subject's body.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* The filters in the body periodically over-react to the flow of blood through the subject's system, removing vital nutrients and converting them into waste products. At the beginning of each day, roll 1d10 – on a result of 1, the subject suffers a -2 penalty to his Strength and Intelligence as a result of the reduced blood volume and nutritional deficiencies.

**Disease Glands:** Fibrous, external glands are grafted onto the subject's back and chest. The glands absorb diseases that enter the subject's body, helping him resist their effects. The subject of this transmutation receives a +2 bonus to all Saving throws made to resist the effects of disease, or to avoid contracting a disease.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 25



*Penalty:* Diseased tissue, corrupted lymphatic fluids, and depleted blood cells periodically build up in the glands and need to be lanced. Whenever the subject fails a Fortitude saving throw, for any reason, he immediately suffers an acute infection as a result of the glands backing up into his system. This causes an immediate but temporary loss of 1d3 points of Constitution as the gland voids and cleans itself out into the body of the subject. This damage heals normally, and may be magically healed, as well.

**Weapon Graft:** The subject may have one hand replaced with a weapon of his choice, provided he can wield the weapon in one hand. The subject never need draw the weapon, as it is always at the ready, nor may he drop the weapon or be disarmed (unless the limb to which the weapon is attached is severed). Of course, the subject can never use the hand replaced by the limb and any task that requires two hands (as determined by the Games Master but including tasks such as disabling devices, grappling, or climbing) suffer a -4 circumstance penalty.

*Location:* Either hand  
*DC:* 20

*Penalty:* The hand cannot be used any longer, for anything other than holding the weapon grafted into it.

**Wand Sleeve:** In this gruesome procedure, the subject has a channel burrowed through his flesh, typically in the chest. The channel heals into a scarred tube, into which a wand (Or similarly shaped object) can be dropped. Any wand in this channel can be used by the subject as if it was in the subject's hand, and the effect blazes forth from the subject's eyes. Thus, a drow with

a wand sleeve and a wand of *fireball* stored inside it could use and target the wand even if bound hand and foot, as long as he was not also blindfolded.

*Location:* Torso  
*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* The sleeve often breaks out into sores that are open to infection. There is a 10% chance each week of an outbreak occurring (randomly determine which day during the week the outbreak occurs). If the subject does anything other than receive bed rest during this time period, he does not heal naturally at all and suffers 1 point of temporary Constitution damage each day. Outbreaks last 1d6 days and cannot be magically healed – the sores are a result of the magic used in the transmutation reacting poorly with the subject's flesh.

**Additional Limb:** Targets may have an additional limb grafted to their body. This limb is useful, but is of limited dexterity – while it can make attacks or hold objects, it is not skilful enough to replace the use of a natural hand. The limb may be used to hold a weapon, in which case the target gains an additional attack with the penalties detailed on the table below.

A subject may never have more additional limbs than his Dexterity modifier. If this modifier changes, any limbs in excess of the current modifier become non-functional – the subject simply lacks the dexterity to control them adequately.

Additional limbs cannot be further transmogrified – you cannot, for example, receive an additional limb

**Additional Limbs Penalties Table**

Circumstances	Primary Hand	Off Hand	Third Limb	Additional Limb
Normal	-6	-10	-14	-16 per limb
All non-primary weapons are light	-4	-8	-12 (if weapon in this limb is also light, otherwise -14)	-15
Two Weapon Fighting feat	-4	-4	-8	-12
Ambidexterity Feat and two-weapon fighting feat and Multiattack feat	-4	-4	-12	-14
All non-primary weapons are light and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	-2	-2	-4	-8



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operation and then undergo fleshcrafting again to add a modification to the new limb.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 20 + 5 per additional limb after the first

*Penalty:* Working nerve tissues into the new limbs can have extremely detrimental effects for the subject. During any stressful situation, there is a chance the subject's nervous system breaks down and begins sending faulty impulses. Whenever the subject suffers damage as a result of being attacked, he must immediately make a Will save (DC equal to the damage caused by the attack) or suffer a -2 penalty to all Attack, Damage, and skill checks until he spends at least 3 rounds without take any action or suffering any damage.

**Armour Integration:** Flesh is actually grown through the armour, binding it permanently to the subject's body to provide protection at all times. Though this

is hardly comfortable, it is actually considerably more comfortable than wearing armour day and night. Up to medium armour can be integrated into the form of the subject, providing its full Armour bonus at all times.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* The armour penalties for the armour grafted to the subject are doubled.

**Flesh Replacement:** Most of the exposed flesh of the subject is replaced with a mixture of armour plates and extruded bones. This provides a great deal of protection to the subject, but is extremely painful. Any armour can be used for the process and transfers any magical properties of the armour are transferred to the subject at the time the operation is completed. The armour bonus provided by the armour used to replace the flesh is increased by 2 as a result of this operation, due to the addition of bone spikes and calcified flesh to fill in the gaps.

*Location:* Torso

*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* The subject's movement rate is reduced by 5 feet per round and the armour penalties for the grafted armour are doubled, as well.

## SYSTEMIC FLESHCRAFTING

While the visible changes to a subject's body are certainly useful and highly entertaining to the drow who inflict them upon their slaves, there is a growing trend toward using virtually invisible fleshcrafting to remake the nervous systems and internal organs of the subject. Though quite dangerous to perform, this systemic fleshcrafting is capable of subtle and powerful effects and is rapidly gaining acceptance amongst drow nobles, who are otherwise notorious for their disdain of the fleshcrafted.

Systemic fleshcrafting is considerably more taxing on the subject than functional fleshcrafting and is much more prone to reversion and catastrophic shock if the subject is subjected to repeated stress. Though some have devised meditation techniques and use drugs to maintain their stress level to prevent these occurrences, the danger of complications cannot be completely removed.





Unlike functional or cosmetic fleshcrafting, systemic fleshcrafting leaves no visible signs of the changes to the subject. The work is entirely internal and hidden from view, though subjects who suffer reversion or catastrophic shock will almost surely suffer horrific disfigurement and potential death.

### The Process

Systemic fleshcrafting requires one day for every 5 full points of the DC. At the end of this time, the fleshcrafter must make a Craft (flesh) skill check against the listed DC. If he succeeds, he has performed the operation adequately and the transmutation occurs and works as intended. Systemic fleshcrafting only very rarely has any effect on the outward appearance of the subject, though botched operations and reversion can result in some particularly horrific results.

Failing the Craft (flesh) skill check by less than 5 indicates an aborted operation. Realizing the operation is going poorly, the fleshcrafter stops the process, leaving no visible scars and causing no harm to the subject. In the unfortunate event the failure is by 5 or more, a horrid mistake is made and the subject becomes hideously disfigured. The transmutation permanently scars the individual, as with a cosmetic fleshcrafting botch, see above.

### The Cost

Fleshcrafters normally charge 1000 gp per rank they possess in the Craft (flesh) skill per day required for the operation. Thus, a fleshcrafter with 15 ranks in the Craft (flesh) skill adding a set of poison filters to a drow assassin (15 ranks times 500 gp) for three days (DC 15 divided by 5), for a total of 7,500 gp for the operation. The price is paid whether the operation succeeds or fails – the fleshcrafter’s time is his commodity and few will part without unless well paid. If the operation is particularly difficult (in general, if the fleshcrafter cannot succeed with a roll of 10 on his skill check), the fleshcrafter demands payment up front to avoid having to deal with those who attempt to stiff him when an operation does not turn out as desired.

### Reversion

The chance for reversion is very minor when cosmetic fleshcrafting is performed. Immediately after the operation is completed, the subject must make a Fortitude save (DC 35). If this save is successful, the target will suffer reversion in 1d3 days. See the section on Reversion, below, for more information.

### Possible Transmutations

Where cosmetic fleshcrafting involves very visible changes to all or part of the subject’s body and functional fleshcrafting focuses on creating specific additions or alterations to the way the subject’s body works, systemic fleshcrafting is more interested in wholly changing one or more aspects of the individual’s physical being. Functional fleshcrafting can give you an extra arm, systemic fleshcrafting can rewire your nervous system so it is faster. The differences between functional and systemic fleshcrafting are a bit blurry, but the differences are generally one of overall effect and appearance. If you can see it and it has an effect outside of your body, it is most likely a functional transmutation rather than a systemic fleshcrafting operation.

**Regenerative Consumption:** Your body is able to devour pieces of itself in order to heal critically damaged organs or seal ruptured blood vessels. While it will not allow you to grow back a limb or survive a beheading, regenerative consumption will prevent you from bleeding away your life as a result of a massive trauma that leaves you unconscious, and can greatly accelerate the healing process. The downside, of course, is your need for fresh meat, and a lot of it, to replace the tissue your body destroys while healing vital structures.

Whenever your hit points fall below zero, your body immediately begins patching itself together, using whatever materials it can scavenge from the undamaged portions of your flesh and bone. You automatically stabilize during the same round in which you fall below zero hit points and your condition steadily improves each round thereafter. At the beginning of any round during which you have fewer than zero hit points, you gain a number of hit points equal to your current Constitution modifier. This healing will not increase your current hit point totals above 1, however.

In addition to preventing you from dying when you are rendered unconscious, regenerative consumption also increases your natural healing rate. Each day you gain an additional number of hit points equal to your current Constitution modifier, as long as all of the costs for the penalty (see below) are paid.

*DC:* 25

*Penalty:* Hunger is your worst enemy. Your body constantly tears down and repairs itself, its cells devouring one another in an endless cycle of death and rebirth. While this certainly has its benefits, it also



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means that you must eat a ridiculous amount of food in order to sustain your system and prevent yourself from falling into a starvation coma. Each day, you must consume at least three pounds of fresh meat, any type of meat, or immediately suffer one point of temporary Constitution damage and the loss of the benefits of Regenerative Consumption until you begin eating your daily allotment of meat again.

**Unborn Saviour:** The drow are brutal creatures who have no qualms about sacrificing their young in order to preserve their own lives. The unborn saviour is the ultimate expression of this drow drive to survive. A basic uterine pouch is created amongst the drow's internal organs and magic is used to spark a spontaneous pregnancy within this artificial womb. Because the child is never intended to come to term, the artificial uterine pocket has no connection to the outside and is quite small – the drow gestates the foetus for up to 20 weeks, at which point his body attacks and digests the tiny parasite, breaking it down and passing it on to the digestive system for disposal.

The benefit of this transmogrification is the ability to use the unborn child as the target of a spell, shielding the drow from a potentially deadly magical attack. Any spell requiring a Will or Fortitude save may be transferred to the unborn saviour at anytime, even after the fleshcrafted dark elf fails his saving throw. When a spell is transferred, the infant is immediately destroyed, absorbing the spell in the process. Note that only spells targeting the drow, specifically, can be redirected in this way; spells with an area of effect or that affect the drow only as a result of affecting his environment may not be redirected to the unborn saviour.

Whenever the unborn saviour dies (as a result of having a spell redirected at it or after 12 weeks of gestation), the tiny body is passed through the semi-permeable membrane separating the faux uterus and the stomach. This causes the drow to vomit uncontrollably, passing the half-digested corpse in 1d6 rounds. A new foetus begins developing on the following day, and may be used as a target for spells one week after its gestation begins.

*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* Keeping the gestating foetus alive is draining. The transmogrified subject requires an additional 4 hours of rest each night and one-third more food and water than is normal. In addition, the subject is *stunned* during the

time he spends passing the deceased foetus from his digestive tract, which occurs immediately after this transmogrification's benefit is used. Finally, this transmogrification prevents the forming of any new demonic bonds and nullifies existing demonic bonds just as if the conditions of the bond were broken.

**Protected Organs:** Your internal tissues are surrounded by extra layers of fat and calcified flesh, which form padded cages to protect sensitive organs from traumas. This reduces critical threat ranges of all piercing or slashing attacks made against by 2, though critical hits from blunt or energy weapons are resolved normally.

*DC:* 30

*Penalty:* The price of having all your organs rearranged and encased in thick, protective padding forged from your own innards is a reduction in your overall physical capacity. The changes in your body



reduce your Strength by 2 points and you suffer a –1 penalty to all Fortitude saves.

**Shortened Nervous System:** To decrease your reaction times and increase your ability to respond to threats, the paths of your nerves have been magically reduced in length. When surprised, you react quickly and smoothly, though often violently. Your senses are not any more acute than normal, your reactions to perceived threats occur faster. You receive a +4 natural bonus to Initiative checks and a +2 bonus to all Reflex saving throws made.

*DC: 25*

*Penalty:* Your reaction to surprise is always to attack or cast a damaging spell. Whenever surprised, you are able to act in the same round as the creatures who surprise you, though you act after all surprising creatures have had their turn. You must take an attack action or cast a harmful spell at the creatures who surprise you, however, or begin moving toward them if you cannot do either of the above.

Aerilis twitched and hurled herself sideways, easily dodging the blast of magical energy. The bolt of power crunched into the wall behind her, charring the calcified construction webbing and sending ripples through the heavy weaves.

Angered at the miss, Kulizir flexed his fingers and began weaving another intricate pattern of arcane energy, grinning wildly as the eldritch poison began taking shape before him. Aerilis smirked and came in low, her kukri narrowly missing the flesh of the wizard as he deftly stepped away from her attack. Kulizir spent too many hours on the battlefield for such a simple tactic to disrupt his spellcasting.

A spray of sizzling green poison leapt from his fingers, showering Aerilis with deadly venom even as she attempted to throw herself clear of his attack. With a screech of pain and aggravation, the dark elf monk tumbled back away from her foe, somersaulting away clumsily as the poison ate at her flesh and gnawed on her nerves.

Blinded by the burning poison, she could only sense the movements of her foe and hear his quiet murmuring as he prepared yet another spell. She hastily turned sideways to the noise, doing her best to shield her hands from the prying eyes of her target. If he could not see what she was up to, he could not attempt to stop her before she had it completed.

The kukris were old and enchanted with a powerful spell, but the divine energies they contained could only be activated by her death. Fighting to concentrate against the pain, Aerilis finally managed to slot the kukris together and felt the first cold touches of death swarm out from their hilts to embrace her. Like a clot of ice in her chest, her death weighed heavily upon her.

Kulizir lashed out with his own magic and a column of shrieking lightning burst from his palms. The electrical blast took Aerilis in the chest and sent her tumbling backward, her flesh blackened and her eyes burst in their sockets by the flow of current. But Kulizir's shout of triumph turned to one of horror as the young monk's kukris suddenly burst into a blossom of bilious green smoke and a tongue of death suddenly darted toward the wizard.

All his protections were as nothing as the envenomed smoke blasted up his nose and past his lips, filling his lungs with a deadly toxin. He could feel himself falling from the world as the poison saturated his blood and crept into his tissues. Only a matter of moments remained to him, he knew, but he struggled to remain conscious, to will his body to obey.

Valves slammed shut against the poison, directing it down and inward. It filtered through the crude placenta surrounding his unborn saviour and plunged into the unborn flesh. A ripple of pain washed out from the dying foetus, and a flicker of sorrow accompanied it through Kulizir. Then the pain passed and the vomiting began, chunks of slick and undefined flesh, gray and black with poison, splashing onto the floor.



# THE GRAVEBOND

The dark elves are specialists in dark magic and have developed unique methods for exploiting the necromantic arts for the benefit of their kind. While animating skeletons and zombies is certainly within their capabilities, the drow have also learned a more subtle method of necromancy that draws not upon the flesh and bones of the fallen, but on the energy of the spirit. By capturing a spirit at the threshold of life and death, the dark elf necromancer is able to extract a steady flow of energy from the unfortunate, energy useful in circumstances arcane, divine, and mundane. Sadly, the spirits so used are locked into a torturous existence. The afterworld is in sight but the corporeal world holds them in place, pinning back their ethereal wings with barbed pins for the use of the dark elf necromancer.

## THE POWER OF DEATH

The dark elves believe the entire system of planes is a structure meant to govern the flow of power from one location to another. Objects are simply containers for limited power, storage units that give the energy of the universe a fleeting purpose on its way from one part of the great web to another. Living things, then, are simply more advanced types of objects that give the energy they contain not only a purpose, but the consciousness necessary to act on that purpose. When an object is destroyed, or a creature is killed, the drow believe it is merely one method the constrained energy uses to escape back into the universe. This desire for energy to be free, to shed its mortal coil or material prison, forms the basis for the gravebond.

The drow have learned to tether the soul of the recently departed to the body from which it was so nearly free. By holding the energy of the soul between the states of life and death, the drow are able to extract energy from its struggles. As it strives to be free, the soul creates a great deal of friction in the Great Web, attracting even more energy, which the drow can then use for their own nefarious purposes.

But to draw upon this energy, the drow must place himself at some risk. He must tie the energies of his body to those of the captured spirit, creating the *gravebond*. This magical connection allows the drow to call upon the power created by the trapped soul, using it to fuel his own spells, skills, and other abilities.

## FORGING THE BOND

To create a gravebond, the drow must first have an appropriate subject for the binding. Though soul nets and perverted canopic jars are useful for creating a gravebond, the limitations on the spirits these two items are able to contain makes them popular only with necromancers of little skill or feeble training. The most powerful spirits may only be bonded at the moment of death, when the spark of life is extinguished and the soul is momentarily unmoored. At this point, the drow are able to perform their fell rites to constrain the spirit and prepare it to accept the gravebond, enslaving it to the will of the drow who performs the proper ceremonies.

In practice, this requires controlled circumstances and lengthy rituals. Living subjects are tortured, typically by having their skin boiled and then flayed from their bones, until they hover at the brink of death. Drow priestesses are often involved, using their skill at magic to hold the subject just at the edges of life while the ritual performer prepares his spells. When the spell is cast, the spirit and the caster engage in a contest of wills. If the drow wins, the gravebond is complete, otherwise the spirit escapes after lashing out at its tormentors.

### The Practice of Gravebonding

Performing the gravebonding ritual requires following the following steps.

1. **Capture a Subject.** The drow love their slaves, but the slaves make poor subjects for gravebonding. With their will so badly destroyed, the spirits of drow slaves struggle only a little and produce no energy of note. Therefore, the dark elves often engage in kidnapping sprees and pay very well for strong, subdued, subjects.

The stronger a subject's life force (measured by its Hit Dice, levels, or the total of both), the more energy it releases. Subjects with special abilities provide additional energy related to those abilities. Though the specialized energy is less copious than the more generalized power created by an entrapped soul, it allows the gravebond to use abilities they do not actually possess, rather than simply allowing them to boost their existing powers.

Naturally, stronger subjects are more difficult to subdue, so most drow make extensive use of magic and poisons to keep their gravebond targets from breaking loose and wreaking havoc in the ritual chambers.

2. **Prepare the Subject.** After a subject is in the drow's possession, it must be readied for the gravebonding. A sudden death generates a sudden burst of energy, but the spirit escapes too quickly to be captured and the energy is squandered. Preparing the subject prolongs the process of death through complex tortures that slowly sap the vitality of the subject and leave the spirit confused and temporarily tethered to the body.

The torturing process is difficult, however, and requires great skill to accomplish. The drow performing the torture must make a successful Torture check (DC 15 + 1 per Hit Die or Level of the subject creature), opposed by the Will save of the subject. The check requires one hour per level of hit die of the subject creature and involves horrific tortures – as noted above, boiling and flensing is a common practice, but tension hooks used to pry apart limbs, flaying, and other methods are very common, as well. The most perverse of the drow engage in bizarre acts of sexual violence with their targets, believing the intimacy of the torture makes the gravebond stronger. Though there is no truth to this belief, it is still commonly held amongst the drow, who embrace such depraved theories with great relish.

If the drow wins the opposed Torture check, he is able to hold the subject's spirit in place, pinning it to the material plane long enough to begin the gravebond. If the drow loses, however, the spirit escapes beyond the reach of the gravebond (though potentially not other necromantic spells targeting spirits). In addition to its escape, the spirit takes its revenge upon the bonding drow, lashing out with all the anger and fear it accumulated in life.

The drow on the receiving end of this attack must immediately make a Will save (DC 20 + 1 per Hit Die or Level of the subject creature). If the saving throw succeeds, the drow suffers no damage and only minor pain as the spirit's energy flashes through him on its way to its final rest. If the saving throw fails, however, the result is more spectacular. The drow suffers one point of temporary Constitution damage from the spiritual assault for every point by which he failed the saving throw. This damage heals naturally, as normal, but may not be magically healed – damage to the spiritual essence of a person takes some time to repair, after all.

3. **Perform the Gravebond.** With the spirit momentarily weakened and tethered to the body, the drow must complete the casting of the *gravebond* spell. Work out the results of that spell as detailed in the Drow Spells chapter.

Once the gravebond is completed, the body ceases decomposition and will remain in this state of stasis until the spirit is completely used up through the gravebond or destroyed as a result of a successful rebellious demise (see below). At the instant the spirit is no longer extant, the body, too, is destroyed, decomposing at a shocking rate until it is nothing more than a fine dust after 1d4 rounds. Attempts to halt the decomposition of the body are unsuccessful – not even a *wish* can avoid the utter destruction caused by the death of the spirit. The Great Web reclaims its own, irrevocably, and eternally.

Of course, the bodies must be protected as well as the captured souls. If a body is ever destroyed by burning, or if it has its head removed, the gravebond is ruptured and the bound spirit is released. This has no ill effects for the creature who bonded the soul, but it does deprive the creature of the energy the soul generated.

A creature may only have a number of gravebonds active at any time equal to the highest of his Intelligence, Charisma, or Wisdom ability modifiers. The strengths of the bonds are not the determining factor here, but rather the strain placed on the creature by the simple number of bonds linked to his energies. Even the struggles of a very weak bond are enough to tire an experienced wizard.

### Transferring the Gravebond

A spellcaster who successfully completes the *gravebond* can transfer the bond to another creature. This is automatically successful if the target is willing to accept the bond and automatically fails if the target does not wish to take the bond. If successful, the target pays the experience cost for the *gravebond* spell and the mage who cast the spell has his experience restored by a similar amount. If unsuccessful, the gravebond remains intact and the creator may use it as he wishes.

## ENERGY FROM THE BOND

Once a gravebond is established, it may be used to provide fuel for spells, the energy necessary to excel at skills, and to generally improve (or add) abilities the bonding dark elf may not possess on his own. Some say the gravebond is the secret of the drow's success, by allowing them to turn their captured enemies into power to defeat yet more energies, who can be used to generate energy, and so on and so on. While it is not true that all drow are able to use the energy of their enemies in such a way, there are enough priestesses and wizards with the knowledge to do so that most of the noble houses have at least a few gravebonds, and many have far, far more.





## THE GRAVEBOND

Ringed with cones of incense belching thick clouds of purple, foul-smelling smoke, the room was an indistinct, hazy place through which flitted a variety of shadow forms. The drow had no difficulty making their way through the stinking murk, but their victim could scarcely see their forms, much less make out the details of what they were doing. The occasional steely flash visible through the cloying smoke did little to settle his jumping nerves, nor did the ominous, throaty chants floating toward him from the dark corners of the chamber.

With his limbs bound spread-eagled and the jagged surface he was chained to biting into his back, he could not formulate his thoughts well enough to form the psionic patterns in his mind. Valkirst, one of the most powerful minds the flayer breeding pools had ever produced, was as helpless as the warm blood slaves he dined upon nightly.

His captor emerged from the darkness and smoke, her naked flesh obscured only by the twining tattoos that raced up her arms and legs to create an intricate mandala of dark symbols across her breasts and lower abdomen. The blackness of her skin stood out in stark contrast to the glow rising from her tattoos and her sparkling white teeth winked at him from between her quirked lips.

Her hands closed around two of his tentacles, pulling them taut to expose the sensitive, purple skin around the rim of his eating orifice. She stroked the tips of the tentacles gently, teasing the soft pads of her thumb along the trembling tissues in her grasp. 'There are so many things you flayers do not understand,' she crooned and knelt close to him. She rubbed the tentacles along the sides of her neck, drawing her face down near his to do so. The natural anaesthetic she squeezed from the glands along the lengths of the tentacle beaded in the hollow of her throat before trickling down into the mass of tattoos covering her torso.

The chanting reached a fevered pitch and she responded, standing suddenly and jerking her arms out straight from the shoulders. He screamed in her mind but she could not hear it, so great was the ecstasy thrashing through her senses. She held the torn tentacles aloft and laughed down at the bloody stumps left on his face. 'Save your energy, mindslug. We are only beginning.'

The strength of the bond is equal to the Hit Dice, or Levels, of the creature whose spirit provides the energy of the bond. Thus, stronger and more experienced creatures provide a correspondingly more potent strength through the gravebond, making them much more desirable as subjects. More importantly, the stronger the creature who performs the bond, the stronger the bonded spirit must be to provide any benefit at all. While a 1<sup>st</sup>-level drow wizard can reap significant benefits from a 4 HD spirit, for example, the same drow wizard at 8<sup>th</sup>-level will gain only a very small benefit and, possibly, no benefit from it at all.

To determine the amount of energy provided by the bond, compare the strength of the bond to the total of the bonding drow's level and hit dice. If the strength of the bond is less than the bonding drow's level and hit dice, then subtract the difference between the two from the strength of the bond to determine the amount of energy it provides, each day. If the strength of the bond is equal to or greater than the bonding drow's level, then the bond provides energy equal to its strength.

Selikanoz has two gravebonds, one with a strength of 5 and one with a strength of 3. As a 4<sup>th</sup> level priestess of the Empress of the Web, Selikanoz gains 5 points of energy from her bond with a strength of 5 (because its strength is greater than her level, she gains the total strength as energy) while she only gains 2 points from the bond with a strength of 3 (because she must subtract the difference between the strength of the bond, 3, and her level, 4, from the strength of the bond and 3 minus one equals 2). It is clearly time for her to replace the weaker bond, as it will begin costing her more to maintain the bond each month than she can gain from its use.

The energy of the bond is depleted when it is used. If the bond ever ends the day at 0 energy, the spirit has been destroyed and the bond is destroyed along with it. If the bond is not destroyed at the end of the day, then the energy it provides replenishes itself at the rate of one point per day. As the spirit struggles toward freedom, it generates the energy needed to bring the bond back up to its full strength. See also *Approaching the Grave*, below, for more information about the effects of destroyed bonds on the spellcaster.

## ARCANE USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

The arcane spellcasters, with their bone-studded robes and skull imagery so common, are perhaps the best known users of the gravebond and the energy it provides. By using the souls of the dead to provide energy for their spells, they are able to cast more, and more powerful, spells each day. Sorcerers find the use of gravebond energy particularly attractive, as it helps them to circumvent some of the problems they face when using metamagic. In this section, we will look at various ways the energy of death can be put to use by arcane spellcasters, from enhanced spellcasting to the ability to avoid injury or other sources of damage.

### Death Pact

The arcane spellcaster can use the energy of the gravebond to convert his life energy into additional arcane energy. This energy can be channelled through the arcane patterns of his faded memory, increasing the number of spells he can cast each day. The downside to this is the cost of the pact – as it increases arcane energy, it decreases life energy at a rapid rate.

When this ability is activated, the spellcaster must expend one point of energy from one of his gravebonds. When this energy is expended, the spellcaster immediately suffers one point of temporary Constitution damage and gains access to an additional three levels of arcane spells. These spells must either be spells he prepared for the day (if he must prepare his spells each day) or spells he knows (if he is capable of spontaneous casting, like a sorcerer or bard). No metamagic feats may be applied to these spells (though the use of the Ignited Blood ability, below, can be used to circumvent this limitation), but they are otherwise immediately available for casting.

Ishildiza activates the death pact ability for three consecutive rounds. She suffers three points of temporary Constitution damage in the process, while gaining 9 additional spell levels. She may now use those levels to purchase an additional spell slot of 9<sup>th</sup> level, three additional spell slots of 3<sup>rd</sup> level each, nine additional spell slots at 1<sup>st</sup> level each, or any other combination totalling nine. If she had activated the ability in one round, then taken an action during the following round, she would have had to convert the three spell levels immediately, as this was the first and last consecutive use of the ability.



Activating this ability is a full-round action that depletes the strength of a gravebond by one point. Spell levels gained from subsequent uses of this ability (on consecutive rounds) may be added together or spent in any combination to gain additional spell slots. The additional spell levels gained from the use of this ability must be converted to spell slots in the round immediately following the last consecutive use of this ability.

### Arcane Vampirism

This ability allows the spellcaster to convert some of his currently prepared (or uncast for sorcerers and other spontaneous spellcasters) spells into life energy. When activated, this ability immediately converts a number of spells into hit points. An arcane spellcaster may convert a number of spell levels equal to his current level into hit points in this way, gaining 3 hit points for every spell level so converted. Note that only entire, prepared spells (or spell slots for those capable of spontaneous casting) may be converted. A *fireball*, for

example, must be converted as a 3<sup>rd</sup> level spell, you cannot convert one level of the spell and still have a 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell. Likewise, a spell's slot must be entirely consumed in the process and may not be 'traded down' into lesser spell slots – a 5<sup>th</sup> level spell slot becomes 15 hit points, it does not become 3 hit points and two 2<sup>nd</sup> level spells.

A spell prepared with a metamagic feat provides as many hit points as the spell slot it takes up when prepared. So, for example, a *fireball* prepared with a metamagic feat that increases its level by two would provide 15 hit points, rather than 9 for the standard 3<sup>rd</sup> level spell.

Activating this ability is a full-round action that depletes the strength of a gravebond by one point.

## DIVINE USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

When a drow priestess (or the rare drow priest) gathers up the souls of the fallen for her own personal use, you can be sure there is a world of hurt in store for her enemies. The divine uses of gravebond energy are tied directly to the ability of the clerics to channel divine energy, giving them new and frightening ways to deliver the anger and hatred of their gods into the lives of their enemies.

### The Word of Hate

The drow have a long tradition of despising those who dwell upon the surface and their good-aligned allies. While the elves cavort beneath the sun, the drow struggle for survival in an alien environment and their black skin flushes with the rage they feel over the injustice of it all. By focusing this hatred, the drow are able to fuse gravebond energy with the divine power they channel, sending the warped energies at their enemies with a powerful shout.

This ability is treated as a turning attempt that affects only good-aligned, living creatures, rather than the undead. The attempt is resolved as normal, save that the drow may not destroy targets with fewer than half of his total Hit Dice or levels. These weak creatures are, however, affected by all other elements of a successful turning attempt.

Activating this ability is a full-round action that requires the sacrifice of one turning attempt for the day, as well as one point of gravebond energy. The effect of the word of hate occurs at the end of the round in which it is activated.

### Web of Fate

Use of this ability draws down the attention of the fatespinners, temporarily allowing the divine spellcaster to avoid the fate they had in store for him. This ability may only be used as a reaction to an event that would reduce the spellcaster to zero hit points or fewer. Activating the ability does not require an action and does not require the activating creature to be conscious – it is automatically activated when the need arises.





When the ability is used, the divine caster's current hit point total is immediately returned to 1 + the caster's level. However, the spellcaster is also unable to take any action for 1d4 rounds as he is reintegrated into the Great Web.

Activating this ability is a free, involuntary action that occurs whenever the divine spellcaster's hit points fall below zero. When activated, this ability requires the expenditure of one divine channelling attempt for the day, and reduces the strength of the gravebond by two points. This ability may only be activated once per hour, regardless of how many times the spellcaster is reduced to fewer than zero hit points during that time.

## BARBARIC USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

Barbarian dark elves are rare, but they do exist. The savage Surzailikai warriors, for example, are often left to survive in the darkness of the Underdeep at a very young age and learn the arts of survival from the wild creatures they battle on a daily basis. As they grow stronger, some few develop the full gamut of barbaric talents and return to drow culture very different creatures from those around them. Though most fully integrate into drow society, eventually, drawing upon their barbaric heritage only in times of need, others revel in their savage nature and hone their primitive skills throughout their lives. Either type of drow barbarian can make use of the gravebond, however, infusing their natural rage and resilience with the power of the grave.

### Undying Rage

The barbarian is able to focus the power of the gravebond into his rage, increasing the duration of the rage by one round per character level. A rage fuelled by the gravebond may not be ended prematurely – the barbarian must endure the entire duration of the rage once it is initiated. The barbarian must decide whether or not to use the gravebond at the moment the rage is used.

### Corpse Flesh

The barbarian's natural defences against physical injury are enhanced by the power of the gravebond energy. For every four levels of the barbarian class possessed by the gravebond, he may expend one point of gravebond energy to augment his damage resistance. For every point of energy so expended, the barbarian may either increase his damage reduction to 5/magic for a number of rounds equal to his current level. Note

that barbarians without natural damage reduction gain no benefit from this ability.

## BARDIC USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

The bards of the drow are a sick and perverse lot, using their artistic talents to portray scenes and events of intense depravity. When they draw upon the gravebond, they may choose to use its powers to simply augment their arcane spellcasting powers, but more often they bend the power of the grave into their bardic performances. Filling their voices with the cries of the void and the sounds of their instruments with the crackling of shattered bones, the bards of the drow are able to create quite horrific effects.

### Fatalistic Dirge

When this ability is activated, the bard sings a dirge that assures his allies that their death is at hand and only by exerting themselves to the utmost can they hope to be remembered as anything other than useless wastes of flesh. The grave-tinged words of the dirge drive drow to fanatical heights of martial prowess and all who hear the song are affected as if by the bard's *inspire courage* ability. The energy of the gravebond doubles the bonuses provided by this ability, however, increasing the morale bonus to saving throw against charm and fear effects to +4 and providing a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls rather than a mere +1. When the dirge ends, all drow who heard the song must shake off the effects of the song. Doing this requires 1d4 rounds, rolled randomly for each victim. During this time, the drow suffer a -1 morale penalty to all skill checks and attack and damage rolls. This costs 1 point of gravebond energy.

### Funereal Proclamation

This ability must be targeted at a specific individual within 30 feet of the bard. The bard issues a dire proclamation concerning the horrible fate of the target and weaves the words into a powerful chant. The target is then allowed a Will save (DC 10 + level of the bard). If this save succeeds, the target is not affected during the current round, but must continue to make saving throws during each round in which the bard continues the use of this ability. If the target fails his Will save, he immediately suffers a -1 morale penalty to all skill checks, saving throws, and attack and damage rolls. During each round in which the bard continues the funereal proclamation, the target must make another Will save at the same DC – each roll that fails immediately increases the morale penalty



by 1. The bard may continue to chant the funeral proclamation for a number of rounds equal to his current level. While chanting the bard can fight, but may not cast spells, activate magic items by spell completion (such as scrolls), or activate magic items by magic word (such as wands). This costs 1 point of gravebond energy.

### FIGHTING USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

Warriors are the least likely to draw upon the gravebond energy, for the physical handicaps it can create work in direct opposition to the fighter's need to maintain good physical health and resilience. Still, there are those who use the gravebond to augment their fighting abilities, or as a last-ditch weapon against enemies that might otherwise prove too powerful to defeat. Though fighters must take great care not to destroy their bodies while using the gravebond, it does offer them a significant boost in power if they use caution.

#### Death Strike

When this ability is used, the fighter gains an additional attack at his normal attack bonus. This attack is made after all other attacks the fighter is allowed in the round. If one of the fighter's normal attacks for the round hits the same opponent as the death strike, the death strike is treated as a confirmed critical if it hits. If two of the fighter's normal attacks for the round hit the same target as the death strike, the death strike is treated as a confirmed critical hit that causes maximum damage if it hits. For each additional normal attack that hits the same target as the death strike, the critical damage multiplier of the weapon used for the death strike is increased by one, in addition to all benefits provided by a death strike following two successful hits against the same target, again assuming it hits at all. This costs 2 points of gravebond energy.

#### Crypt Burst

When activated, this ability sheathes one of the fighter's weapons in hand with a black, throbbing aura of intense cold. The aura remains in effect for a number of rounds equal to the fighter's current level. Whenever the fighter hits a target with the weapon, it causes an additional 1d6 hit points of cold damage to all creatures within a 10-foot radius of the fighter. This damage is not applied to the weapon's wielder, but does affect his allies. This costs 1 point of gravebond energy.

## MONASTIC USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

The monks of the Sealed Crypt monastery have long used the gravebond for their own purposes, infusing their deadly martial arts with the dangerous flows of negative energy. While some view the use of the gravebond as a perversion of their natural talents and honed skills, most of the drow monks see no problem in using the gifts given to them by the Fatespinners, no matter how those gifts are received. The numbers of monks with gravebonds is increasing rapidly, especially as the ties between the various drow faiths and their monastic orders are strengthened.

#### Withering Stun

This ability is used in conjunction with the monk's stunning attack ability, only. Once declared, this ability remains active until the monk succeeds in stunning a target or a number of rounds equal to the monk's current level have passed, whichever comes first. If the monk succeeds in stunning a target with his stunning attack, the energy of the gravebond may be used to do one of the following:

- † Deal 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.
- † Increase the number of rounds the target is stunned by one-half the monk's current Wisdom bonus.
- † Stun a creature that is otherwise immune to stunning attacks for 1 round.

#### Palm of Fate

This ability may only be used in conjunction with the monk's quivering palm ability. When used, the palm of fate changes the DC needed to resist death to 10 + the monk's current level + the monk's wisdom bonus. Use of this ability requires two points of energy from the gravebond and causes 1 point of temporary Constitution damage from the strain of channelling so much power. This damage heals normally, but may not be healed magically.

## RANGER USES OF GRAVEBOND ENERGY

With a few exceptions, there is not much known about the drow ranger. That they spend most of their time patrolling the area surrounding the drow cities and searching out the hated enemies of their people is true, but they also devote a significant portion of their

time to moving through the cities themselves, working as assassins and hired muscle. Those who use the gravebond are among the most feared assassins for their ability to strike from a distance and their unerring accuracy. This costs 1 point of gravebond energy.

### Impending Doom

This ability may be used any time a ranger is tracking a target. The negative energy of the gravebond forms a connection between the hunter and the hunted, giving the ranger a better lock on his quarry and his target a sense of impending doom at a cost of 1 point of gravebond energy. This ability remains active for a number of hours equal to the ranger's current level, and provides a +5 insight bonus to all checks made to track and find the specific target during that time. The target receives a cumulative -1 morale penalty to all skill checks, attack and damage rolls, and saving throws for every hour the ability remains active, as well, and may not attack the ranger tracking him unless the ranger attacks first. Rangers who use this ability to track and kill their targets are greatly feared, as the target is nearly helpless with panic and dread when the ranger finally brings the chase to an end.

### Shot from the Grave

Use of this ability is a full-round action, at the end of which the ranger must unleash a shot from his bow at a target. The shot is automatically a confirmed critical hit and receives a +20 insight bonus to hit. This ability may only be used once per hour and costs 1 point of gravebond energy.

## APPROACHING THE GRAVE

The gravebond is not without its risks. While all drow may benefit greatly from the use of the bond, careless users may find themselves suddenly enslaved by the very powers they attempted to harness. Each time a gravebond is destroyed, either by consuming the entire energy it provides or as a result of a successful rebellion by the enslaved spirit, the creature to whom the bond is attached comes one step closer to the grave himself. Those drow who carefully husband their gravebonds are able to maintain them for decades, drawing a bit of power here and there, using it to amplify their abilities without destroying them. More careless drow, on the other hand, tend to have very short lives as the effects of the gravebond corrupt their flesh and drain their spirit.

As noted above, the gravebond relies on the transfer of energy between two states – life and death. Unfortunately, when the bond is destroyed, the transfer of energy changes, which can have dire implications for those bound to it. Whenever a gravebond is destroyed, the powers of death charge into the void, attempting to claim another life that is so tantalizingly close to their reach.

Any time a gravebond is destroyed, the creature who created the gravebond (or who is attached to the gravebond if it was transferred to another) must immediately make a Will save (DC 15 + the strength of the gravebond). If this save succeeds, the creature suffers only 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage as the negative energy of death floods his body. If the save fails, however, the bonded creature suffers 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage and gains one of the living corpse attributes, defined below. As the character gains more and more attributes of a living corpse, his life force dwindles and he drifts closer to the land of the dead.

### Living Corpse Attributes

The following are all attributes of the living corpse. While some of these attributes are merely cosmetic, these attributes become increasingly more difficult to deal with, resulting in the ultimate destruction of the life force.

Note that you may only ever have one attribute from each 'level' of attributes. You select your first attribute from the first level of attributes, your second from the second level, third from the third level, and so on. Upon receiving your fifth living corpse attribute, you are claimed by the forces of death and your body is blasted to dust. Resurrection and reincarnation are both impossible at this point, as the very essence of your being no longer exists as anything but consumed energy.

#### First Rank Attributes

**Corpse Blemish:** Your skin bruises easily and the bruises remain for days. At any given time, visible bruises are quite evident across your skin, forming deep, black and green splotches on your otherwise flawless, inky skin.

**Stare of Death:** Your eyes bulge from their sockets and are shot through with a spider's web of engorged, red, veins.

**Breath of Rot:** Your breath is incredibly foul and can be easily smelt at a distance of ten feet or less.



## THE GRAVEBOND

**Faded Glory:** You appear much older than you are, developing wrinkles and faded skin tones well before the other drow that are your age.

**Sexual Dysfunction:** The concept of procreation becomes abhorrent to you, filling you with a disgust so deeply-seated you find yourself unable to perform. Even the ovarisites are unable to assist you in your duties, which can lead to significant problems for you if you belong to a Noble house (see the Game of Bones chapter for more information).

**Coffin Nails:** Your fingernails grow at a freakish rate, curving down and around your fingertips by day's end, even if you clip them down to the bone in the morning.

### Second Rank Attributes

**Fungal Rash:** Thin tracers of fungus bloom over your skin, burrowing into the dead flesh they find there. Though the fungus itself is not harmful, the rapid rate

at which your skin decays is a bit of an issue. You suffer a  $-1$  penalty to all Dexterity-based skill checks.

**Sluggish Blood:** Your blood cells die at an unfortunate rate and your circulation is sluggish at best. When you bleed, the fluid tends to be thick and darker than normal, smelling faintly of rot. You also heal slower than others and regain 2 fewer hit points than normal each day from natural healing.

**Bloated Muscles:** Pus and strands of dead tissue cause the muscles of your extremities to swell painfully. The bloated, puffy muscle tissue is less useful than normal and you suffer a  $-1$  penalty to all Strength-related checks.

**Murky Vision:** Cataract-like clouds of dead tissue obscure your vision and make it much more difficult than normal for you to see. Your vision is limited to 30 feet in all light and you are unable to discern colour or fine details (such as facial features) at more than 15 feet, even in the best of light.



**Ghoulish Hunger:** You are no longer able to stand the sight of fresh meats or vegetables of any kind, and can only consume food that has been begun to rot. As a result, you are much less healthy than normal and suffer a  $-4$  circumstance penalty to any Saving throws used to resist disease. Your food is also easy to smell at up to 120 feet, making it difficult for you to travel through hostile areas without being detected.

### Third Rank Attributes

**Grave Caul:** You experience difficulty making sense of your surroundings as dead tissue and fluid clots over your eyes, ears, and nose on a regular basis. You suffer a  $-1$  circumstance penalty to all Wisdom-based checks as a result.

**Zombi Voice:** Your speech is flat and monotonous and you often have difficulty presenting your thoughts or feelings to others in a meaningful manner. Because of this deadness in your relations with the world around you, you suffer a  $-1$  circumstance penalty to all Charisma-based checks.

**Deadened Reason:** The connections in your brain have become loose and unreliable as the tissues break down and drift apart. While your thoughts are still relatively orderly, you are not as swift as you once were, nor are you

as able to formulate complex thoughts. You suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all Intelligence-based checks.

**Clotted Breath:** You may only exert yourself for a number of rounds equal to twice your Constitution modifier before you become winded. Winded characters suffer a -1 penalty to all actions until they have rested for a full minute. Exertions include casting spells, fighting in combat, moving at more than your standard movement rate, or otherwise engaging in physical activity outside the norm. You must also rest for 10 minutes for each hour of continued activity, of any type, in which you engage.

**Decayed Concentration:** The degeneration of connective tissues in your body and the general inability of your body to control or mitigate the impulses of pain caused by injury conspire to make it much more difficult for you to maintain your concentration. You suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Concentration-based checks you must make. This penalty is increased to -4 if you make the check as a result of an injury you sustained.

#### Fourth Rank Attributes

**Shambler:** You have little fine motor control at this point, as your nerve tissues and muscles have badly decayed. Your base movement speed is reduced by 10 and you suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls, or skill or ability checks that involve fine control (Dexterity checks, Balance checks, Disable Devices checks, for example).

**Deep Rot:** The rot has invaded your internal organs, partially destroying your respiratory and digestive systems. As a result, you tire very easily and gain very little nutrition from the meagre amounts of food you can force yourself to ingest. You are unable to be active for more than six hours each day and must spend the remainder of your time resting.

**Gelatinous Gray Matter:** Your brain tissue has rotted extensively, destroying critical parts of your reasoning capacity. As a result, you are considered one level lower than your actual level for determining your maximum skill ranks for a given skill and your spellcasting ability. Any skill ranks that exceed your new maximums are lost. Spells you were formerly able to cast but now cannot use are not forgotten, but cannot be used until your effective spellcasting level increases. This applies to divine spells as well as arcane spells.

**Corrupt Vitality:** Negative energy has so saturated your tissues you are no longer able to defend yourself as you would if healthy. As a result, you suffer a -2 penalty to all saving throws.

**Bloodless Flesh:** The normal flows of life are no longer present within you. Though you have not yet died or passed onto the state of unliving, you are nearly there. While you must continue to eat and drink, voiding your body of wastes is very painful and you gain no benefits from natural healing. All of your wounds or illnesses must be healed magically, as you no longer possess the ability to recuperate naturally.

#### Fifth Rank Attributes

**Undying:** The flow of negative energy through your body is so strong, you are no longer truly alive. While you no longer need to eat or drink, you also no longer heal naturally or recover from illnesses without unnatural help. While poison still affects you, you cannot purge yourself from the effects and automatically suffer the secondary effects of any poisons that you fail to save against the primary effect. Though you can be healed as normal, other spells that require a living target fail when cast upon you, as you are now of the undying type. Note that if you gain another attribute at this level, you immediately die, as the negative energy reaches out to claim you at last.

Gulorthis shrieked in horror as the energy of the gravebond twisted and writhed through his soul. His control faltered and he felt the spirit sliding out of his grasp, its energy suddenly spurting free from the jagged rent in his aura as it fled between the planes. He sensed, rather than saw or felt, the massing thunderhead of grave energy rising to fill the void and struggled to raise his defences against the inevitable. Through one cataract-riddled eye, he could just make out the faces of his companions, their horrified expressions telling him more than all his years of arcane energy.

Then his flesh grew tight and paper-thin against his bones, which cut through the skin as easily as a knife through the flesh of an unborn child sacrifice. He howled as the revenge of the spirits he had enslaved caught up to him and his throat filled with pus and chunks of rotted lung tissue. Vomiting did nothing to clear his throat, but did manage to rupture his stomach and split the skin of his abdomen. Clutching his grey-green entrails to his chest, Gulorthis wept tears of black ichor that carved channels through the dust that replaced the skin of his face. Long minutes later, he was gone, leaving behind only a corrupt sludge of swirling energies and rotting flesh.



# RELIGION OF HORRORS

The drow exist only due to a compact between themselves and a pantheon of dark and alien gods. With their back to the wall and their enemies breathing down their necks, the drow threw themselves on the mercy of any gods who would listen to their calls for blood and vengeance. Given the dire nature of their need, and the fact the drow cried out not for mercy or salvation but for the screaming death of their enemies, it is not surprising they were answered by beings so vile they had no worshipers of their own. In this chapter, you will discover the truth behind drow religion and the horrors the drow must commit to keep the favours of their alien deities.

## IN THE BEGINNING

According to official dogma, the pantheon of the drow existed before the other gods crawled from the primordial flows to claw their way into being. The deities now worshiped by the drow then referred to themselves only as the Spinners of Fate. They claim it was their destiny to lay out the future of reality, weaving the strands of fate into a completed tapestry, into which every life is placed as a strand, long or short. Even the gods, or so it is said, were placed into the tapestry and their fate predetermined.

Paradoxically, the Spinners of Fate do not know the ultimate destiny of any creature placed within their tapestry. Though it is said they can affect a fate by tampering with its thread at the behest of their worshipers, the results are unpredictable at best. Like so many things in drow culture, uncertainty is the only guarantee when dealing with the Spinners of Fate.

As with other aspects of drow culture, the exact details of the creation myth associated with the drow pantheon differ from region to region. Some claim the seeds of the drow were created when the first strands of reality were carelessly frayed and warped. Others preach a different message, one of hate and desperation. These drow claim it was the pure malice of their ancestors which awakened the Spinners of Fate and drew them down from their impartial post above reality. In this version, the Spinners of Fate are shaped by the drow as much as the drow were shaped by their gods – formerly neutral and aligned with no race, the Spinners were so impressed they adopted and augmented the evil of the drow.

Whatever the case, it is an undisputed fact the drow worship deities of pure evil and are willing and able to carry their message of hatred and horror to the rest of the world at the tip of a blade or the end of an incantation. While the truth of how the Spinners of Fate came to be associated with their drow minions is an issue to be answered by individual Games Masters for their particular campaign, the deities presented here can be seamlessly integrated with virtually any campaign. They represent the archetypes of drow deities and, though their names may change, what they represent remains the same.

## THE SPINNERS OF FATE

### Karzerothrine

*Empress of the Web, Bitch of Fate, Loomqueen, The Dark Mother*

**Symbol:** A black spider on a silver web. In traditional symbology, the Empress' web is depicted with barbed edges. More elaborate scenes add the flesh and bones of enemy races, including mind flayers, humans, and, of course, elves from the surface. Amongst the common folk, her symbol is often reduced to a circle surrounded by eight crooked lines, a crude representation of the spider.

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Governs:** Torturers, drow nobility

**Domains:** Evil, Darkness, Fear

**Favoured Weapons:** Throwing disks, flails

Karzerothrine is a feminine deity, but one focused on the darker aspects of motherhood – vengeful protectiveness, a controlling nature, and obscene fecundity. Karzerothrine will destroy anyone who trifles with her children, but she has no compunction about annihilating any of her children who step out of line, either. After all, there are always other children, other worshipers, other slaves to nurture and enslave.

In her nurturing aspect, Karzerothrine showers her priestesses with gifts, purchasing their loyalty with enhanced spellcasting abilities, powerful hymns, and granted abilities. Her demands are extreme, however, and all priestesses must accept a Demonic Bond at every third level. These bonds are sacred to the priestesses and represent the ties to the Empress of the Web, but none can deny their often horrific effects and often debilitating consequences of such bonds.

Men never serve Karzerothrine directly, she disdains the masculine as weak and disgusting. Though priestesses are allowed to take consorts for breeding purposes, they are not allowed to marry and serve for life. While priestesses are required to forsake their

noble heritage when joining the temple, virtually no commoners are ever brought into Karzerothrine's clergy. The bitch of fate wants her people respected and feared, not sneered at by the haughty drow royalty.

### Religious Observances

Karzerothrine revels in sacrifices and demands her temples keep at least three giant spiders on hand at all times to assist in their proper preparation. The ritual is time consuming and horrifying – the screams of sacrificial victims can be heard ringing throughout the temples continually, their hoarse shouts and pleading whispers carrying on the incense-laden subterranean breezes.

A properly prepared sacrifice is first bound. The victim's arms are bound behind the back, wrists tied at the small of the back while the elbows are bound together as well, painful contorting the sacrifice's joints. The toes are then pulled forward as far as possible, stretching the tendons in the legs taut. The knees are bent sharply over one another and the entire leg tied up at an acute angle, with the ankles fastened level with the waist. The body is then entirely wrapped in spider silk, leaving only the face exposed. Sacrificial victims are then hung upside down over Karzerothrine's altar.

Each day, priests pierce the sacrificial victims' bodies with long, sharpened canules. The absorbent spider silk, specially formulated by the giant spiders' diet, slowly draws the blood from the wounds, staining the silk a vivid scarlet. When all the white in a sacrificial cocoon has been turned red, the victim is ready for the ultimate sacrifice. A paralytic, degenerative poison is injected into the target and, as its body turns to a soft, goeey, mass of disrupted flesh and rubbery bone, the priests and acolytes of the Bitch of Fate consume the victim. The bones, while still malleable from the poison, are then shaped into images pleasing to the Empress of the Web and used to adorn her temples.

### Temples

The bitch of fate demands her temples be located at the heart of the drow nobility. Any structures used by the ruling houses must contain at least one temple and most noble houses contain a shrine dedicated to this dark goddess. The temples are filled with spiders of all shapes and sizes (see *Arachnophilia* for more information) and are constructed from black marble. Karzerothrine's religious symbols are inlaid in the walls using silver or, more rarely, mithral. The shape of the temple is always octagonal, with rooms radiating out from the central chapel along eight main hallways.

### Priestesses of Karzerothrine

The priestesses of this goddess are only drawn from the ranks of the most powerful noble families. This is part of Karzerothrine's plans to hold the fractious drow together, by delivering pieces and parts of her message to various members of the ruling nobility, she forces them to work together to see all of her plan and to succeed in their endeavours. While this does not always work as well as she would like, it does keep the noble families from degenerating into an all-out war of assassination and helps to tie each family more closely to her church. Because she only accepts priestesses, it also gives Karzerothrine a hold over the noble families – by tying up some of their precious childbearing resources, the bitch of fate is able to coerce nobles into actions they would normally find distasteful (see *The Game of Bones* for more information on the importance of breeding to the drow).

All major laws or edicts passed in a drow city must either come from the priestesses of this temple or be approved by them. Any decisions that affect the city as a whole must also come from or through the priestesses, who relish the role their power gives them. Karzerothrine is careful to keep their powermongering in check, however, for if they push the nobles too hard, her hold over the drow might falter or be destroyed completely by their rebellion.

Priestesses of Karzerothrine almost never emerge from their temples, save for those times when they are issuing new laws or proclamations. On rare occasions, one of these dark hearted drow females might be dispatched on a special mission for the goddess, which is when they are normally encountered by adventurers. Tasked with retrieving magical items or dispatching enemies of the drow, these priestesses are dangerous and driven foes to be avoided at all costs. Because they have the authority of their goddess, the priestesses are often accompanied by the most elite of the drow wizards and warriors, giving them a powerful bodyguard should they be threatened or need to threaten others.

### The Gravemother

*Filtheater, Womb of Corruption, Seedripper*

**Symbol:** A black sphere surrounded by a silver circle. In statuary or other more representational works, the Gravemother is shown as a bloated drow with a skull clenched in her teeth and a spider emerging from the juncture of her thighs.

**Alignment:** Neutral Evil

**Governs:** Childbearing, death, secrets

**Domains:** Death, Healing, Knowledge

**Favoured Weapon:** Spears



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## RELIGION OF HORRORS

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The most overtly feminine of all the drow deities, the Gravemother is also the most feared. Her presence at the beginning and end of all drow lives make her an important member of the pantheon, but one that is rarely openly worshiped. Pregnant drow, or those who wish to become pregnant, pray to the Gravemother as do those who feel their natural spans coming to an end, but most drow would prefer not to be reminded of her presences in their lives.

In her guise as the Seedripper, the Gravemother assists drow in the arts of seduction and in luring a mate. Though the consummation of such relationships is always violent and frightening to at least one of the parties involved, the Seedripper is directly responsible for keeping the drow race alive through her ability to instil drow males and females with a bestial lust to breed, whatever the cost.

As the Womb of Corruption, the Gravemother protects and nurtures the life growing within a drow mother. She follows the child from natural mother to birth mother, using the life of the chosen broodmare to fill the unborn child with the vitality and hunger for survival he will need later in life.

Lastly, the Gravemother visits the dying drow as the Filtheater. She devours the evil they have committed in their lives and, if the dire acts satiate her hunger, she ushers them on to the next life. If the evil done by a drow in life is insufficient, however, she captures the soul of the drow and stores it away to be injected into a new child, giving the drow another chance to do the wrong thing in a new life.

### Religious Observances

The Gravemother is present at every conception, every birth, and every death in drow culture, but is almost never venerated outside of these instances. To gain her blessing on a union, it must be consummated in violence and fear, devoid of pleasure and ripe with pain. The rituals used in drow breeding, then, involve all manner of spells, drugs, and tortures designed to bring one of the participants to the brink of horror and despair. All culminate with a whispered prayer to the Seedripper, a plea that the pain inflicted and blood spilled will cause a child to take root.

Daily prayers to the grave mother's guise as the Womb of Corruption are the most common form of veneration afforded this dread goddess. Pregnant drow roll out of their silken beds and croon atonal hymns to the goddess in the hopes she will provide the unborn child with the strength and vitality to survive the passage through the ovarisite and will grow to term in the coarse flesh of the broodmare. Those who tend the slave pens and birthing pits offer their own hymns to the Gravemother in an attempt to keep the broodmares healthy and free of disease and the newborn children pure and perfect in form and mind.

There are no drow grave ceremonies. As a sign of weakness, death is left to creep in on its own, without fanfare or acknowledgement. Terminally ill drow or aged drow are abandoned to their own devices and nobles often go so far as to completely seal the rooms of ailing





relatives in order to leave them to the Gravemother's tender mercies. Most noble homes are littered with such rooms turned into makeshift mausoleums when the inhabitants became too ill or aged to remove themselves from the premises under their own power. The abandoned and sealed rooms are all makeshift temples to the Gravemother and their spectral inhabitants often her only worshipers in her aspect as the Filtheater.

### Temples

The only real temples the Gravemother enjoys are the birthing pits and the stalls of the broodmares, all of which are tended by an all-male clergy skilled in the healing arts and talented in various methods of conception and birthing. The priests of the Gravemother tend and clean these pseudo-temples and generally live in areas adjoining to their places of responsibility. While the only visitors to these areas are normally pregnant or looking to become pregnant, some come to the pits to absorb the spectacle of birth or in the hopes of purchasing one or more of the stillborn infants for their own nefarious purposes (usually for use in the *eternal death* spell).

### Priests of the Gravemother

The Gravemother will only accept men into her clergy, as she quickly grows too jealous of females and their ability to create life. Though the Gravemother knows it is her responsibility to help others conceive and give birth, witnessing it fills her with a dark jealousy as she herself is unable to deliver children in her image. Though the spiders she births in answer to Karzerothrine's demands are her young, she cannot help but feel alienated from these strange progeny who are doomed to a life of slavery.

The priests of the Gravemother spend most of their time tending to pregnant broodmares or overseeing the use of the ovarisites and the transfer of drow young from their natural mothers to the broodmares. Because any failed transfers or stillbirths result in exceptional agony and potential death for all priests involved, only those with the highest levels of skill and natural talents willingly seek to join the ranks of the Breeding Priests.

A few drow males, possessed of meagre healing talents but representing certain perfect aspects of the drow form or mentality, are drafted into the Gravemother's service to provide the seed for drow females selected for breeding. These males live a life of pampered seclusion, but are virtual prisoners within their quarters. Because drow breeding is based so strongly on pain and torture, the males' lives are punctuated

with periods of utter horror when they are brought to breed, because they know they are the ones to suffer. This leaves most broken in body and spirit after a few years, and very few of these breeding priests survive more than a decade.

The priests of the Gravemother are never encountered outside of drow society, because their skills and seed are so critical to the survival of the race as a whole. Most are trained in the martial arts, either armed or unarmed, and use the spells provided by the Gravemother to zealously defend the lives of themselves and their charges.

### The Killer

*Slaughterer, Butcher, Devourer, Hunter*

**Symbol:** A black blade, normally a scimitar. The hunter is often represented as a male drow clad in blood-soaked swathes of woven webs, armed with dozens of blades of all sizes and shapes. A few of the darker depictions also show the hunter amidst the bodies of the fallen or wearing jewelry crafted from teeth and other bones.

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Governs:** Hunting, Warfare, Murder

**Domains:** Death, Destruction, War

**Favoured Weapons:** The scimitar

The Killer is the most blunt of all the drow gods and the only god normally depicted as masculine. Charged with destroying the enemies of the drow, the Killer protects his people only as an afterthought and his followers work in much the same way. Killing an enemy is more important to them than saving a friend, though if doing the former facilitates the latter, so be it.

Because he is so ruthless, the Killer is feared and revered by all drow warriors, male and female. As the ultimate personification of the killing instinct, the Killer is a creature of finely honed reflexes and trained battle skills. His focus is on offence, not defence, so he most often chooses to attack from hiding or positions of obvious tactical superiority. The Killer is not concerned with honour, fair play or even prowess at arms – he is concerned only with the destruction of his enemies.

### Religious Observances

The Killer demands prayers before battles and tribute after successful conflicts. Drow warriors gather together in small units when preparing for battle and their hymns to the Killer are punctuated by the clashing of their weapons against their armour. They continue their singing through the battle, though the words



## RELIGION OF HORRORS

become much harsher and are used to coordinate their efforts (See Drow Feats for more information about the feats used with these hymns) against their enemies. The horrific, hissing songs can be very distracting and frightening to those unused to them, and the drow use this to their advantage.

Following any successful battle, loot and prisoners are gathered together in the Killer's temple and sacrificed on his iron altars. The warriors revel in the light of the burning victims and smouldering treasures for a full day and night, before collapsing into exhausted heaps throughout the temple. A small faction of warriors are

required to abstain from the revelry to man the city's defences and protect their intoxicated and exhausted allies.

At the close of a losing battle, if there are any drow left, the commanders who failed in their duties (as determined by the priests of the Killer) are sacrificed in nearly wordless ceremonies, their bodies split asunder and left to rot on the altar, a grim reminder for other drow of the consequences of failure.

### Temples

The Temples of the Killer are small, plain affairs used as both places of worship and barracks for the warriors of the city. The exteriors are of iron-reinforced stone, with the images of the Killer and his weapons worked into the iron and carved into the stone.

The doors are always of solid iron with massive bars of the same material used to secure them in times of need.

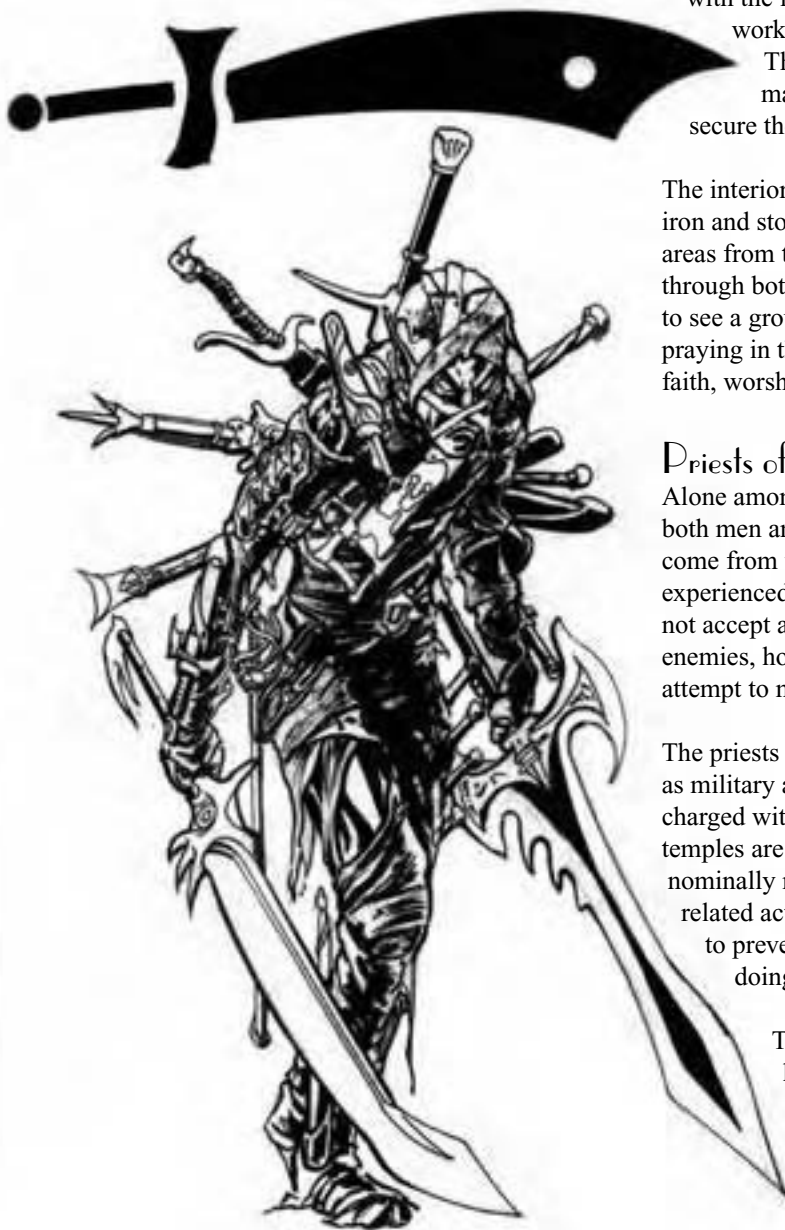
The interior of the temples are similarly adorned with iron and stone, and there is little way to tell the temple areas from the barracks areas. Warriors come and go through both in equal comfort and it is not uncommon to see a group of fighters sparring in the auditorium or praying in their rooms – to the adherents of the Killer's faith, worship and warfare are one and the same.

### Priests of the Killer

Alone amongst the drow deities, the Killer accepts both men and women into his clergy. Priests tend to come from the ranks of the warriors and are often quite experienced fighters in their own right. The Killer will not accept any priest who has not killed at least a dozen enemies, however, so only combat veterans need even attempt to make their way into the priesthood.

The priests and priestesses of the clergy are used as military advisors by the ruling nobility and are charged with the defences of the cities in which their temples are located. While the clerics of the Killer nominally request permission to perform defence-related activities, no noble would think of attempting to prevent them from going about their duties, as doing so is a sure way to tempt fate.

The clerics come from all walks of life and low-born drow who wish to increase their personal influence could do much worse than to join the temple of the Killer as a priest. While it is not the same as being a member of the nobility, there is



considerable power and influence inherent to the position.

### The Deceiver

*Twister, Witch of the Maze, Hopethief*

**Symbol:** A black-ringed coin. The Deceiver's symbols not normally found in any standalone icons, but is instead worked into the iconography of other drow deities.

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Governs:** Stealth, Lies, Theft, Corruption

**Domains:** Chaos, Evil, Luck, Trickery

**Favoured Weapons:** The rapier

Deception and trickery are part and parcel of the drow way of thinking, so it is only natural they have a goddess who specializes in deceit. Though her names are many and her servants legion, the Deceiver hides her religion in the guises of other faiths, using their priests and followers to do her bidding. This allows her to accomplish much more than she could get away with given the small number of drow who openly venerate her, but does draw the ire of other religions on a regular basis. Purges of Deceiver priests are common in drow churches, though the bloody pogroms usually end with politically-motivated murders and few of the Deceiver priests caught and killed.

The Deceiver is a nebulous presence in drow life. Some believe she exists only to prevent the drow from overthrowing the other fatespinners and taking charge of the universe themselves, others feel she is part of the drow curse, the spirit of the internecine fighting keeping them from every realizing their goals of regaining dominion over the surface world. Whether true or not, it is obvious the Deceiver's agents sow a great deal of dissent and discord in the ranks of the drow.

The followers of the Witch of the Maze believe their goddess guides them in culling the weak from the drow herd, using trickery and treachery to exploit their weaknesses and using them as tools for others to destroy. While the Deceiver's priests relish this role, the Deceiver rarely lets them know if it is true or not, and her plans often leads them into grave danger.

### Religious Observances

The Deceiver does not demand observances from her priests, but she does demand they do their best to infiltrate the ranks of other religions and use their services to her ends. The slight perversions of the normal religious ceremonies twist even mundane ceremonies to the Deceiver's ends, depriving the

rightful god of a small portion of the needed power and granting the power to the Deceiver. This rankles Karzerothrine and the Killer, the only two deities normally targeted by the Deceivers, and both deities do their best to make sure none of these treacherous drow get into their churches.

### Temples

The Deceiver has no temples of her own, but her priests do their best to subvert other temples for her use. Cleverly hidden coins, blackened with charcoal or the resin from nightwatch mushrooms, are used to draw the influence of the Deceiver to these locations, and the faithful spend a great deal of time and energy placing these coins where they will not be discovered. Each such token of their deity's presence weakens the church in which it is placed, while strengthening the Deceiver.

### Priests of the Deceiver

Those who serve the Deceiver most faithfully are those who do so willingly and knowingly. While she derives a great deal of power from the subverted faith stolen from other temples, only those who know whom they serve are able to channel that faith to her in a meaningful way. In most cases, the Deceiver's priests come to her attention through their own webs of subterfuge and deceit, impressing her (or her agents) with their clever lies and crafty plots. Almost all new priests are quite young and their schemes so-far undiscovered: someone known as a schemer and a liar is of less use to the Deceiver than someone with a less tainted reputation.

Priests are trained informally by their peers, though it is rare to find more than two or three of them ever gathering together. There is no church leader, really, but each Deceiver receives his orders through prayer. While these orders often seem conflicting if compared to the orders given to other priests, all priests of the Deceiver trust in the plans of their mistress, whose mazy intellect is truly indecipherable.

Given the relationship between the Deceiver's priests and those of other religions, an exposed priest is normally a dead priest. Their willingness to die to protect others of their kind, however, makes these priests particularly frustrating for those who hunt them. Catching one is only half the battle – keeping them from committing suicide (see the spell *dark denial* in the Drow Spells chapter for more information) is a difficult chore.



# THE GAME OF BONES

The drow appear, from the outside, to have an organized, structured society. They have their castes of noble families, the loyal merchants who oil the machines of commerce, and the servants and slaves who see to the needs of their masters. Law enforcement is organized and efficient, operating quickly and savagely to deal with those who commit crimes and who have no qualms about using extreme force to put an end to disruptive behaviours within the drow cities. To those who do not know better, drow civilization seems to mimic most of the same political and societal structures as any lawful civilization on the surface.

It is, of course, a sham. The appearance is a façade, a construct based around mutual fear and hatred. The

drow are ruled by those with the strength to hold the position, their nobility are created, not born, and their entire society is built upon the supposition that those with the strength and cunning to take something are entitled to have it. What keeps the drow from falling upon one another like a pack of jackals are the ancient customs and systems of battle they all respect. Only barbarians fall upon their enemies like common brawlers, and the drow believe they represent the pinnacle of civilized development.

Informally, the drow refer to their systems of competition and interspecies warfare as 'The Game of Bones.' A complex system of owed debts, granted boons, and personal power holds drow society together and prevents the drow from devolving into constantly warring tribes. Part religious belief, part self-preservation, the Game of Bones is a deadly social conflict. More often than not, the deadly turns of this game are never even seen by those not directly involved.



## THE FRAME OF THE GAME

Within drow society, there are those who play the game, and those who do not. In general, players are of the ruling nobility and the upper ranks of the merchant class. The clergy of the drow pantheon do not directly engage in the Game, but their support is critical in securing one's place within the shifting power structure the game creates. Drow with considerable personal power, particularly arcane spellcasters and successful adventurers of all stripes, also enter the game, but may find themselves without the social contacts and interpersonal skills to survive the deadly web of alliances.

Once involved in the Game, a player's position (and survivability) is based on two critical factors: his influence and his power. Influence measures the ability of the Player to convince others to do things for him, leveraging their power for his own benefit. Power is the raw ability of the Player to do something himself, to get a job done using his personal resources. The greater the resources possessed by the Player, the more impressive his power and the easier it is for him to get things done.

The complexity in the Game rises from the opposition of its players. While having

a high Power is impressive, it is not terribly useful without the Influence to keep others from ganging up against you. Likewise, while Influence can be a very useful way to get something done without dirtying your own hands, without Power it can begin to wane. After all, the drow pride themselves on their personal abilities and will (take seriously) anyone who onstantly use others to accomplish even the simplest of tasks. There are those who take great pride in manipulating others while keeping their hands clean, but it can be very difficult to maintain such a stance indefinitely without appearing weak to those whom you influence.

At its most basic, then, the Game of Bones is a set of rules for the use of influence and power within drow culture. Players struggle to maintain or improve their position by using their own resources, or convincing others to do their work for them (or to simply not compete against them), all while watching their enemies for a potentially devastating counterattack.

## INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS IN THE GAME

It is very rare for a single dark elf to play the Game without outside assistance. While it is certainly conceivable for a lone dark elf to amass enough personal power and influence to become a Player, doing so has its risks. For starters, such powerful individuals are highly sought after commodities by the noble houses and other political structures within the Game. While some of these organizations may accept a polite refusal to join their number, many others see such a refusal as a personal insult and will bring whatever power and influence they possess to bear in an attempt to destroy the upstart. The wise individual will seek out a group with which to ally before he enters the Game, using the group to protect his own standing while contributing to the overall power and influence of his new allies.

Because the web of influence extending from any single individual is limited, solo Players find themselves at a disadvantage in this regard when facing off against groups. The pyramid structure of most groups guarantees an expanding base of influence as the number of contacts increases with the number of individuals within the group. Because the overall Diplomacy skill of a character determines the number of contacts he can maintain at any one time, it is clearly advantageous to ally with others in order to expand influence.

This combination of factors ensures the most successful Players within the game are part of one or

more political organizations they can use to augment their own power and influence within the Game.

## INFLUENCE

Before a character enters the Game, he must amass a certain amount of influence and power. The precise amounts of each vary considerably from area to area and are based entirely on the total influence available in any given city or area of contention. The larger the city, the more difficult it is to enter the game as anything more than a bit player unworthy of notice. Influence, like power, is measured by points, which are amassed by either gaining control over areas, earning the favour of others, or even gaining the blessings of the Fatespinner or other gods. Influence can also be purchased, though the outright buying of influence normally leaves the customer poorer while only gaining a short-term advantage. The table below describes ways in which Influence can be gained and how much Influence is gained for each action. Note that this table is not used once a person or group enters the Game of Bones – once he reaches a combined total of 1,000 Influence and Power, he is considered to have Rank and can only gain influence through a Public Relations Campaign (see below).

\*Killing a rival or enemy must be handled either by hiring an assassin (see below) or performing the job personally. This is perhaps the most dangerous and least common way to gain influence because it is so easily exposed if it goes poorly.

**Action:** A description of the action that is undertaken to gain influence. These are general descriptions and can be expanded by the Games Master as she feels appropriate to the campaign.

**Influence Gained:** The amount of influence the player will gain, provided his action is successful. This is also the amount of influence the player will lose if his action fails and is discovered.

**DC:** The skill check necessary and DC necessary to resolve the action. Note that the DCs listed here are going to be higher than those normally associated with various skills. This is because these DCs represent a series of actions needed to complete a given task, rather than a single action. A hired spy, for example, might have to spend days attempting to gather information, then more days to make sense of the various rumors he hears and report the information back to his spymaster, who must then spend time determining whether or not the information is worth passing back up the chain of command.



# THE GAME OF BONES

## Gaining Influence

Action	Influence Gained	Skill DC
Hire a spy for one month	100	Gather Information (15)
Own a tavern or other gathering place	200	Profession (Merchant)(20)
Use blackmail to gain control of an enemy	100 per power level of the enemy	Innuendo (30)
Kill a rival or enemy	300 per power level of the enemy	See below*
Gain control of a powerful magical item (10,000 gp value or more)	100 per 1,000 gp value of the item	No skill check – only available by purchasing, stealing, or otherwise acquiring the item.
Having a priest in the organization.	100 per level of the priest, 500 per level of a priestess who belongs to the church of the fatespinner.	No skill check – getting a priestess into an organization is a matter of birth

## POWER

Raw force is not as easily used as influence, but it is much easier to obtain and a far more visible deterrent to enemies who might decide to come after an organization. While having a massive amount of influence may allow an organization to subtly alter the course of events in a city, it does not protect that organization when armed mercenaries are kicking down the doors and tossing firepots through windows made from web-spun glass. When push comes to shove, no noble house or criminal family would be comfortable without a large force of armed thugs, guards, and warslaves.

But power is not found only in strength at arms. Divine and arcane spellcasters provide significant power to the houses to which they belong, and many merchant organizations pay very well for the loyalty of their own wizards and sorcerers.

To determine the power available to an organization, simply add together the power ratings found in the table below for all the guards, mercenaries, family,

### Gaining Power

Character Type	Power Provided
Mercenary Soldier	50 per level of warrior, 100 per level of fighter, barbarian, or ranger.
Mercenary Spellcaster	200 per level of wizard, sorcerer, or cleric. 150 per level of druid.
Mercenary 'Agents'	25 per level of bard up to 4 <sup>th</sup> level, then 50 per level. 50 per level of rogue up to 6 <sup>th</sup> level, then 100 per level.

and other members of the house or organization. Note that power can be increased by a noble house or organization at any time, provided they can pay to have the guards on staff. If a house loses guards, either because it can no longer pay them or because it has suffered a military defeat, then that house may also lose rank as their power is decreased.

## RANK IN THE GAME OF BONES

The total of a house or organization's Power and Influence is used to determine the houses rank, as shown on the table below.

Rank is an important thing in the Game of Bones. All players are aware of their position in the game, as well as the position of others – at least within a few ranks. The players of the game do not, of course, refer to their position by a formal rank number, but they know, nevertheless, their relative strengths. Strong houses do not have to worry as much about attacks from their lesser, while weaker houses worry constantly about

**Rank by Power and Influence**

Total Power and Influence	Rank	Action Bonus	Influence/Power Defence
1000	1	+1	+2/+0
4000	2	+2	+3/+0
9000	3	+3	+3/+1
16000	4	+4	+4/+1
25000	5	+5	+4/+1
36000	6	+6/+1	+5/+2
49000	7	+7/+2	+5/+2
64000	8	+8/+3	+6/+2
81000	9	+9/+4	+6/+3
100000	10	+10/+5	+7/+3
121000	11	+11/+6/+1	+7/+3
144000	12	+12/+7/+2	+8/+4
169000	13	+13/+8/+3	+8/+4
196000	14	+14/+9/+4	+9/+4
225000	15	+15/+10/+5	+9/+5
256000	16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10/+5
289000	17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10/+5
324000	18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11/+6
361000	19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11/+6
400000	20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12/+6

**Total Power and Influence:** Add the house or organization's Power and Influence together and consult this column to determine the rank of the house or organization.

**Rank:** This is the rank of the house or organization, as determined by its Total Power and Influence.

**Action Bonus:** The organization has an Action Bonus that works very similarly to the Base Attack Bonus for an individual. As the house grows larger, it is able to undertake more actions without fear of overextending itself, though each action has progressively less chance of success.

**Influence/Power Defence:** The Power and Influence Defence ratings of houses or organizations represent their ability to deal with threats of influence or power. If the House's power rating is higher than its influence rating, its power defence is higher, and vice versa. This rating is used when the house defends itself from hostile actions (see below).

the predations of the strong and the ambitions of the weak. Eventually, most drow cities end up with a handful of houses at the very top of the heap and many, many other houses below them, existing at their leisure and surviving by allying themselves with the more powerful. Given the drow, of course, alliances rarely last long enough for the ink on the agreements to dry, so houses who make deals with one another do it knowing full well the betrayal lying in wait.

**Rank Checks**

Rank checks are made by rolling 1d20 and adding the rank of the noble house to the result. Rank checks are most often used in conflicts between noble houses, particularly for actions taken during the Game of Bones. Rank checks are most useful when they are not made very often; while the Game of Bones is always shifting, some constancy must come of it or the system is no better than the mass anarchy it is intended to control. As such, those drow who constantly throw their rank around (i.e. constantly perform actions that require a rank check) are likely to lose some of it because of the attention they have drawn to themselves.



### PLAYERS OF THE GAME OF BONES

For the drow, the Game of Bones is the ultimate expression of their goddess' will. She believes in the strongest surviving by crushing the weak beneath their heels, and the Game represents a clean, clear expression of that principle. On the other hand, the Game of Bones does offer some protection to the weak, because the strong simply are not able to act fast or decisively enough to wipe them out. Given the utility of the weak houses as tools for the strong, some survive purely by doing as they are told, stifling their individual ambitions to simply hold onto the little scraps of power they already have.

#### Drow Noble Houses

Drow families are organized into Noble Houses, loose collections of family members and allies with a central fortress-home. While the members of a Noble House may live within the fortress-home, many do not, preferring instead to maintain their own bolt-holes in their cities, hidden from their enemies *and* their family members. The House fortresses do serve as symbols of power and a place to house the warslaves, mercenaries,

spellthralls, and house wizards during times of peace and as a place of protection in times of war. Hugely expensive and ridiculously over-protected, the fortress homes also serve as a balance to the threats of the Game. By holing up a House can preserve its members at home, though their influence will certainly wane if they remain out of touch for too long.

Drow Noble Houses are the primary players in the Game of Bones. Their wealth, numerous agents, and traditional role in drow society make them the most powerful organizations in any city of dark elves.

#### Other Organizations

While the drow noble houses are easily the most powerful in drow society, they are not the only organizations with political clout. Merchant guilds, criminal conglomerates, divine sects, and even hidden revolutionaries all band together to play the Game of Bones, amassing power and influence in an effort to earn themselves a place in the brutal pecking order of a drow city. If a group can muster the influence and power (for a combined rank of at least 1,000) they are able to enter the Game.

### PLAYING THE GAME OF BONES

The Game of Bones is a combination of political strategy and brutal combat, with its mood shifting rapidly depending on the whims and

desires of its players. In some cities, it is fought almost entirely in the back alleys and hidden meeting rooms as cabals spread damaging rumours about their rivals and draw upon the services of spies and informers to discover the secrets of their foes. In others, assassins launch brutal strikes against the members of noble houses and armed conflicts between entourage of enemy houses are not uncommon. Though the Bitch of Fate makes it very clear she does not want her cities plunged into constant internecine





warfare, the priests of the Fatespinners encourage the simmering conflicts as a measure of the city's connections to chaos.

In play terms, the Game of Bones is carried out in month-long phases and each player in the Game is able to make a number of actions during each phase, based on their rank, available resources, and number of available lieutenants. The most powerful noble house in any city is helpless to act if all of its leaders have been assassinated or otherwise rendered incapacitated and, likewise, a house with many leaders but little cash is going to have a hard time mobilizing any sort of serious effort in the Game of Bones. Maintaining a balance of things is difficult, but there is no other way to rise in prominence in drow society.

### Aggressors, Defenders, and Target Areas

Throughout this section, you will see references to aggressors, defenders, and target areas. The aggressor in the action is always the noble house (or other organization) who takes the action during the phase. The defender, naturally enough, is the noble house that is the target of the action.

Target areas are typically city blocks or other holdings that provide influence, power, and money to the controlling noble house. See the *Silken Strongholds* chapter for more information about territory and areas.

### Lieutenants

A noble house or other organization normally has a leader, but it must also have a number of lieutenants in order for the house to use its power and influence effectively. For noble houses, this is normally a matter of the family being involved in the action – while drow families are often rife with internecine struggles, it is generally accepted wisdom that members of the same noble house will at least work together to further the interests of the house. Other organizations tend to recruit their lieutenants from the friends and trusted allies of the leader. Wherever they come from, a house must have at least one lieutenant for every action it takes after the first in a given month. This lieutenant must have a number of levels or Hit Dice equal to the Rank of the house or organization minus five. It is the lieutenant's skill which is used when an action is taken.

### Taking Action

The rank of a noble house (a combination of its power and influence) is a rough measure of its ability to get what it wants out of the Game of Bones. More powerful houses (those with a higher rank) are able to act more frequently within the Game, separating their

vast resources to further their own plots or deal with the transgressions of their enemies. Smaller houses, on the other hand, must instead focus their meagre resources on fewer possible actions, because they lack the manpower to do otherwise.

Below are the various actions a noble house may take during a given phase of the game. Each action is presented in the following format:

**Name:** The name of the action in question, used only for reference.

**Influence Requirement:** The minimum influence a house must have in order to take the action.

**Power Requirement:** The minimum power a house must have in order to take the action. While two houses of similar rank have a wide variety of options available to them, the options are very different based on whether the house is influence- or power-based.

**Cost:** The cost of the action. This can have as many as three distinct portions: the power cost, the influence cost, and the actual cost. The power and influence costs indicate the amount and type of resources the house must devote to the action. These costs do not reduce the power or influence of the house, but must be dedicated to the action – they cannot be used for any other actions or defences during the course of the action. The actual cost is typically in gold – though some may allow the substitution of magical items or other forms of payment in place of hard cash.

**Time:** The amount of time the action takes to complete. This is normally given in week-long increments.

**Skill DC:** This is the skill needed to initiate the action and, if necessary, needed to defend against it, as well as the DC for the skill check. The primary leader of the action always makes this skill check and may be assisted by the other leaders or his staff (see below for more information).

**Success Result:** If the action succeeds, the results are spelled out here. This is normally related to the amount by which the skill check succeeded.

**Failure Result:** When an action fails, there is always a penalty of some sort, even if the penalty is only the temporary disposition of resources toward a failed effort. The results of a failure are detailed here and, like the Success Result, are often tied to the degree of failure.

### Assassination

An assassination attempt is very straightforward – you choose a target and hire an assassin to take him out. Regarded by many drow as a dangerous tactic due to the risk of having their assassin captured and interrogated, assassination is still a time-honoured





tradition. This tool is especially likely to be wielded by drow impatient to take their foe down through less violent means.

**Influence Requirement:** 500

**Power Requirement:** 100

**Cost:** 1,000 Influence per level or Hit Die of the target, 1,000 gp per level or Hit Die of the target

**Time:** Two weeks

**Skill DC:** Gather Information (DC 20 + 1 per level or hit die of the target), opposed check

**Success Result:** If the attacker's Gather Information check exceeds the Defender's by 10 or more, the target is killed outright. If the check succeeds by less than 10, the target is entitled to a Reflex Saving Throw (DC 20) to avoid death. If the save fails, the target is killed.

**Failure Result:** If the attacker's Gather Information check fails by 10 or more, the assassin is captured

and provides a +10 bonus to the next Gather Information check made by the targeted house to determine where the attack came from. If the attacker's skill check fails by less than 10, the assassin escapes but fails to close the deal, leaving the target alarmed, but alive. Failing by less than 5 indicates the assassin did not make the attempt, because the target was too well-protected, not where he was anticipated, or was otherwise inaccessible within the assassination parameters.

### Assault

Frontal attacks against a location are rare in the Game of Bones, but are sometimes used to finish off a weakened opponent or to severely weaken an overly aggressive house. The law does not prohibit such attacks, but they require a significant portion of the aggressor's resources and are difficult to succeed with unless the defender is caught at a weak point.

**Influence Requirement:** 0

**Power Requirement:** See below

**Cost:** Variable power cost, see below. For every 1,000 power the aggressor devotes to the assault, he must also expend 500 gp in supplies and bribes.

**Time:** One week

**Skill DC:** None. For every 1,000 power the aggressor devotes to the assault, he receives a +1 bonus to his Rank check. For every 750 power the defender has in position at the location of the assault he receives a +1 bonus to his Rank check. An opposed Rank check is made to determine the result of the assault.

**Success Result:** For every 5 points by which the aggressor beats the defender, the defender suffers a permanent loss of 1,000 Power, up to the maximum Power at the assault site.

**Failure Result:** For every 3 points by which the defender beats the aggressor, the aggressor suffers a permanent loss of 1,000 Power, up to the maximum Power used by the aggressor in the assault.

### Counterintelligence

It is sometimes just as important to keep a foe from understanding what you are up to as it is to find out what they are planning. Counterintelligence is a very useful way to keep other drow guessing about your intentions, and prevents other from finding out your secrets.

**Influence Requirements:** 5,000

**Power Requirements:** 1,000

**Cost:** 500 Influence per Rank of your Noble House

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Gather Information (DC 25)

**Success Result:** For every 5 points by which you exceed the DC of the Gather Information skill check, all aggressors who direct Smear Campaigns, Force Assessments, Frame Ups, and Poison Pill actions against you suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all skill checks related to those actions.

**Failure Result:** You tip your hand while attempting to prevent others from uncovering your plots, making your house or organization more vulnerable to attack. For every 5 points by which you fail the DC of the Gather Information skill check, all aggressors who direct Smear Campaigns, Force Assessments, Frame Ups, and Poison Pill actions against you enjoy a +1 circumstance bonus to all skill checks related to those actions.

## Cover Up

There are times when a noble house or organization may wish to undertake an action they do not want tied to their reputation. This action covers up all evidence of the action in question, but can burn up resources at an alarming rate if used to conceal large-scale operations.

**Influence Requirements:** The same as the total Influence and Power requirements of the action being covered up.

**Power Requirements:** --

**Cost:** 250 Influence per Rank of your Noble House

**Time:** The same as the action being covered up

**Skill DC:** Diplomacy (DC 25)

**Success Result:** If this action succeeds, all evidence tying the noble house to the action it wishes to disavow is destroyed. Others may know the action happened, but they do not know who was responsible for it.

**Failure Result:** The action is not covered up.

## Divine Petition

Seeking the favour of the divine is a longstanding drow tradition. Since the priestesses are not averse to providing such divine backup to houses who suitably impress them, regardless of the goddess' actual thoughts on the subject, noble houses lavish gifts and favours upon the temples whenever possible.

**Influence Requirements:** 20,000

**Power Requirement:** 0

**Cost:** 10,000 Influence, 5,000 gp

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Bluff (DC 30).

**Success Result:** The priestesses agree to provide you with divine sanction, preventing all other noble houses from interfering with your actions during the next phase. Those you directly target suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to all Skill checks made while defending against your actions.

**Failure Result:** Your petition fails to sway the priestesses, who instead decide to condemn your actions. You suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to all Skill checks made while defending against the actions of other houses.

## Extortion

Extortion is a favourite game amongst smaller noble houses who delight in tweaking the noses of their peers. By threatening the livelihood and health of business owners, thugs from these houses extract bribes from the proprietors. Though it is rare for extortion rackets to exist long in one area due to the risk of attracting armed response from the controlling house, even sporadic flare-ups of this type can be damaging to a house's finances.

**Influence Requirement:** 1,000

**Power Requirement:** 2,000

**Cost:** 500 gp + 200 gp per targeted area, 500 Power per targeted area

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Intimidate (DC 20). This is opposed by the target's Sense Motive skill.

**Success Result:** For every point by which the aggressor's skill check result exceeds the skill check result of the defender, the aggressor receives 5% of the targeted area's income for the month. This reduces the amount of income received by the defender in control of the target area by the same amount.

**Failure Result:** The defender receives a +2 circumstance bonus to any defensive action it takes in response to this action, and a +5 circumstance bonus if its skill check result exceeds the skill check result of the aggressor by 10 or more.

## Force Assessment

Before charging into an area, it is wise to know what you are likely to face when you get there. This manoeuvre is most often used prior to an Assault action, to judge the potential danger in the area. This is also very useful if you are attempting to discover what enemy agents are up to in one of your own areas, or an area you intend to take for your own.





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**Influence Requirements:** 3,000

**Power Requirements:** Variable

**Cost:** 1,000 gp per target area, 200 Influence per target area

**Time:** One week

**Skill DC:** Gather Information (DC 20)

**Success Result:** The acting house learns of the type and number of troops and agents in a given area, as well as their approximate strength (average level of all agents and troops in the area). If the result of this skill check exceeds the DC by 10 or more, the plans for those troops are also discovered. This allows the spies to know what the forces will be doing during the next week.

**Failure Result:** The acting house learns nothing about the disposition of troops in the area. If the skill check total fails by 10 or more, then the acting house believes there are more or less troops in the area than are actually present.

### Frame Up

Drow law enforcement is horribly corrupt and used primarily as a weapon of the priestesses to keep the rest of the society in line. The frame up turns this tool of oppression against a noble house by planting evidence of betrayal or heresy where law enforcement can find it. The subsequent investigation is rarely fatal for a noble house, but it does prevent them from acting as freely as would otherwise be impossible.

**Influence Requirement:** 3,000

**Power Requirement:** 2,000

**Cost:** 1,000 Influence per rank of the target noble house, 1,000 gp + 500 gp per rank of the target organization or noble house

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Gather Information (DC 25). This is opposed by the target's Sense Motive skill.

**Success Result:** For every 10 full points by which the aggressor's skill check exceeds the skill check result of the defender, the defender's effective Rank is decreased by one for one month (beginning at the end of the month in which this action is taken). This does not decrease the Power or Influence of the defender, only their ability to take actions and their bonuses for defence or offence.

**Failure Result:** The aggressor house has its own effective Rank decreased by one for one month, beginning at the end of the month in which the action is taken.

### Intelligence Gathering

There are times when it is best to simply sit tight and figure out what everyone else is doing, and how what

they are doing impacts you. This action enables you to try and figure out what actions are directed at your noble house and what immediately threatens your forces.

**Influence Requirement:** 1,000

**Power Requirement:** --

**Cost:** 500 gp, 1,000 Influence

**Time:** One week

**Skill DC:** Gather Information (DC 20).

**Success Result:** If this check succeeds, you discover one action that will occur in the next month and is targeted at your noble house or your areas of control. For every five full points by which your result exceeds the DC of this skill check, you learn of another plot. If this action is used more than once in the same time period, different actions will be discovered by each use if there are additional actions to be discovered.

**Failure Result:** You discover one false action targeted against you.

### Poison Pill

Putting a spy into the house of an opposing noble is a powerful way to gain an edge over him. The poison pill's ability to remain in the house for an extended period of time makes him an important asset – the longer you can keep a spy in place, the greater the benefit he provides. On the other hand, a spy turned against you when he is discovered can cause a great deal of trouble for your house. Being misled into attacking a supposed weak point can be deadly.

**Influence Requirement:** 5,000

**Power Requirement:** 1,000

**Cost:** 500 Influence per rank of the target noble house, 1,000 gp per rank of the target noble house

**Time:** Two months

**Skill DC:** Sense Motive (DC 25). This is opposed by the target's Gather Information skill.

**Success Result:** If the aggressor succeeds, they have planted a spy in the noble house or organization. This spy provides a +2 bonus to the aggressor when making any actions against the target house. This bonus increases by +1 for every 3 months the spy remains in place. The above skill check must be made at the end of every month in which the spy was in place. If the defender wins the skill check, the spy is suspected and the current bonus he provides is reduced by 1. If the aggressor wins, the spy stays in place. If the bonus a spy provides is every reduced to 0, the spy is discovered and the failure result, below, immediately goes into effect.

**Failure Result:** The spy is forced to feed false information to the aggressor, inflicting a -2 penalty



to all actions the aggressor house takes against the defending house.

### Public Relations Campaign

By successfully wining and dining the nobility of a drow city, it is possible for a dark elf noble house or other organization to improve its public image and increase its influence within that city. Though extremely costly and difficult, this is the only method for gaining influence. As a result, drow nobility spend a great deal of time partying with one another and attempting to gain favour with other houses.

**Influence Requirement:** 1,000 per Rank

**Power Requirement:** 0

**Cost:** 2,000 gp per rank of your noble house, 500 Influence per rank of your noble house

**Time:** Three months

**Skill DC:** Diplomacy (DC 10 + current Rank), unopposed

**Success Result:** If the noble house succeeds at the Diplomacy check made at the end of this action, it immediately gains 2,000 Influence. Note that this action becomes more difficult as a house gains rank,

as it requires greater and greater expenditures of time and effort to increase the influence of a powerful noble house or other organization.

**Failure Result:** The noble house neither gains nor loses Influence, though it has spent a ridiculous amount of gold and kept its many influence assets tied up for three months during the attempt.

### Smear Campaign

A smear campaign is an attempt to weaken a noble house by tarnishing their public image. In drow culture, this often means leading others to believe the house is weaker than it actually is, or that it is hamstrung by some sort of emotional or moral ideals held dear by its masters. Smear campaigns, while an effective way to undercut the strength of a noble house, can fail spectacularly. If the campaign is exposed, it gives the targeted house a handle to use against their attackers. While the drow have no problem with liars, they really prefer it when a noble house has the grace and style to at least lie successfully.

**Influence Requirement:** 5,000

**Power Requirement:** 0



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**Cost:** 2,000 gp per rank of the target Noble house, 1,000 Influence per rank of target house

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Innuendo (DC 20 +1 per level or Hit Die of the target), Opposed by target's Sense Motive

**Success Result:** If the attacker's Innuendo skill check result beats the target's Sense Motive skill check result, the target noble house suffers a loss of 1,000 Influence. If the attacker's Innuendo skill check result beats the target's Sense Motive skill check result by more than 10, the target noble house loses 1d4x1,000 Influence. Either of these losses may lower the rank of the house in question.

**Failure Result:** If the attacker's Innuendo Skill check is 10 or more less than the target's Sense Motive skill check, the target gains a +5 bonus to any counterattack they make in response to this action. If the Innuendo skill check fails, but by less than 10, the money is wasted but there are no other ill-effects for the attempt.

### Troop Movements

Moving forces from one area to another can be a tricky thing if you want to keep your actions quiet. This action is used to move your forces without being discovered by others – you do not need to bother with this action if you choose to move your forces openly. Whether you use this action or not, it takes one week to move troops from one area to another, as long as both areas are within the same city.

**Influence Requirement:** 1,000 per 5,000 power worth of troops moved

**Power Requirement:** --

**Cost:** 100 gp per 1,000 Power equal to the troops being moved

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** Hide (DC 10 + 5 per 1,000 power being moved)

**Success Result:** If this check succeeds, you move your troops quietly from one area to another without being spotted.

**Failure Result:** Your forces are easily seen moving through the city and all other noble houses know where you have moved them.

### Vandalism

Vandalism involves hiring groups of thugs to tear up a block or other area of the city under the control of an opposing noble house in order to damage their ability to make money. This can be devastating against houses that are overextended, but can backfire as vandals turn on their owners (after coercion by the enemy) and start tearing things up in the 'wrong' territory.

**Influence Requirement:** 500

**Power Requirement:** 2,000 + 1,000 per area to be vandalized.

**Cost:** 200 gp + 100 gp per area to be vandalized, 500 power per area to be vandalized.

**Time:** One week

**Skill DC:** None. This requires an opposed Rank check at the current bonus of the attacker and defender (DC 15).

**Success Result:** If the aggressor's Rank check exceeds the defender's Rank check by 10 or more, the entire area has been so heavily damaged it provides no income for the next three weeks and requires 1d6 x 1,000 gp of repair work before it can generate more than 30% of its original income. If the Rank check succeeds by less than 10, the area provides only 50% of its normal income for 1d4 weeks, after which the damage is repaired and the area provides its normal income once again.

**Failure Result:** When the aggressor's Rank check fails by 10 or more, the vandals are turned against the aggressor and attack one of his territories. This is treated exactly as if the defender had hired the vandals to attack the aggressor, but does not use one of the defender's actions for the round. A group of vandals cannot be turned more than once during a single action. If the aggressor's Rank check fails by less than 10, the vandalism attempt fails, but there are no other repercussions.

### Wrest Control

The only sure way to keep a rival down is to take away his territories and control them yourself. This risky action is designed to steal an area from a rival. This action cannot be taken in areas in which your target has any Power invested – you must first either defeat his forces using an Assault action or otherwise get them out of the area you wish to seize.

**Influence Requirement:** 5,000

**Power Requirement:** 1,000.

**Cost:** 10,000 gp, 5,000 power

**Time:** One month

**Skill DC:** None. This requires an opposed Rank check at the current bonus of the attacker and defender (DC 15).

**Success Result:** If the aggressor's Rank check defeats the defenders by 10 or more, the aggressor has seized control of the target area from the defender.

**Fail Result:** If the aggressor's Rank check fails by 10 or more, the defender has managed to use the opening provided by the attack to turn public opinion against the aggressor. For the next 1d6 months, the aggressor suffers an effective reduction of 5,000 Influence. At

the end of this time the aggressor suffers a permanent reduction of 2,500 influence.

## DESTROYING AN ENEMY HOUSE

Noble houses and organizations are very resilient. While it is certainly possible to wipe one out, doing so requires a considerable amount of effort and a fanatical zeal to get the job done. To completely destroy a house or organization, you must first reduce it to a Rank of 1, and then kill the Leader and all lieutenants. This effectively destroys the house and ensures others cannot pick up the loose ends and start over.

In the event of a destroyed Noble House or other organization, all areas controlled by that house become uncontrolled and are open for the taking once again.

## THE GAME OF BONES AND PLAYER CHARACTERS

This chapter provides the framework for political and military conflict in the world of the drow, enabling you to quickly adjudicate the actions of many noble houses and other organizations on a large scale. When Player Characters are involved, however, this system may be too abstract. The following additions to the system can greatly enhance the role-playing opportunities of the Game of Bones.

First, if characters are involved, only use the systems above to determine the possible outcome, provided the player characters do not become involved. That is, if the Player Characters were not around, the results determined by the above systems will come to pass. Then create short adventures that allow the characters to overcome these results through specific actions.

Second, make sure the characters are in a position to take actions of their own. If they have control over a portion of their noble house's forces, then they

may be perfectly happy setting things in motion and waiting to see how they turn out. This is a perfect set up for an espionage-based campaign, wherein characters use the forces of the house to find out information they can then act upon.

Third, remember that drow culture is a hotbed of betrayal and deceit. Play up these aspects within their house to keep the player characters guessing about who their enemies and allies really are.



# ARACHNOPHILIA

The chief goddess of the drow is the Fatespinner, the dark bitch of the web, a spider-fiend with a thirst for deeply convoluted plots and the blood of her enemies. While the drow are useful tools to this deity, she provides them with the fruits of her own egg sac, as well, creatures birthed specifically to help the drow in their endeavours and protect them from those who oppose their will. These arachnid-like creatures are the servants and allies of the drow and so well do they work together it is often difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins.

## WORKERS OF THE WEAVE

The most common type of creature used by the drow are the worker spiders, creatures developed specifically for their great strength, constitution, and ability to follow orders without constant supervision. These workers of the weave come in three basic types, each used for a general purpose in drow society and rarely seen outside of that role. Most noble houses will have several of each type of spider available for use and cities have hundreds of each of the worker spiders constantly at work to keep the city running and its architecture sturdy. With the shifting earth and constant dampness eroding even the best-laid plans of drow engineers, these creatures are vital to the continued survival of the drow.

### Drone Weaver

#### Large Vermin

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+4 (22 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

**AC:** 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +4 melee

**Damage:** Bite 1d10+3 and poison

**Face/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Poison

**Special Qualities:** Vermin

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +14, Hide +6, Jump +2, Spot +7

**Climate/Terrain:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 2

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Advancement:** 6-9 HD (Large), 10-12 HD (Huge)

Born sterile, these creatures are the results of failures in other breeding programs. Though they are not as strong as the drudges who perform most of the hauling and lifting for the drow, the drone weavers are quite useful in their own way. The stress of being unable to breed drives these creatures to distraction, which results in a greater amount of web being produced by them than any other spiders. When fed the proper diet, the drone weavers create the incredibly strong and flexible construction webbing used by the drow in their architecture. Though construction webbing is not sticky, the drone weavers are capable of secreting a powerful glue to hold it in place.

A single drone weaver is able to create a 10 ft. cube of webbing material per day per 2 hit die. Thus, a four hit die drone weaver is able to create two 10 ft. cubes of construction webbing each day, provided it receives the proper diet. It normally costs 5 gp per day per 2 hit die to supply the drone weaver with the food it needs to generate its webs.

### Combat

Drone weavers are trained to fear combat and will flee any attacker unless cornered or goaded into attacking at the behest of a blessed master (see The Prestige Drow). Unlike most other spiders, and despite their ability to produce prodigious quantities of webbing material each day, the drone weavers are incapable of creating a traditional spider web of their own and lack any web attack. If forced into combat, the drone weaver simply bites and injects its poison into any creature who gets near.

**Poison (Ex):** The drone weaver spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage. Vermin: As vermin, the drone weaver is immune to all mind-influencing effects.

### Drudge Crawler

#### Huge Vermin

**Hit Dice:** 10d8+10 (55 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

**AC:** 16 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +8 melee, 2 claws +3 melee

**Damage:** Bite 2d6+6 and poison, 2 claws 1d8+6

**Face/Reach:** 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Poison, Rage

**Special Qualities:** Vermin

**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 17, Con 12, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Skills:** Climb +16, Hide +2, Jump +4, Spot +7



**Climate/Terrain:** Underground  
**Organization:** Solitary  
**Challenge Rating:** 5  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Neutral  
**Advancement:** 11-23 HD (Huge)

The drudge crawler is one of only two types of drow arachnid unable to spin a web. The drudge crawler is gifted instead with a pair of oversized claws it can use to lift and carry materials from one location to another. Completely passive in most cases, the drudge crawler becomes a frenzied whirlwind of destruction if it is threatened or when exposed to mating pheromones. Drow arachnophiles often douse themselves with such pheromones before battle, keeping their drudge crawlers in a heightened state of aggressive arousal throughout the conflict.

A single drudge crawler can lift much more than its meagre strength would seem to indicate, due to the support provided by its legs and the design of its carapace. In addition to the normal lifting capacity provided by the drudge crawler's Strength, it can lift an additional 200 pounds per Hit Die. This great strength allows the drudge to do all the manual labour involved in construction for the drow and makes them the most prized of the worker spiders.

## Combat

Drudge crawlers enjoy combat and will attack any strange creature (other than a drow) entering their territory. Drudge crawlers will work together under the watchful of a spider handler, only, but are otherwise prone to attack one another. In combat, the drudge crawler focuses on a single creature at a time, doing its best to kill one opponent before moving onto the next.

**Poison (Ex):** The drudge crawler spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage.

**Rage (Ex):** A drudge crawler who takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage the following round, clawing and biting madly until either it or all opponents are dead. It gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and +2 AC for the duration of this rage. The drudge crawler cannot end its rage voluntarily.

**Vermin:** As vermin, the drudge crawler is immune to all mind-influencing effects.

## Grindgut Spitter Large Vermin

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+4 (22 hp)  
**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)  
**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft. (40 ft., climb 20 ft.)  
**AC:** 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural)  
**Attacks:** Bite +4 melee  
**Damage:** Bite 1d8+3 and poison  
**Face/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Attacks:** Poison, Toxic Spit, Web  
**Special Qualities:** Vermin  
**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1  
**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2  
**Skills:** Climb +14\*, Hide +6, Jump +2, Spot +7

**Climate/Terrain:** Underground  
**Organization:** Solitary  
**Challenge Rating:** 3  
**Treasure:** None  
**Alignment:** Neutral  
**Advancement:** 6-9 HD (Large)

The most specialized of the three types of worker spider, the grindgut has a large gizzard it fills with jagged rocks and other bits of hard debris. The gizzard is used, not in the digestion of food as in many types of bird or reptile, but rather in the condensation of blood, tissue, and organic waste into a paste useful to the drudge crawler and drone weaver. This paste is a necessary component of the diet of both creatures, and a single grindgut spitter can provide enough of the paste each day to supply one of either type of creature per Hit Die. Thus, a 6 Hit Die spitter can provide enough paste for up to 6 of drone weavers or drudge crawlers.

## Combat

Like drudge crawlers, grindgut spitters are highly aggressive and attack strangers (other than drow) who are stupid enough to enter their lairs. Spitters lead with a squirt of webbing, followed by a blast of toxic spit before closing in to finish off their prey with their venomous bites.

**Poison (Ex):** The grindgut spitter spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage.

**Toxic Spit (Ex):** As a follow-up to an attack with a web, the grindgut spitter can spit a 10-foot cone of toxic spittle at its targets once per round. Those within the cone must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d8 points of damage.

**Vermin:** As vermin, the grindgut spitter is immune to all mind-influencing effects.





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**Web (Ex):** Both types of monstrous spiders often wait in their webs or in trees, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size. Web-spinning spiders can cast a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size smaller than the spider. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst it with a Strength check. Both are standard actions whose DCs are listed in *Core Rulebook III*. Web-spinning spiders often create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed at a Spot check (DC 20) to notice a web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has the hit points listed on the table, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/fire. A monstrous spider can move across its own sheet web at its climb speed and can determine the exact location of any creature touching the web.

**Skills:** \*Grindgut spitters gain a +8 competence bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks when using their webs.

## GUARDIANS OF THE WEB

While the drow are quite capable of protecting their cities from attack, doing so is a distasteful task they prefer to leave to those not as precious in the grand scheme of things. Chief amongst their guardians are the following three spiders, bred for their viciousness, ability to be guided in battle, and raw deadliness. While perhaps not as dangerous as a platoon of drow warriors, a clutch of these deadly arachnids can be more than enough to deter intruders.

### Acidweaver

#### Large Magical Beast

**Hit Dice:** 5d10+15 (40 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft. (40 ft., climb 20 ft.)

**AC:** 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +8 melee

**Damage:** Bite 1d8+4 and poison

**Face/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Poison, Web of Acid

**Special Qualities:** --

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 5

**Skills:** Climb +6\*, Hide +5, Move Silently +2\*, Jump +7, Spot +5

**Feats:** Dodge

**Climate/Terrain:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Advancement:** 6-9 HD (Large)

The acidweaver is the trap architect of the drow city. It lairs in the tunnels leading to and from the city and cloaks vital areas of the tunnel in thick layers of webbing. While the drow travel through secret tunnels devoid of such defences, those who stumble into the tunnels of the acidweaver are in for a rude shock as the sticky strands become flesh-devouring acid that quickly reduces even the strongest of foes into quivering puddles of liquefied tissue and soggy bone. Acidweavers look much like other giant spiders, though their bodies tend to be longer and thinner than their cousins. The only real hint of their more dangerous nature is the stench of ammonia that clings to them and can be detected within 20 feet.

## Combat

The acidweaver is not a direct fighter. It prefers to use its webs to capture targets, then releases the acid held in the webs to destroy those it finds particularly dangerous. If the web and acid are not enough to finish a creature off, the acidweaver will normally retreat and search for allies to help it bring the intruders down, resorting to biting only as a last resort.

**Poison (Ex):** The acidweaver spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage.

**Web of Acid (Ex):** Acidweavers often wait in their webs, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size. The acidweaver can cast a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size smaller than the spider. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst it with a Strength check.

Both are standard actions whose DCs are listed in *Core Rulebook III*. The acidweaver often create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground.

In addition to the abilities of the web, listed above, the acidweaver can trigger the release of a powerful acid from the web itself. Any creature caught in the web must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) or suffer 2d4 hit points of damage as the acid soaks into their flesh and begins breaking their tissues down. This damage persists for 2d4 rounds, or until the creature removes itself from the web. The damage continues for one round after the creature removes itself from the web, as the acid continues to burn the skin. This damage can be avoided by immediately dousing the creature in one gallon (plus one gallon per size category above medium) of mild alcohol (most wines or other alcoholic drinks qualify).

**Skills:** \*Acidweavers gain a +8 competence bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks when using their webs.

## Vampire Spider

### Huge Undead

**Hit Dice:** 8d12 (48 hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

**AC:** 21 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +11 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +15/+10, Slam +10

**Damage:** Bite 2d6+11 and poison, Slam 2d6+11

**Face/Reach:** 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Poison, Smite Good, Web

**Special Qualities:** Blood Drain, Cold and Fire

Resistance (15), Damage Reduction 15/+2,

Domination, Energy Drain, Fast Healing, SR 16, Turn Resistance, Vampiric Weaknesses

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 32, Dex 14, Con --, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

**Skills:** Climb +13\*, Hide +7, Jump +10, Move Silently +7\*, Spot +11

**Climate/Terrain:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 11

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Advancement:** By character level

The vampire spider is one of the most vile creations of the drow - the imprisonment of a fiendish spirit and an undead vampiric essence within the form of a

giant spider. These creatures appear as giant spiders, with rotted carapaces and hideously elongated fangs. Though they appear to move clumsily, it is a ruse - the vampire spider is every bit as dextrous and agile as any spider of its size. The only hint of its otherworldly origins is the faint purplish glow emanating from each of its eight eyes (this glow can be seen with a successful Spot check (DC 15)).

While vampire spiders are a combination of fiendish and vampiric essences in the form of a giant spider, they do not receive all of the advantages of their vampiric form. The drow are jealous of their power and do not want their vampire spiders running around creating armies of their own, so vampire spiders do not have ability to create spawn or command wild creatures. Each vampire spider is also attuned to one master at the time of its creation and must serve that master faithfully regardless of the orders it is given or the danger those orders present to its continued well-being. See the Drow Spells chapter for more information about the creation spell for vampire spiders, *Spawn Sanguine*.

Along amongst the spidery servants of the drow, the vampire spider is able and willing to pursue its own improvement through advanced training. Vampire spiders favour the fighter class, but are also known to undertake some training as rogues and rangers, as well.

## Combat

The vampire spider is a strong and canny combatant who prefers to strike from surprise in order to weaken its foes and deplete their numbers before it makes a frontal assault. Working in teams, these hideous creatures can wreak terrible havoc against would-be invaders into drow territory. Given their ability to heal themselves from the blood of their foes, the vampire spider makes a formidable opponent who is very difficult to destroy.

**Domination (Su):** A vampire can crush an opponent's will just by looking onto his or her eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the vampire must take a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the vampire targets must succeed at a Will save or fall instantly under the vampire's influence as though by a *dominate person* spell cast by a 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer. The ability has a range of 30 feet.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** A vampire can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, inflicting 1d4 points of permanent Constitution drain each round the pin is maintained. If a vampire spider



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can make contact with its web within 20 feet of a creature entangled in it, the fiend may inflict this special attack on them without need for a grapple check of its own.

**Energy Drain (Su):** Living creatures hit by a vampire's slam attack suffer 2 negative levels.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** A vampire heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points or lower, a vampire attempts to escape. It must reach its web within 2 hours or be

Elisia ducked low beneath the spider's fangs as they slashed the air overhead, then kicked off the thing's leg and rolled away from its ponderous bulk. Shards of brittle chitin showered away from the leg where she had kicked it, but the hole filled itself in as quickly as it had crumbled. The stench of carrion and rotting blood filled her nostrils as the creature surged toward her again.

As a ranger of the deep gnomes, she had seen many drow creatures and killed every one she had been given the chance to dispatch. But what she had taken for a giant spider was clearly something much, much more. It chattered at her angrily and spun to face her where she had ended her roll, pivoting on its rotting legs as smoothly as a pondflier on its gossamer paddles. It spat a gob of webbing at her and, off balance, she was too slow to dodge away from the mucus-slicked net. The strands settled around her almost gently but stuck fast to whatever part of her body they touched. A thick, slimy strand fell across her face and she gasped at the pain its touch brought where it lay across her nose. Like a thousand tiny hooks, pinpoints of agony stabbed into her flesh and she cried out in pain. She struggled but the net grew only tighter around her, the filaments biting into her skin so sharply it left her senseless.

Then the spider sighed, a great, gusty breath stinking of the crypt. The web was still connected to its spinnerets and Elisia watched in horror as the web binding her turned a deep crimson. She felt the weakness seep into her muscles as her blood was siphoned away by the web and fed into the vampiric spider's system, where it nourished the foul beast. Her struggles grew more and more feeble, until at last, her breath leaked from dead lungs and her eyes turned to sightless, glazed orbs.



utterly destroyed. (It can travel up to nine miles in 2 hours.) Once at rest in its web, it rises to 1 hit point after 1 hour, then resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

**Poison (Ex):** The vampire spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage.

**Smite Good (Su):** Once per day, the vampire spider can make a normal attack to deal 8 hit points of additional damage against a good foe.

**Vampiric Weaknesses (Su):** All vampire spiders share the same weaknesses as other vampires, including an inability to cross running water or enter a home without being invited. Vampire spiders cannot be staked, however.

**Web (Ex):** Vampire spiders often wait in their webs, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size. The vampire spider can cast a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size smaller than the spider. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst it with a Strength check. Both are standard actions with a DC of 20 + 5 for every target size category smaller than Medium (i.e. a Halfling caught in the web would have to make a check against a DC 25). The vampire spider often creates sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground.

The vampire spider's web is also much more than just its home, it is also an extension of its abilities. The vampire spider can use its blood drain ability against any creature entangled in any of its webs within 30 feet of its current location.

## Foulstalker Spider

### Large Magical Beast

**Hit Dice:** 5d10+15 (40 hp)

**Initiative:** +1 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 20 ft. (40 ft., climb 20 ft.)

**AC:** 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

**Attacks:** Bite +8 melee, Claw +3 melee

**Damage:** Bite 1d8+4 and poison, Claw 1d10+4

**Face/Reach:** 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Leaping Impale, Web

**Special Qualities:** Camouflage

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 5

**Skills:** Climb +6\*, Hide +5, Move Silently +2\*, Jump +7, Spot +5

**Feats:** Dodge

**Climate/Terrain:** Underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Advancement:** 6-9 HD (Large)

The foulstalkers are creatures of vile temper and ravenous hunger, spiders instilled with a hatred of all creatures other than the drow, to which they are fanatically loyal. Just as important as their loyalty to the drow, the cephalothoraxes of the foulstalker spiders contains a fluid that is magically tied to a darkstone, creating a mystical tether that prevents the creature from moving too far from the darkstone. This allows the drow to simply dump them into the tunnels surrounding their cities and leave them to their own devices. The foulstalker is quite capable of feeding and caring for itself in the wild and breeds rapidly, quickly creating a legion of unpleasant watchdogs which gleefully attack any non-drow they locate.

Unlike most spiders, foulstalkers are not territorial and willingly share domains with one another, often forming packs of six to ten in order to protect one another or deal with particularly difficult threats. These silent, hidden threats are often the last thing drow hunters see, as they leap from hiding to impale their targets with their deadly forelegs.

## Combat

The foulstalker uses its natural camouflage abilities to remain hidden as it scurries from place to place and communicates with its allies through a complex and subtle language of pheromones. This coordination allows spiders to track one another's locations up to 120 feet and to communicate reasonably sophisticated battle plans (on par with the pack hunting techniques used by wolves or lions). Once in position, the spiders leap at their enemies, striking first with their elongated forelegs in an attempt to cripple or kill the target outright. On subsequent rounds, lone spiders will use their webs to take down creatures who pose the greatest immediate threat (armoured fighters are their targets of choice) and then turn on spellcasters or others who are less able to defend themselves in close combat. Packs use the same tactics, though half launch themselves





onto spellcasters while the other half use their webs to tie up the melee fighters and prevent them from aiding their companions.

**Camouflage (Ex):** When not moving, the foulstalker gains a +10 to its Hide skill checks to remain hidden due to its natural coloration and body shape. This camouflage is only effective while the spider is on stone walls or in very rocky areas.

**Leaping Impale (Ex):** The foulstalker is equipped with a vicious set of forelegs tipped with jaggedly barbed chitin. They use their legs much like a spear, rising up on their back legs and lunging forward to drive the tips home. When leaping, this attack is even more effective and is capable of killing or incapacitating a target. The foulstalker must have 3 rounds to study the target before launching its impale and must be within 20 feet of the target at the time it leaps. This is resolved as a charge attack which, if it successfully hits the target, causes an additional 4d6 hit points of damage.

**Poison (Ex):** The foulstalker spider possesses a poison that has a Fortitude save DC of 16 and causes 1d6 Strength damage for initial and secondary damage.

**Web (Ex):** Foulstalkers often wait in their webs, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size. The foulstalker can cast a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size smaller than the spider. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst it with a Strength check. Both are standard actions whose DCs are listed in *Core Rulebook III*. The foulstalker often create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground.

## INTIMATE COMPANIONS

While the six spiders detailed above are all critical to the survival of the drow, in one way or another, there is another group of spiders highly prized by the drow. These spiders are constant companions, created to travel with the drow at all times and provide them with abilities they do not normally possess. More importantly, these spiders bond with the drow in an

intimate fashion, some going so far as to become a part of their masters' bodies. These intimate companions are a gift of the Fatespinner and are bred and raised by the drow priestesses as part of their holy duties. While some are commonly available, many are restricted to the nobility or members of the clergy and represent one of the highest honours the goddess can bestow upon the faithful.

It is important to note that, while these are living creatures, they are not typical monsters. They have no life outside of their attachment to a drow host and can be easily destroyed when not so attached. They are treasures and tools, but they are not monsters to be battled like the creatures above. Anyone who wants to can kill any of the creatures below as a full-round action, provided it is not currently attached to a drow.

## The Bond

Other than the ovarisite, each of the creatures indicated below must be bonded to a drow to provide any benefit at all. The ovarisite is treated as if it were bonded to its host creature at level 5, however, for purposes of determining damage or destruction of the creature.

Bonding a creature costs 1,000 experience points per level of the bond. A creature may only increase the bond between himself and one of these creatures once per level, though the bond may be increased at any time during a level, provided the character has been in contact with the creature for at least 56 hours during the month in which the bond is increased.

## Effects of the Bond

The greater the power of the bond, the more resilient the creature is and the greater the benefit it provides to the bonded drow. All creatures and their wearers start with a bond strength of 0, which may be increased as noted above. A bond is never necessary, though the relatively feeble benefits of the creatures who are not bonded decreases their utility.

Each of the creatures described below is followed by a short table indicating the benefits provided by the bond at each of the six available ranks. The table columns are:

**Bond Rank:** This is the rank of the bond in question.

**Benefit:** This lists the benefits of the creature at a given bond rank.

**Penalty:** This lists the penalties of the creature at a given bond rank.

**Special:** Some bonds have special needs or requirements that must be dealt with either before or after the rank is attained, while some provide special

benefits if certain conditions are fulfilled. These conditions and their benefits are indicated in this column of the table.

## Ovarisite

Like other elves, the drow have some difficulty in creating offspring. Their long lives and generally frail physique inhibit their rate of fertilization, while their harsh living conditions and vicious infighting prevent many pregnancies from reaching full-term. Because the fatespinner views the drow as her tools, she was not well-pleased with their inability to expand their numbers at a reasonable rate and took steps to improve the situation.

The ovarisite is her answer, a spider-like creature designed to transport a growing fetus from the womb of a drow to a host body. This allows the drow to attempt more fertilizations by removing the imperative from the females to carry the child to term and also places the drow young beyond the scheming hands of their relatives. While it is certainly possible for a drow to sneak in and destroy an ovarisite clutched to its host body, the presence of the priests of the Filtheater make this a much more difficult task than assaulting a lone pregnant woman in the dark walkways of a drow city.

The ovarisite is a simple creature, consisting primarily of an elongated cephalothorax attached to an expandable sac. The cephalothorax is tipped by a pair of spatulate pedipals which are used to slide the developing infant from the womb, through the birth canal, and into the ovarisite's abdominal sac. This sac then becomes the infant's new home during its gestation, which normally takes 20 months to complete.

While gestating an infant, the ovarisite requires a host. Most drow use male hosts, though the race is unimportant. The ovarisite attaches itself to the back of the host with its modified back legs. These legs are tipped with spines for securing the ovarisite to the host and for withdrawing vital nutrients to nourish the growing drow infant. The ovarisites often bind their hosts in webbing to keep them from putting up too much of a struggle, but there are those who prefer a host that is able to move about. These ovarisites are sometimes seen steering their host through the streets of drow cities on some errand or another, their bulging sacs rising from between the host's shoulder blades like some grotesque tumor. When it comes time to deliver a child, the ovarisite detaches itself from the host and retreats to the breeding pits. Here, the child is delivered by priests of the Filtheater, who extract the



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child in a soggy cocoon from the ovarisite's sac and clean it for presentation to its family.

Hosts are able to carry out their normal activities while an ovarisite is in place, though wearing clothing or armor over the back is impossible and the ovarisite will not allow its host to undertake dangerous activities or put itself into hazardous situations at any time. Because the ovarisite is intelligent (assume it has an intelligence of 12 to 15 in most cases) it knows enough to exercise and care for its host, but allows it very little personal freedom. During the last two months of gestation, the ovarisite will direct its host to the breeding pits, where it is wrapped in webbing and supplied food through a feeder spider (see below) until the child is delivered.

Ovarisites have a strong degree of control over their hosts and can inflict pain in order to reinforce this control. When the ovarisite gives a telepathic order to its host (the creatures only communicate through very limited range telepathy 'audible' up to 30 feet) the host must make a Will save (DC 15) to avoid obeying the order. The ovarisite can inflict 1d8 points of damage on the host at any time, which forces another Will save to resist the current order (DC 25). The drow normally choose passive or weak-willed hosts, especially preferring the mongrel races such as orcs, humans, and ogres.

**Cost:** The ovarisites are not for sale – they work for the drow because they are commanded to do so by the fatespinner. The church of the fatespinner assigns ovarisites to the drow noble houses as they are needed and may, if petitioned and there is no other pressing need, allow a commoner family the use of an ovarisite.  
**Upkeep:** The ovarisites require no real upkeep beyond a host, but do require a 'sacrifice' of several drow infants each year. The ovarisites work with the priestesses to select the infants so sacrificed and immediately upon the birth of these infants the ovarisites depart with the children. While most drow believe the infants are hauled off to be offered to the fatespinner, a few know the truth – that the children are being re-integrated into drow civilization for some unknown reason.

### Heartshield Spider

The drow have developed a breed of spiders that is not only very colourful and pleasing to the eye, but which is very useful as a form of living armour, as well. The heartshield spider clings to the torso of its host, wrapping its armoured legs over the and under the shoulders and around the waist and locks them together behind the host using its specialized claws. This holds

the heartshield spider in place and prevents it from being dislodged in much the same way the straps on armour hold it in place. Depending on the strength of the host's magical abilities and the age of the spider, it can provide very potent defences against mundane and magical attack.

The heartshield spider provides the armor bonuses indicated in the table below, but it also provides a certain amount of damage mitigation and spell resistance, based on how tightly the wearer and spider are attuned. This creature is always considered medium armour while worn, but requires only a single round to remove or don.

**Cost:** 3,000 gp

**Upkeep:** The heartshield spider requires 100 gp per week per bond rank (minimum of 100 gp) for food and health supplies. A week's worth of such supplies weighs five pounds. If the heartshield spider does not receive its normal food for even a single day it goes into hibernation and cannot be revived until its feeding is resumed. Note that the spider comes out of its hibernation 24 hours after it is first fed. If a heartshield





Bond Rank	Benefit	Penalty	Special
0	+2 armour bonus	-2 skill penalty, 25% arcane spell failure	
1	+3 armour bonus	-2 skill penalty, 20% arcane spell failure	
2	+4 armour bonus	-2 skill penalty, 15% arcane spell failure	If the wearer expends a spell slot or level 3 or higher or a turning (or rebuking) attempt, the heartshield spider can also absorb 10 hit points of damage caused by any source of damage for the next 5 rounds.
3	+5 armour bonus, +1 Fort save bonus	-2 skill penalty, 15% arcane spell failure	If the wearer expends a spell slot or level 3 or higher or a turning (or rebuking) attempt, the heartshield spider can also absorb 15 hit points of damage caused by any source of damage for the next 5 rounds.
4	+5 armor bonus, +2 Fort save bonus	-1 skill penalty, 15% arcane spell failure	If the wearer expends a spell slot or level 3 or higher or a turning (or rebuking) attempt, the heartshield spider can also absorb 20 hit points of damage caused by any source of damage for the next 5 rounds.
5	+6 armor bonus, +2 Fort save bonus	-1 skill penalty, 15% arcane spell failure	If the wearer expends a spell slot or level 3 or higher or a turning (or rebuking) attempt, the heartshield spider can also absorb 25 hit points of damage caused by any source of damage for the next 5 rounds.

spider goes for more than 5 days without the needed supplies, it perishes from malnutrition.

### Fangspitter Spider

The fangspitter spider looks like a bloated purple spider with a slightly elongated thorax and a surprisingly long (3 inches) proboscis in place of the fangs normally found on such spiders. Its legs are equipped with the same sort of hooking claws found on the heartshield spider, but the fangspitter uses its claws to cling to the forearm of the wearer.

By flexing the muscles of the forearm, the wearer can stimulate the fangspitter to launch one or more darts of calcified tissue laden with an injectable poison. As the bond between the fangspitter and its wearer grows stronger, the creature is able to shoot its darts further and its poison increases in power.

Cost: 5,000 gp

Upkeep: The fangspitter spider extracts all the nutrients it needs from the body of the wearer. It also extracts the calcium and other materials needed to create the darts from the tissues and blood of the wearer. This reduces the wearer's Constitution by 1 point while the fangspitter is worn. This damage may



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Bond Rank	Benefit	Penalty	Special
0	May fire one dart per round at a range of 20 ft. The dart has a damage of 1d4 and no poison.	The fangspitter is treated as an Exotic weapon by its wielder when the bond is at its weakest.	--
1	May fire one dart per round at a range of 25 ft. The dart causes 1d3 damage and its poison (Fort save DC 15) has an initial effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage and a secondary effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage.	The fangspitter is treated as a Martial weapon by its wielder when the bond is at this rank.	--
2	May fire one dart per round at a range of 25 ft. The dart causes 1d4 damage and its poison (Fort save DC 15) has an initial effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage and a secondary effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage.	The fangspitter is treated as a Marital weapon by its wielder when the bond is at this rank.	A 3 <sup>rd</sup> level or lower spell with a range of touch may be imbued into the next dart fired by the fangspitter. If the attack hits, the dart injects no poison but does, instead, release its magical payload into the target. Imbuing the spell is treated as casting the spell for all purposes – targets who cannot cast spells may not imbue a spell into a fangspitter dart. The dart must be fired within 5 rounds or it loses the imbued spell.
3	May fire two darts per round (but no more than the wearer's number of attacks in a given round) at a range of 25 ft. The darts cause 1d4 damage and their poison (Fort save DC 15) has an initial effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage and a secondary effect of 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage.	The fangspitter is treated as a Simple weapon by its wielder when the bond is at this rank.	You may increase the save DC of the poison by allowing the fangspitter to draw 5 hit points of blood from your arm. It takes one round for the fangspitter to extract the blood; the damage caused by the fangspitter may be healed magically or naturally.
4	May fire two darts per round (but no more than the wearer's number of attacks in a given round) at a range of 30 ft. The darts cause 1d4 damage and their poison (Fort save DC 15) has an initial effect of 1d2 points of temporary Dexterity damage and a secondary effect of 1d2 points of temporary Dexterity damage.		

5	May fire three darts per round (but no more than the wearer's number of attacks in a given round) at a range of 30 ft. The darts cause 1d4 damage and their poison (Fort save DC 20) has an initial effect of 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage and a secondary effect of 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage.		By firing a single dart as a full-round action, you receive a +4 insight bonus to your attack roll this round.
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be healed naturally, but only after the fangspitter is removed and the wearer rests for a full week.  
 Notes: More than one fangspitter may be worn, but each bond must be paid for individually and the wearer suffers a Constitution reduction of 2, one for each of the fangspitters.



### Assassin Spiders

These tiny creatures are no larger than the head of a pin and are exactly the same shade as the skin of the drow to which they are bonded. This allows them to cling to their host completely undetected, their tiny bodies lurking in every fold or flap of the body to which they are attuned. The creatures are extremely toxic, but only in large numbers and if given time to position themselves to flood the target's bloodstream with sufficient quantities of their venom. This makes them useless in combat, but an ideal tool for assassinations if the attacker can remain close to his target until the spiders have a chance to get into position. These spiders were used to great effect during the Courtesan Wars, when pleasure slaves were trained in their use and then set upon unsuspecting young nobles.

To use the assassin spiders, the assassin must remain in physical contact with their target for a full five minutes. The target is allowed a single Spot skill check (DC 20) after two minutes to notice the miniscule assailants flooding onto his body. If the check succeeds, he may save himself by immediately moving at least 5 feet away from the assassin, at which point the little spiders begin making their way back to their master. If he does not move at least 5 feet away from the assassin, the spiders will remain in place until he does move the required distance away or until 10 minutes have passed without the assassin re-establishing contact

Bond Rank	Benefit	Penalty	Special
0	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 15 and has an initial damage of 1 point of Constitution and a secondary damage of 1d2 points of Constitution.	The assassin spiders are very difficult to get along with at first and can be extraordinarily distracting. The host suffers a -1 penalty to all Skill checks until he has increased the power of his bond. At Rank 1, this penalty disappears.	



## ARACHNOPHILIA

with the target. If the assassin does re-establish contact within 10 minutes, the clock starts at the point at which the target moved out of contact with his killer. For example, at two minutes, a target realizes something is

not right and moves a few feet away from the assassin. Seven minutes later, the assassin manages to assuage the fears of his target and moves back into contact. After another three minutes, the assassin has been in

1	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 15 and has an initial damage of 1d2 points of Constitution and a secondary damage of 1d3 points of Constitution.	The assassin spiders begin testing their venom on their host. As a result, the host suffers a -1 reduction to his Constitution until such a time as he is able to increase the strength of his bond with the spiders. This penalty is removed when the host increases the bond to rank 2.	
2	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 17 and has an initial damage of 1d3 points of Constitution and a secondary damage of 1d4 points of Constitution.		The Constitution penalty felt by the host is no longer in effect due to his tolerance to the initial venom. The host does, however, require a dose of antidote each day (5 gp per day or 2 gp in raw materials and a successful Alchemy skill check (DC 15) ) in order to avoid succumbing to the stronger venom his spiders create.
3	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 20 and has an initial damage of 1d6 points of Constitution and a secondary damage of 2d3 points of Constitution.	The spiders reach maturity and begin breeding. This saps the host of 1d4 hit points at the beginning of each day as the tiny vermin feed on his flesh. This damage may be healed normally and occurs each morning as soon as the host awakes.	
4	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 22 and has an initial damage of 1d8 points of Constitution and a secondary damage of 2d4 points of Constitution.	The erosion of the host's natural defences against poisons brought on by the constant injections of venom and taking of antidotes inflicts a -1 natural penalty to all saving throws the host makes to resist the effects of poisons.	
5	The venom of the spiders has a Fort save DC of 25 and has an initial damage of 1d10 points of Constitution and a secondary damage of 1d10 points of Constitution.		

contact with his target for a total of five minutes and the assassin spiders respond by injecting their venom into the target.

It takes the assassin spiders a mere two minutes to move from the target back onto their host. If they are not given the chance to return to the host, they die and decay into fine particulate matter in less than an hour. Finding living assassin spiders on a corpse is difficult, requiring a Search skill check (DC 25). Dead assassin spiders are impossible to find and look like nothing so much as tiny motes of dust.

Cost: 5,000 gp

Upkeep: The tiny assassin spiders place a bit of strain on the target, mainly in the hit point loss as their numbers increase, but require no outside supplies or other maintenance needs.

### Bloodclot Spiders

These small, red spiders attach themselves to the hosts flesh with their tiny web sacs. The sacs are normally attached to the flesh near major blood vessels such as under the arms, in the groin, or other areas with considerable blood flow. While they are not useful in any offensive sense, the bloodclot spiders are very useful when it comes to stopping bleeding. The spiders can tell when their host is bleeding by the scent and move immediately to the injury, which they coat with a layer of webbing that prevents further blood loss and promotes healing.

Cost: 20,000 gp

Upkeep: The bloodclot spiders need no additional upkeep other than that noted in the Special column, above. The creatures are fed by the blood of their host and need no other nourishment or special care.

Bond Rank	Benefit	Penalty
0	The host automatically stabilizes when knocked unconscious.	The host must consume twice as much food as normal in order to keep his bloodclot spiders fed. The tiny beasts drain a bit of his blood at regular intervals to replenish their stocks of webbing material.
1	The host suffers 1 hit point less damage from any attack inflicted by a weapon which causes piercing or slashing damage.	The host body loses some of its natural ability to heal from wounds without the aid of the bloodclot spiders. If the host ever loses his spiders, he is unable to heal naturally until they are replaced.
2	The host's natural healing rate is increased by 2 hit points each day.	The sacs created by the spider are unpleasant and distracting to others the drow interacts with. The character suffers a -2 penalty when using any skills related to the Charisma ability.
3	The host's natural healing rate is doubled; this ability replaces the ability gained at the second rank of the bond.	Thick layers of webbing prevent the host from using his body to its fullest. The character suffers a -1 penalty to all skills related to the Dexterity ability.
4	The host naturally heals one hit point per hour while walking but not while undertaking other strenuous activities (such as spellcasting, research, item creation, or combat of any kind).	The character requires a full hour each day to clean off the layers of webbing the bloodclot spiders spin around his body each night. During this time, the character is considered helpless.
5	The host naturally heals a number of hit points per hour equal to his unmodified Constitution modifier even while undertaking strenuous activities.	If the host stops moving for more than 30 minutes, his spiders weave enough webbing around his body to make movement difficult. Unless the host spends a full 15 minutes removing the webbing, he suffers a -1 circumstance penalty to all Reflex saves, Armour Class, and any other Dexterity-related skill checks or natural abilities.



# SILKEN STRONGHOLDS

The drow remain within their homes a good portion of the time. Given the harsh environment of the Underdeep around their cities and the dangers nobles present to one another, it is no surprise that their homes are as much fortress as they are luxurious estate. For the drow, the home is a place of power from which they plot and scheme, with the noble family hidden and protected at the centre of a web of traps and deceit.

While some drow do build their strongholds on the fringes of their society, establishing a fortress in the wilderness of the Underdeep is a difficult and dangerous task. Most nobles prefer, instead, to construct their estates in the cities of their people, not only a considerably safer option than living in the wilderness, but also gives them access to far more resources. In most cases, a drow estate in the wilderness either belongs to outcasts or was placed there to safeguard a very important location or item (such as a mithral mine or sacred site).

Just as the stone and webbing used to construct the silken stronghold is important, so too are the resources it controls. Given the constant scheming of the drow and their social conflicts, these resources often take the form of informants, spy networks, and even areas of the city. These resources are necessary to protect a noble house from its enemies and to allow it to launch attacks against those it views as weak or vulnerable (see *The Game of Bones*).

## SURROUNDINGS

As noted above, the drow do not relish rustic living on the frontiers of the Underdeep wilderness. Their sybaritic lifestyle favours easy access to the necessities and luxuries of life, so few drow nobles will leave a city of their own accord. Instead, they construct their homes within the boundaries or on the edges of a drow city, fastening their estate to their dark civilization like a leech to its host.

In times of peace, the drow estates serve primarily as luxurious homes for their noble families. Though there are defences in place, few drow truly fear a frontal assault on their homes – the dangers presented by assassinations and other plots can rarely be stopped by strong walls or barred doors. Though the estates do

provide real defences for those who live within, they are primarily living spaces, not military encampments.

The most secure drow estates are those in the central areas of a drow city, where the nobles not only have easy access to their urban holdings, but are also defended from true military threats by the mass of the city itself. It is much simpler to crash the gates on a fringe compound than it is to carve a bloody swath to the centre of a drow city to sack the noble homes found there. Thus, houses in the centre of the city are far more valuable and uncommon than those on the fringes, but are also much more expensive and difficult to secure against other drow.

A few drow have taken to building their homes in massive stalactites above the cities of the drow, carving passages and chambers from the limestone to create hanging estates. Though quite secure, these are difficult to travel to and from, limiting their use by the more active noble houses.

## DROW CITIES

The drow construct their cities in large, natural caverns, usually at least a mile across and several hundred feet high. As the city grows, it expands out through the natural stone surrounding the city, creating a warren of tunnels and rooms connected to the city. Seen as a whole, a mature drow city sits at the centre of a web of tunnels extending for miles in every direction and filled with scheming drow, their mercenaries, slaves, and spiders.

The primary sections of a city are the city center, city proper, the tunnels, the perimeter, and the fringe. The city center is at the heart of the city and normally contains the financial districts and most influential and powerful noble houses. Often walled and always heavily protected, the city center is the secular heart of the drow city, without which the rest would quickly fall into ruin.

The city proper is composed mostly of businesses, temples, and the homes of drow. By far the most densely populated of any portion of the city, the city proper is also the heart of the drow religious life. Temples crop up every few blocks and small shrines dot even the residential areas and busy streets of the business district. If the city center is the heart of the drow city, the city proper is its body and soul. It is from here that the churches lead the city, issuing edicts to the residents of the city and subtly guiding the hands of the nobles, all the while preaching the glory of the dark pantheon of drow culture.

Home to organized crime and less organized gangs of drow schemers and criminals, the tunnels run under and around the city proper and city center. Patrolled only by the agents of those who make their home here, the tunnels are dangerous in the extreme – those who come here to live are willing to protect their territory with extreme violence. Few venture into the tunnels without an armed escort and even fewer leave if they come here looking for trouble.

Encircling the city proper is the perimeter. This area is the edge of the developed city and, as such, is constantly changing. The true perimeter holds a few drow homes in spaces carved from the cavern walls and sometimes carved into the walls themselves. These homes are often the fortresses and estates of petty drow nobles, those too poor or too threatened by life within the city proper or city centre. As the city expands, it overtakes the perimeter, incorporating the structures here as it spreads and pushing the true perimeter further away.

The fringe is the least controlled area of the city and consists mostly of armed garrisons and scout camps. This is the post of the drow armed forces, who patrol the area surrounding the city with an eye toward stopping invasions and preventing the ingress of potentially hostile infiltrators. Those who choose to live here are very rare and face constant trouble and potential disaster should a group of flayers or angry driders come crashing into their estate. Those who do live here normally have something to hide or wish to separate themselves almost entirely from drow culture.

Each section of the city has its own benefits and drawbacks for the construction of a silken stronghold. While living in the city centre provides great access to resources and fantastic protection from outside invaders, it also costs a king's ransom and puts one at risk from attacks from other noble houses. On the other hand, living in the hinterlands is dirt cheap, but provides access to no resources and creates the risk of being eaten by a flayer if one has a bit of bad luck. The table below illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of living in different sections of a drow city and allows Games Masters to nicely abstract the general composition of different sections of drow cities.

**Area:** The area of the city the noble house is constructed in.

**Resource Availability:** Different types of construction and resources can only be had at a given level of availability. A gambling den, for example, requires at least fair resources, while a fungus farm requires no resource availability at all. This is important because a noble house cannot control a resource in an area more affluent than the area in which it is constructed. Thus, while a noble house in the City Centre can control a business anywhere else in the city, and beyond, one built in the perimeter cannot control a resource found in the city proper or city centre.

**Resource Modifier:** Resources found in different areas provide different levels of income. Modify the income of a resource area by this number to determine the total income (or loss) it provides for the month.

**Danger:** Drow cities are not truly safe by the standards of surface dwellers. Their chaotic nature and belief in the right of the strong to rule makes their



## SILKEN STRONGHOLDS

law enforcement spotty, at best, and allows various types of criminal activity to flourish. Couple this with the danger of strange creatures from the Underdeep attacking, and it becomes obvious there is a great deal of danger to go around. The danger rating of each area of the city shows how dangerous the area is (see below for more information).

**Cost:** This is the cost per unit to construct anything in a particular area of the city.

**Upkeep:** The cost per unit, per month to maintain an estate in a given area of the city.

\*The fringe does have some resources available. These are noted in the 'resources' section, below.

\*\*The City Centre has dangers all its own, namely the Game of Bones. While there is little danger of being accosted in the street by random criminals, nobles who live in this part of a drow city must be prepared at all times for a sudden attack brought on by the manoeuvrings in the Game of Bones.

## RESOURCES OF A DROW CITY

Noble houses need a steady infusion of cash to keep running. All those spies and soldiers have to be paid, not to mention the upkeep and expansion of the estate,

or the many luxuries the nobles enjoy. In true drow fashion, the easiest way to get the funds necessary to support their lifestyle, the drow nobility seize control of various businesses and other institutions in the city through elaborate protection rackets. These controls are far from foolproof and have no legal validity, however, and so shift from house to house based on the outcome of the Game of Bones. Such resources are known as 'contested resources' and are far from stable investments.

Following are descriptions of the many resources available in a dark elf city. While not an exhaustive list, those resources described below are the foundations of all drow cities. To determine the number and locations of these resources, see the Available Resources section, below.

### Dining

The drow enjoy fine foods, and the restaurants in most of their cities serve a wide variety of dishes to suit their tastes. Like luxury merchants, no one needs to eat at a restaurant, but many do for the sheer pleasure of the experience.

**Availability:** 15%

**Earnings:** 10d10 – 5d10 gp





**Takeover DC:** 15  
**Required Resources:** Poor

### Entertainment

Gambling dens, theatres, and other sources of drow amusement are all regarded as entertainment venues suitable for control by a drow noble house. Unfortunately, they are also easier to take over than many other types of resource, making them risky investments.

**Availability:** 10%  
**Earnings:** 20d20 – 15d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 10  
**Required Resources:** Fair

### Housing

Perhaps the simplest resources to control are the residents of an area. Through clever use of insurance schemes and other protection rackets, housing areas can be converted into profitable assets for a conniving noble house. Though readily available, these areas are also easy to overthrow and can be quite volatile given the disparate nature of the residents. They also provide relatively little income, all things considered.

**Availability:** 25%  
**Earnings:** 1d10 – 5d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 15  
**Required Resources:** Poor

### Manufactory

Closely related to the raw materials business, manufactories create items for sale. Smithies, woodworkers, and other craftsmen are all considered part of the manufactory business.

**Availability:** 5%  
**Earnings:** 15d10 – 5d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 25  
**Required Resources:** Fair

### Merchant, Staple

Staple merchants offer food, clean water, or other basic necessities of life within drow cities. They sell the materials that few drow wish to make, but which all drow need to carry on and, as such, tend to produce a small but steady stream of profits.

**Availability:** 20%  
**Earnings:** 5d20 – 5d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 15  
**Required Resources:** Fair

### Merchant, Specialized

Specialized merchants sell things like paper, pens, spell components, and other items needed by specific professions. These merchants can make more money than staple merchants, but the higher prices of their inventory can cost them dearly in lean times.

**Availability:** 15%  
**Earnings:** 10d20 – 10d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 20  
**Required Resources:** Good

### Merchant, Luxury

These merchants sell items no one in the city needs, but many want. Whether they sell fine wines or pieces of art, the luxury merchant is in the business of selling items to fill the desires of others.

**Availability:** 10%  
**Earnings:** 15d20 – 15d10 gp  
**Takeover DC:** 20  
**Required Resources:** Excellent

### Raw Materials

The drow need metal, stone, wood, and other raw materials just like any other civilization. These types of resource either procure or make available these resources to those who need them within the city. Though highly profitable, these operations are prone to take over due to their need to remain accessible to a wide variety of individuals and organizations in order to maintain their businesses. Though the risk is

### Drow City Sections

Section	Resource Availability	Resource Modifier	Danger	Cost	Upkeep
City Centre	Excellent	X10	**	5,000 gp	2,000 gp
City Proper	Good	X5	Low	3,000 gp	1,000 gp
Perimeter	Fair	X1	Average	1,000 gp	500 gp
Tunnels	Poor	X3/4	High	500 gp	300 gp
Fringe	*	X1/2	Extreme	200 gp	100 gp



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great, if protected these resources can prove extremely beneficial to a house.

**Availability:** 5%

**Earnings:** 20d20 – 10d10 gp

**Takeover DC:** 10

The specifics of different businesses and resources are left to the Games Master's discretion – it is enough to know the category (merchant, entertainment, etc) of business, however, without needing to know the exact type.

### AVAILABLE RESOURCES

There are a finite number of resources in a drow city, based on its population and overall wealth. To determine the number of each type of business in

a given city, please consult the tables below. The population value table consists of the following columns:

**Population:** The number of individual drow living within the city. It is assumed there are an additional 20% more than this number kept in the city as slaves, mercenaries, merchants, or other jobs non-drow may hold in the city.

**Areas:** These columns denote the number of areas within each section of the drow city. Areas are important because they are what noble houses control. Each area can contain a number of businesses, as seen in the table below.

**Noble Houses:** The number of noble houses found in a city of this size, on average. This also includes organizations of any power, such as wizard guilds, criminal empires, or trade groups.

#### Areas by Population

Population	City Centre	City Proper	Perimeter	Tunnels	Fringe	Noble Houses
1,000	1	2	10	10	20	1
2,000	2	4	20	20	40	1
3,000	3	6	30	30	60	2
4,000	4	8	40	40	80	2
5,000	5	10	50	50	100	3
10,000	10	20	100	100	200	5
15,000	15	30	150	150	300	8
20,000	20	40	200	200	400	10
30,000	30	60	300	300	600	15
40,000	40	80	400	400	800	20
50,000	50	100	500	500	1000	25
75,000	75	150	750	750	1500	40
100,000	100	200	1000	1000	2000	50
+25,000	+10	+20	+50	+50	+100	+1

#### Business in City Centre Areas

D100 Roll	Business Type
01-10	Dining
11-20	Entertainment
21-50	Merchant, Specialized
51-75	Merchant, Staple
76-100	Merchant, Luxury

#### Business in City Proper Areas

D100 Roll	Business Type
01-10	Dining
11-20	Entertainment
21-50	Merchant, Specialized
51-75	Merchant, Staple
76-100	Housing

**Business in Perimeter Areas**

D100 Roll	Business Type
01-10	Merchant, Staple
11-20	Dining
21-50	Housing
51-75	Raw Materials
76-100	Manufactory

**Business in Fringe Areas**

D100 Roll	Business Type
01-40	Raw Materials
41-80	Manufactory
81-100	Housing

Once you know the number of areas available in a drow city, you can then determine the types of business in those areas by consulting the tables below. There is one table for each of the city section types, and each city area will contain 1d6 resources at any given time.

**TERRITORY**

Getting some space in the city centre of a mature drow city to build your new silken stronghold requires one of two things – a great deal of power and influence or an extremely unlikely run of good luck. In most campaigns, the city centre is the domain of powerful, established drow noble houses which are unlikely to part with their living space willingly. Likewise, the tunnels are impossible to gain territory in, unless you are willing to depose one of the current gangs down there and seize their space for your own. In most cases, these two areas of the city are best left to their own devices until you are a more powerful player in the Game.

Conversely, getting space on the fringe or perimeter is very easy. The perimeter, at least, does not even need to be cleared of monster infestations because the guards and military patrol it semi-regularly to prevent any sizeable groups from taking root there. The fringe, on the other hand, is dotted with clusters of vile creatures, each ready and willing to create all manner of havoc for those unfortunate enough to stumble into their lairs or cross their wandering paths.

To take control of an area in the perimeter, a drow need only find some empty space and claim it. Construction can begin immediately and no one will step in and try to stop it – the drow nobility encourages construction

**Business in Tunnels Areas**

D100 Roll	Business Type
01-30	Dining
31-60	Entertainment
61-90	Merchant, Staple
91-100	Merchant, Specialized

and population in the perimeter, as it is by this method that the city grows.

To control an area in the fringe, the drow must clear an area of at least 5 square miles around the site of the stronghold. To do this, he must annihilate, drive out, or bargain with the existing inhabitants of the region – the Games Master should determine who and what these actually are using the encounter tables in *Core Rulebook II* as a basis. Once such an area has been cleared, regular patrols must be set in place to keep the region free of encroaching enemies. At least two patrols should be travelling the area at any one time, each with a unit size of at least 10. The Games Master should adjudicate as to the success of these patrols and of which, if any, creatures will attempt to take back the land by attacking the patrols, as well as the effect of the fighter either increasing the size and regularity of the patrols, or pulling them back after heavy losses.

Once the stronghold has been completed, the drow need only send out one patrol at a time in order to keep the region relatively safe. However, fighters may be determined to increase their region of control, by sending additional patrols to cover more areas of 5 square miles each. Once again, two patrols will be needed to do this until a garrison (small fortress) can be built, when only one patrol will be needed for the 5 square mile area. The Games Master is free to adjudicate that certain areas near to the main stronghold no longer need continual patrols once the fighter has established himself in the wilderness and controls at least 20 square miles of territory in total, or is within one mile of the city perimeter.

Perhaps most difficult is obtaining space within the city proper. Though horribly crowded and cramped, the city proper offers the easiest access to the widest variety of shops and other resources, without the ridiculous expense and difficulties inherent in moving into the city centre. But gaining space to construct anything in the city proper is handled by special dispensation from the churches of the drow. In almost all cases, the church requires both a substantial payment and a significant quest undertaken to prove the worthiness of the candidate. Those who succeed





in their quest and have the cash are given the claim of an area of the city decided upon by the church. The church clears the land and evicts the current tenants of the area, but provides no further services.

This method of construction is how the city proper is expanded into the perimeter, as noble houses are allowed to build their estates just inside the edges of the city proper, nearly bordering the perimeter. As businesses move out to take care of the needs of the nobles and their servants move out to be nearer to their masters, the city expands and the perimeter is pushed further out into the fringe.

## BUILDING THE STRONGHOLD

Once adequate territory has been gained, the fighter can then take the very expensive step of building his stronghold. This will take a great deal of gold and a very long time, but it is only when the last stone is laid that a fighter can truly feel that all his sword work throughout the years has finally been justified, for he will be lord of all he surveys!

To build the stronghold, the fighter need only work through the Construction List below, selecting what he needs. Both players and Games Master should at this point begin drawing up an accurate map of the stronghold, whether it is a small fort or a huge castle, in order to properly gauge what is needed. Players should be warned – there are a lot of very nice options that can be taken when building a stronghold, but they are also very expensive!

There are several rules that a fighter should be aware of when choosing items from the Construction List with which to build his stronghold;

† All the costs of hiring and feeding workers is taken into account within the prices on the Construction List.

† One engineer must be hired for every 50,000 gp, or part of, spent on building the stronghold. See Staff below for further details.

† When building a stronghold in difficult terrain (such as mountains, swamp or desert), all costs on the Construction List must be doubled to take into account the difficulty of creating solid foundations or simply transporting materials through the wilderness.

† The stronghold will take one week to construct for every 2,000 gp spent on the Construction List. The fighter may reduce this time to one week for every 5,000 gp by increasing all costs by 50% as he hires more workers.

† All constructions may be built larger than their base size listed below on the Construction List. Doubling any dimension (height, width or length) will double the cost of the construction. Tripling any dimension will also triple the cost. Such costs are cumulative – for example, a wall doubled to 60 ft. high will cost 8,000 gp. If the width of it is also doubled to 40 ft. wide, the final cost will be 16,000 gp. No dimension may be more than tripled in size and no

## Construction List

Construction	Cost	Height	Width	Length	Structure Points
Barbican	55,000 gp	40 ft.	20 ft.	100 ft.	800
Bastion	6,000 gp	30 ft.	20 ft.	-	400
Buttresses	750 gp	20 ft.	-	-	+20%
Fleshcrafter's Surgery	10,000 gp	10 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	--
Fungal Garden	1,000 gp	--	50 ft.	50 ft.	--
Gatehouse	8,000 gp	20 ft.	20 ft.	50 ft.	100
Keep, Round	120,000 gp	80 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	1,250
Keep, Square	80,000 gp	80 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	1,000
Library, Arcane	5,000 gp	20 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	--
Moat	500 gp	20 ft.	20 ft.	100 ft.	-
Outbuilding, Stone	900 gp	10 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	
Ovarisite Creche	1,000 gp	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	--
Spider Pen	500 gp	10 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	400
Torture Chamber	1,000 gp	10 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft.	--
Tower, Round	25,000 gp	30 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	800
Tower, Square	18,000 gp	30 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	600
Underground Corridor	150 gp	10 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.	-
Wall	4,000 gp	20 ft.	20 ft.	100 ft.	300

construction may be more than twice as high as its width.

† When increasing the size of a construction, the Structure Points of it will also increase in proportion to the cost increase. So, for example, the wall above would have 600 Structure Points when its height was doubled, and 1,200 when its width was also doubled.

† All constructions are considered to have a Hardness score of 8. This may be increased to 10 by doubling the final cost of the construction.

† All constructions are assumed to have adequate doors, trapdoors, windows and arrow slits, as the player desires.

**Barbican:** The barbican is a combined construction, consisting of a gatehouse and two towers, all specially reinforced to provide a highly defensible entrance to the stronghold. The drawbridge is of hardened wood and has a hardness of 6 and 30 Structure Points. In addition, the barbican also has a portcullis with a hardness of 10 and 10 Structure Points. The listed height of the barbican is that of its two towers. The

actual gatehouse will always be half the height of the towers.

**Bastion:** The bastion is a half-tower used to provide extra defence to a wall. The bastion must be mounted against a wall and no more than one may be built for every 100 ft. of wall length.

**Buttress:** Designed to give extra strength and reinforcement to walls under constant bombardment by siege engines and magic, a set of buttresses take the form of several stone supports built along the outer side of a wall. A set of buttresses grant a 20% bonus to the total Structure Points of a wall. No wall may have more than one set of buttresses. The buttresses may be increased in height to give a wall either a 40% or 60% (by doubling or tripling their height, respectively) increase in Structure Points, but not buttresses may be higher than the wall they support.

**Fleshcrafter's Surgery:** This area is used by visiting fleshcrafters to work on their noble clients. Most noble houses prefer to have the work done in their own estates, where the results can be carefully monitored by other members of the house and the instruments and facilities are a known quantity. All Craft (flesh) skill checks made in this chamber receive a +6 circumstance bonus.





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## SILKEN STRONGHOLDS

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**Fungal Garden:** This smelly area is normally located beneath the main structure of the estate or in an enclosed courtyard. It contains a fast-growing collection of fungi that are all edible and provide enough sustenance to keep 100 drow alive for up to three weeks without the need for outside supplies. The garden is normally not used for day-to-day eating but is kept up in case of sieges or famine. If used as the primary source of food for a week or more, the fungal garden requires one month per week it was used to replenish the supply of fungus.

**Gatehouse:** The gatehouse is little more than an opening within a section of wall to allow entrance to the stronghold. It has a drawbridge of hardened wood with a hardness of 6 and 30 Structure Points. In addition, there is also a portcullis with a hardness of 10 and 10 Structure Points.

**Keep, Round:** The centre-point of any large stronghold, the keep is the main building within the courtyard, often dwarfing its defences in size and majestic glory. A keep may have any amount or arrangement of rooms and floors within, as chosen by the player building the stronghold. Round keeps are difficult to construct but are able to weather bombardments that would crush a more basic square design.

**Keep, Square:** Square keeps are identical to those with rounded walls but are far easier to construct. However, they are also more vulnerable to attack.

**Library, Arcane:** This library provides wizards and others who research arcane matters with an invaluable source of information. All Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana) checks made in this area require one hour to perform, but receive a +4 insight bonus due to the large amount of research material available.

**Moat:** Moats are relatively simple to construct and greatly add to the defensibility to a stronghold. However, they can also take a lot of resources away from the construction of the stronghold itself if they are designed to completely surround it, as such digging requires a lot of manpower. Most moats are simple ditches, though an engineer may be lucky enough to have a close river with which to divert water to fill it, making the moat virtually impassable. Once a moat has been filled with water, enterprising adventurers often fill it with a variety of unpleasant surprises, from poisons to aquatic creatures to cause further trouble to an attacker. Any drawbridge of the stronghold will automatically be long enough to cross the moat safely when fully extended. The height of the moat listed on the Construction List above actually refers to its depth, and many adventurers will be keen to make it even deeper, in the usual manner of increasing the size of constructions.

**Outbuilding, Stone:** Outbuildings are common within the courtyards of strongholds and are typically used as storehouses, stables and barracks for mercenaries and guards. Players may choose any arrangement of rooms within an outbuilding as they desire, and may add additional floors simply by increasing the height of it. Several outbuildings may be joined together to form larger constructions.

**Ovarisite Creche:** This room is usually located deep within the estate and is quite heavily guarded. It is here that the drow keep their broodmares and house the ovarisites that assist in their reproduction. Those who do not have an ovarisite crèche must allow their children to be gestated by the drow temples, which reduces the effective Influence of the noble house by 1,000 points.

**Spider Pen:** Used to hold the many spiders owned by an estate, each pen can hold up to 4 spiders of size large or smaller.

**Torture Chamber:** The torture chamber is used to get information from the captured enemies of the drow and is quite frequently used by the more active noble houses. For 500 gp, a torture chamber that provides a +2 circumstance bonus to any checks used in torture (see Tricks of the Drow). For 2,000 gp, this bonus is increased to +4, and for 5,000 gp, the bonus is increased to +6. A well-stocked torture chamber can be quite valuable to the drow.

**Tower, Round:** Designed to be the most defensible point of any stronghold, round towers are mighty constructions that can withstand a great deal of bombardment before being destroyed. The arrangement of any rooms and floors within the tower may be left to the player.

**Tower, Square:** Far easier and cheaper to build than round towers, the square design is the most common found on strongholds, though it is less resilient to attack.

**Underground Corridor:** Many strongholds have underground areas designed for defence, stores or even prisons. The cost listed is for a single 10 ft. high square of 5 ft. on each side to be burrowed into the ground and constructed with appropriate support to avoid cave-ins. Players may join such squares together to form long corridors, intersections and subterranean rooms.

**Wall:** The basic defence for any stronghold, walls provide a protective enclosure for other buildings. A player may decide to have a single five foot wide passage built inside the wall free of cost, in order to allow movement within the stronghold and provide firing positions for archers.

## BUILDING WITH WEBS

The information above assumes buildings constructed from stone found in the caverns below. In fact, much of the drow's construction is not done in this manner,

as their cities often rise in great tiers above the floor of the caverns they inhabit. Though the buildings on the very lowest levels of the drow cities are typically built of stone, the upper levels are always built from webbing.

Fortunately for the drow, the construction webbing produced by their spiders is very sturdy and resilient and only grows more so through the years. The longer a structure of webbing persists, the stronger it becomes and the more difficult it is to damage. Drow cities that have stood for millennia have buildings so strong and so resistant to normal damage they are nearly invulnerable.

The cost of building from webs is a mere 20% of the cost of building with stone, but the structures have only 20% of the structural points of a building constructed from stone. The building is otherwise quite sturdy and stands up to standard wear and tear very well, especially given the presence of so many normal spiders in them who cannot resist spinning their webs to add to the overall strength of the thing. The



construction webbing is woven so finely and so tightly by the spiders who create it that it resembles nothing so much as a very fine, flexible sheet of grainless wood and has most of the other properties of wood, as well,

including its vulnerability to fire. Though much less flammable than other webs of a looser weave, construction webbing still burns as well as wood under most circumstances.

For each year the structure remains standing, it gains an additional 1% of the structural points it would have had were it built from stone. This does not increase indefinitely – if a building persists for 100 years, it will ‘max out’ at having 115% of the structural points of the same type of building constructed from stone. After 10 years, the web loses its flammability, as well, and begins to look smoother and sleeker than wood, taking on an almost

metallic sheen. Water poured on the web at this point simply slides off, and other fluids are shed just as easily. After 20 years, the web has roughly the same texture and fire resistance as polished stone, though it will not achieve its full strength for many years.

Even when fully cured, the construction web weighs very little – a cubic foot of the stuff weighs a mere five pounds.



## BUILDING IN STALACTITES

There are many stalactites within the Underdeep that are capable of supporting a large noble house in their interiors. Some drow prefer to build their noble houses in such places, because they provide the natural defences of being high in the air, where ground troops and most conventional assaults would be impossible to carry out.

### Income and Taxes

Building an estate is incredibly expensive but running one will drain the coffers of even the wealthiest family. Unlike the strongholds on the surface, which levy taxes on the commoners, the drow survive by a complex system of graft and protection rackets, as noted above. Legally, a house can claim control of a number of areas equal one-fifth of its current rank (or a minimum of one area) as protected holdings of the house. These are protected from overt attacks by other noble houses and legally belong to the house which claims them. In the event that a new noble house is given territory bordering that controlled by an existing noble house, the new estate cannot claim any of the protected territories of the existing noble house. This can lead to cases where the protected areas of an estate are far from the estate itself, forcing the new noble house to decide whether it should defend its estate with its Power, or use that Power and Influence to protect its holdings in different parts of the city.

Stalactite estates are completely self-contained and do not have external structures of any type. Instead, the stalactite is hollowed out and rooms are constructed in its interior. Treat this as the construction of underground corridors, with a cost of 300 gp for 10-ft. x 5-ft. x 5-ft. section carved from the stalactites. Other interior rooms cost the normal amount, in addition to the amount required to carve them from the stone, to construct.

## WEAPONS AND DEFENCES

Any fighter worth his sword will make sure any stronghold of his is well stocked with skilled mercenaries and guards in order to repel any attack. However, many will also recognise the need to add far stronger weapons and defences in order to not only drive off an invading force, but to utterly destroy them as they hurl themselves against the high walls of the stronghold.

The Stronghold Weapons table below features several weapons a fighter may like to employ in the defence of his new stronghold. Unless otherwise noted, all weapons detailed below require a 10 ft. square space in which to operate.

### Rate of Fire

Though often crewed by several men, many of the weapons found within a stronghold are huge and complicated devices, not easily or quickly operated. Each weapon on the table above is listed as having a

### Stronghold Weapons

Weapon	Cost	Damage	Structural Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Crew
Arrow Catapult	500 gp	Special	-	-	100 ft. (min. 100 ft.)	6	2
Ballista	500 gp	3d6	-	X3	120 ft.	3	1
Catapult, Heavy	800 gp	5d6	3d6	-	200 ft. (min. 100 ft.)	8	5
Catapult, Light	550 gp	3d6	1d6	-	150 ft. (min. 100 ft.)	5	2
Catapult, Medium	675 gp	4d6	2d6	-	150 ft. (min. 100 ft.)	6	3
Fire Projector	3,600 gp	4d6	1d6	-	30 ft. max.	2	4
Trebuchet	1,400 gp	6d6	4d6	-	200 ft. (min. 200 ft.)	10	6



rate of fire – this is how many full-round actions must be spent by the crew reloading the weapon before it may fire again.

### Crew

Each weapon may lose up to 25% of its crew, rounding down, before its rate of fire is affected. Each crewman lost after this point will cause the rate of fire to be doubled.

**Arrow Catapult:** This is a special kind of catapult, designed to specifically target massed units. Several arrows are loaded into a wooden rack and are launched by a spring action that sends them raining down on to the enemy. A Profession (siege engineer) check at DC 20 is made as for firing a catapult and, if the shot successfully strikes a target, will cause 1d10 hit points of damage to all subjects within 20 feet of its point of impact.

**Ballistae & Catapults:** The full rules for using ballistae and catapults are covered in *Core Rulebook II*. Catapults may launch flaming shots, designed to start fires on board attacking war machines. Flaming shot is used in exactly the same way as regular catapult ammunition but in addition to normal damage, will also cause 1 point of Fire Damage on any war machine it successfully hits. Flaming shot costs 250 gp for 20 shots.

**Fire Projector:** These are one of the most feared weapons employed upon the walls of a stronghold, for whilst short ranged, they can spell the doom of any attacking war machine. By using a highly combustible alchemical mix of gases and minerals, the fire projector can shoot a huge torrent of searing flame for many feet, setting enemy war machines alight and annihilating units unfortunate enough to come within range. Fire Projectors cause Fire Damage equal to the amount of structural damage rolled every time they hit a target. This weapon is considered to fire in a 30 ft. cone, in the same way similar spells do, as described in *Core Rulebook I*. A creature caught in the cone of a fire projector may make a Reflex save at DC 10 in order to receive half damage. However, 1d20 should be rolled every time a fire projector is used. On the roll of a 1, the fire projector will automatically explode, igniting its lethal ammunition in a spectacular display of pyrotechnics. Everything within 10 feet will sustain its normal damage.

**Trebuchet:** Trebuchets are immense weapons, slightly different in principle to catapults but working in an identical fashion. Trebuchets require a 20 ft. square space in which to operate.

## STAFF

Every stronghold of note has a large staff working behind its walls, hired by the fighter to ensure the smooth running of his fortress and allowing him to concentrate on important matters of territory and warfare. From the lowly cook who feeds the entire garrison of the stronghold, to the skilled engineer who ensures its walls are always maintained in the finest condition, a fighter will soon come to recognise that he needs to hire far more than simple mercenaries.

Unless otherwise stated, all staff may be considered to be either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level experts in their field, or commoners, as appropriate. The Games Master is welcome to generate abilities and statistics for them as appropriate. Not all the staff listed below are required for every stronghold, but fighters will find their affairs are managed a lot better if they employ the right people for the right jobs. Other player characters may adopt certain positions if the fighter deems them fit for the post.

Staff Member	Cost per Month
Alchemist	800 gp
Armourer	125 gp
Captain of the Guard	2,000 gp
Castellan	500 gp
Chamberlain	50 gp
Cook	5 gp
Engineer	500 gp
Herald	25 gp
Siege Engineer	100 gp
Stable Master	10 gp
Torturer	20 gp
Weaponsmith	100 gp

**Alchemist:** Few noble houses can afford the additional luxury of a permanent alchemist, much less take the risk that his experiments may cause major structural damage! However, such an alchemist will be able to automatically provide 40 rounds of flaming catapult shot per month. In addition, the Games Master may rule that he may be set other tasks of the players' choosing.

**Armourer:** Armourers are essential in keeping the equipment of mercenaries and guards in good working order. One armourer is necessary for every 100 armed men present within the stronghold. If sufficient armourers are not present, units will receive a –1 circumstance penalty to their Armour Class in unit combat until enough armourers are present.



## SILKEN STRONGHOLDS

**Captain of the Guard:** Only the very greatest of noble houses are likely to have a captain of the guard. Such a man ensures the defences of the stronghold are kept tight at all times and he personally manages all mercenaries present. The captain of the guard is a barbarian, fighter or ranger of a level equal to half that of the fighter who owns the stronghold, rounding down.

**Castellan:** Second only to the captain of the guard, the castellan is responsible for the safety of the estate. Managing the placement of defences and fortifications, he is often a vital component for the smooth running of any stronghold. The castellan is a fighter or ranger of a level equal to a third that of the fighter who owns the stronghold, rounding down.

**Chamberlain:** The chamberlain manages all non-military aspects of the estate and handles all domestic duties, such as the hiring of suitable cooks. He is essential for any fighter who does not wish to get bogged down by the day-to-day routines of the stronghold.

**Cook:** Cooks provide foods and drink for every member of the stronghold's forces. One cook is needed for every 50 people present in the stronghold.

**Engineer:** Every estate requires the services of an engineer to ensure walls, towers and keeps are well maintained and able to stand in battle. A stronghold without one engineer for every 100,000 gp of

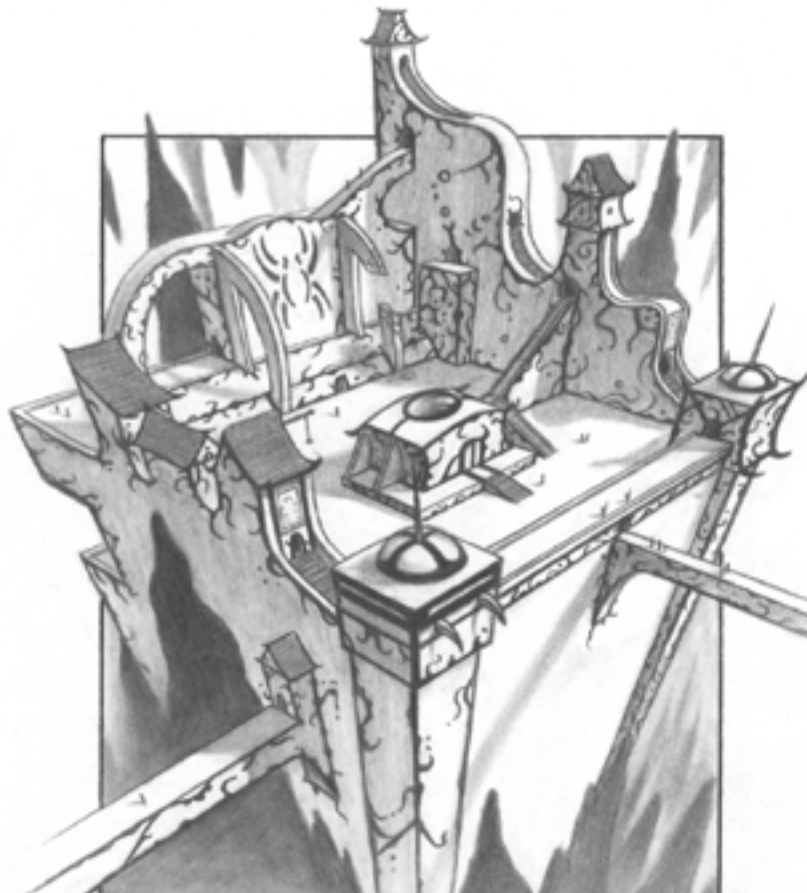
its original value will lose 1d6 Structure Points from every construction each month.

**Herald:** These specialists help keep the drow nobles apprised of the various fates and fortunes of the other noble houses and their members. This allows the nobles to stay abreast of social developments and provides them with the information they need to act accordingly when entertaining guests, be they friend or foe. If a herald is present, the nobles gain a +2 competence bonus to all Diplomacy checks made within the estate.

**Siege Engineer:** Dedicated siege engineers are essential for the proper function of all stronghold weapons. One will be required for every weapon, or the rate of fire for each will be doubled due to the lack of speed of untrained crews.

**Torturer:** For drow, keeping a torturer on hand is a point of pride. A torturer is required for the proper use of a torture chamber, another drow favourite.

**Weaponsmith:** Weaponsmiths are essential in keeping the arms of mercenaries and guards in good working order. One weaponsmith is necessary for every 100 armed men present within the stronghold. If sufficient weaponsmiths are not present, units will receive a -1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls they make in unit combat until enough weaponsmiths are finally hired.



# DESIGNER'S NOTES

When I was given the opportunity to write about the dark elves, I eagerly accepted. The concept of fallen elves is an interesting one, especially as I regard 'normal' elves as creatures to be loathed rather than admired. Combining their xenophobic nature and elitist attitude with the hate and anger of the truly evil creates a villain rich with possibilities.

One of the challenges of writing this book was putting the evil back into the drow. A lot of authors have done a great deal of very exciting work with the drow, but there has been a tendency to treat them as romantic heroes, rather than the dark villains I always loved. You will not find heroes in this book, because I just do not see heroes in the drow world. Aside from an aberrant scimitar-swinging ranger or two, drow are evil creatures, far past redemption and with no interest in pursuing the lighter side of life.

To further drive home the evil of these creatures, this book contains some information about the breeding habits of the drow. As creatures of raw evil, I wanted to show the drow as creatures conceived in hate, dire beings doomed to evil from the instant of their conception. This led to the exploration of the drow use of sex as a weapon, which in turn led to some thought about the ways in which the drow deities would shape their people through the procreative cycle. Thus were born the ovarisites, strange creatures that use the bodies of slaves to gestate drow children, freeing the drow from the need to bear their own children and providing a much larger number of drow young to be used and abused by their parents.

One of the interesting things I discovered about evil is how tightly bound it is to the concept of self in our culture. While researching *The Quintessential Psychic Warrior*, for example, I found some interesting correlations between those who ornament their body with piercings and tattoos and the perception others have of them. A large portion of Western society sees such ornamentation as a sinister form of self-mutilation, which gave rise to the idea of fleshcrafting among the drow. Giving the drow the tools they need to change the bodies of their slaves (and themselves, on rare occasions), seemed a natural to bring out their view of others as tools while playing off the cultural perceptions involved in bodily transformation.

A challenge I faced when dealing with a race of purely evil, highly chaotic creatures was the nature of the civilization. How would they survive for any length of time, much less to become one of the greatest threats posed by the Underdeep? The solution I came up with was the use of religion as a weapon to keep other drow in line, and the Game of Bones, a highly formalized game of politics and military manoeuvring that gives the drow a way to vent their aggression and evil without plunging their society into a brief, albeit spectacular, internal war.

Hopefully, after reading this book, you will have a revitalized view of the drow that dovetails nicely with the existing dark elf lore. I did not seek to redefine the drow, so much as provide new insights into heretofore hidden aspects of their culture and religion. I hope you enjoy the result as much as I enjoyed writing this book – and hope you will come back soon, when I return once more to the world of the dark elves with *Sheoloth, City of the Drow*.

Sam Witt



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# The Quintessential Drow



CHARACTER \_\_\_\_\_ PLAYER \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARACTER CONCEPT \_\_\_\_\_  
 SUBRACE \_\_\_\_\_ ALIGNMENT \_\_\_\_\_  
 PATRON DEITY / RELIGION \_\_\_\_\_  
 PLACE OF ORIGIN \_\_\_\_\_ FIGHTING STYLE \_\_\_\_\_

## ABILITY SCORES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MODIFIER
STRENGTH				
DEXTERITY				
CONSTITUTION				
INTELLIGENCE				
WISDOM				
CHARISMA				

## HIT POINTS

SUB DMG	
HIT DIE	
DAMAGE REDUCTION	

## ARMOUR

◯ = 10 +  
 CLASS

ARMOUR WORN

## ARMOUR

ARMOUR	SHIELD	DEX	WIS	SIZE	NATURAL	MISC

MAX RANKS = LVL +3 (2)    CROSS CLASS    KEY ABILITY    MODIFIERS    TOTAL ABILITY RANKS    MISC

	CROSS CLASS	KEY ABILITY	MODIFIERS	TOTAL ABILITY RANKS	MISC
ANIMAL EMPATHY	Y / N	CHA			
APPRAISE ✓	Y / N	INT			
BALANCE ✓	Y / N	DEX *			
BLUFF ✓	Y / N	CHA			
CLIMB ✓	Y / N	STR *			
CONCENTRATION ✓	Y / N	CON			
CRAFT ✓ ( )	Y / N	INT			
CRAFT ✓ ( )	Y / N	INT			
CRAFT ✓ ( )	Y / N	INT			
CRAFT ✓ ( )	Y / N	INT			
DECIPHER SCRIPT	Y / N	INT			
DIPLOMACY ✓	Y / N	CHA			
DISABLE DEVICE	Y / N	INT			
DISGUISE ✓	Y / N	CHA			
ESCAPE ARTIST ✓	Y / N	DEX *			
FORGERY ✓	Y / N	INT			
GATHER INFORMATION ✓	Y / N	CHA			
HANDLE ANIMAL	Y / N	CHA			
HEAL ✓	Y / N	WIS			
HIDE ✓	Y / N	DEX *			
INNUENDO	Y / N	WIS			
INTIMIDATE ✓	Y / N	CHA			
INTUIT DIRECTION	Y / N	WIS			
JUMP ✓	Y / N	STR *			
KNOWLEDGE ( )	Y / N	INT			
KNOWLEDGE ( )	Y / N	INT			
KNOWLEDGE ( )	Y / N	INT			
KNOWLEDGE ( )	Y / N	INT			
LISTEN ✓	Y / N	WIS			
MOVE SILENTLY	Y / N	DEX *			
OPEN LOCK	Y / N	DEX			
PERFORM ( )	Y / N	CHA			
PROFESSION ( )	Y / N	WIS			
PROFESSION ( )	Y / N	WIS			
READ LIPS	Y / N	INT			
RIDE ✓	Y / N	DEX			
SEARCH ✓	Y / N	INT			
SENSE MOTIVE ✓	Y / N	WIS			
SLEIGHT OF HAND	Y / N	DEX			
SPELLCRAFT	Y / N	INT			
SPOT ✓	Y / N	WIS			
SWIM ✓	Y / N	STR *			
SURVIVAL ✓	Y / N	WIS			
TUMBLE	Y / N	DEX *			
USE MAGIC DEVICE	Y / N	CHA			
USE ROPE ✓	Y / N	DEX			
	Y / N				

## SAVING THROWS

	TOTAL	BASE	ABILITY	MAGIC	MISC	TEMP	MODIFIERS
FORTITUDE (CON)							
REFLEX (DEX)							
WILL (WIS)							

## COMBAT BONUSES

	TOTAL	BASE	ABILITY	SIZE	MISC	TEMP	MODIFIERS
INITIATIVE (DEX)							
MELEE (STR)							
RANGED (DEX)							

## WEAPON AND ARMOUR PROFICIENCIES

--

## WEAPONS

WEAPON	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE	SIZE	HARD	HPS
NOTES								
WEAPON	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE	SIZE	HARD	HPS
NOTES								
WEAPON	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE	SIZE	HARD	HPS
NOTES								
WEAPON	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE	SIZE	HARD	HPS
NOTES								
WEAPON	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRITICAL	RANGE	TYPE	SIZE	HARD	HPS
NOTES								

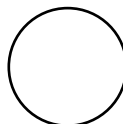
AC WHEN FLAT FOOTED  
 AC VERSUS TOUCH ATTACKS  
 MAX DEX BONUS  
 ARMOUR CHECK PENALTY  
 ARCANE SPELL FAILURE  
 SPELL RESISTANCE

✓ CAN BE USED WITH 0 RANKS, \* ARMOUR CHECK PENALTY APPLIES, ★ -1 PER 5 LBS OF EQUIPMENT



HEAL RATE PER DAY

TURNING/REBUKING  
ATTEMPTS PER DAY =



= 10 + CHA MODIFIER + EXTRA TURNING

SPELLS

SPELL SAVE DC	LEVEL	SPELLS PER DAY	BONUS SPELLS	# SPELLS KNOWN
<input type="text"/>	0	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	1ST	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	2ND	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	3RD	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	4TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	5TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	6TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	7TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	8TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	9TH	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	SPELL SAVE DC MOD			

### MAGIC ITEMS

### MOUNT

NAME	RACE	NUMBER	HD / LVL	HP	INIT	SPD	AC	BAB	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
NOTES														

### HENCHMEN AND MERCENARIES

NAME	RACE	NUMBER	HD / LVL	HP	INIT	SPD	AC	BAB	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
NOTES														
NAME	RACE	NUMBER	HD / LVL	HP	INIT	SPD	AC	BAB	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
NOTES														



PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	AGE	SEX
	HEIGHT	SIZE
	WEIGHT	HAIR
	EYES	HANDEDNESS

QUOTE / FAVOURITE SAYING

PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

FLESHCRAFTED ALTERATIONS

ENEMIES, ALLIES, PAST ACQUAINTANCES

BACKGROUND & FURTHER NOTES

TRAINED AND COMPANION ANIMALS

TYPE	HD	HP	INIT	SPD	AC	BAB	STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	TRAINING SLOTS	TRICKS AND ATTITUDES

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