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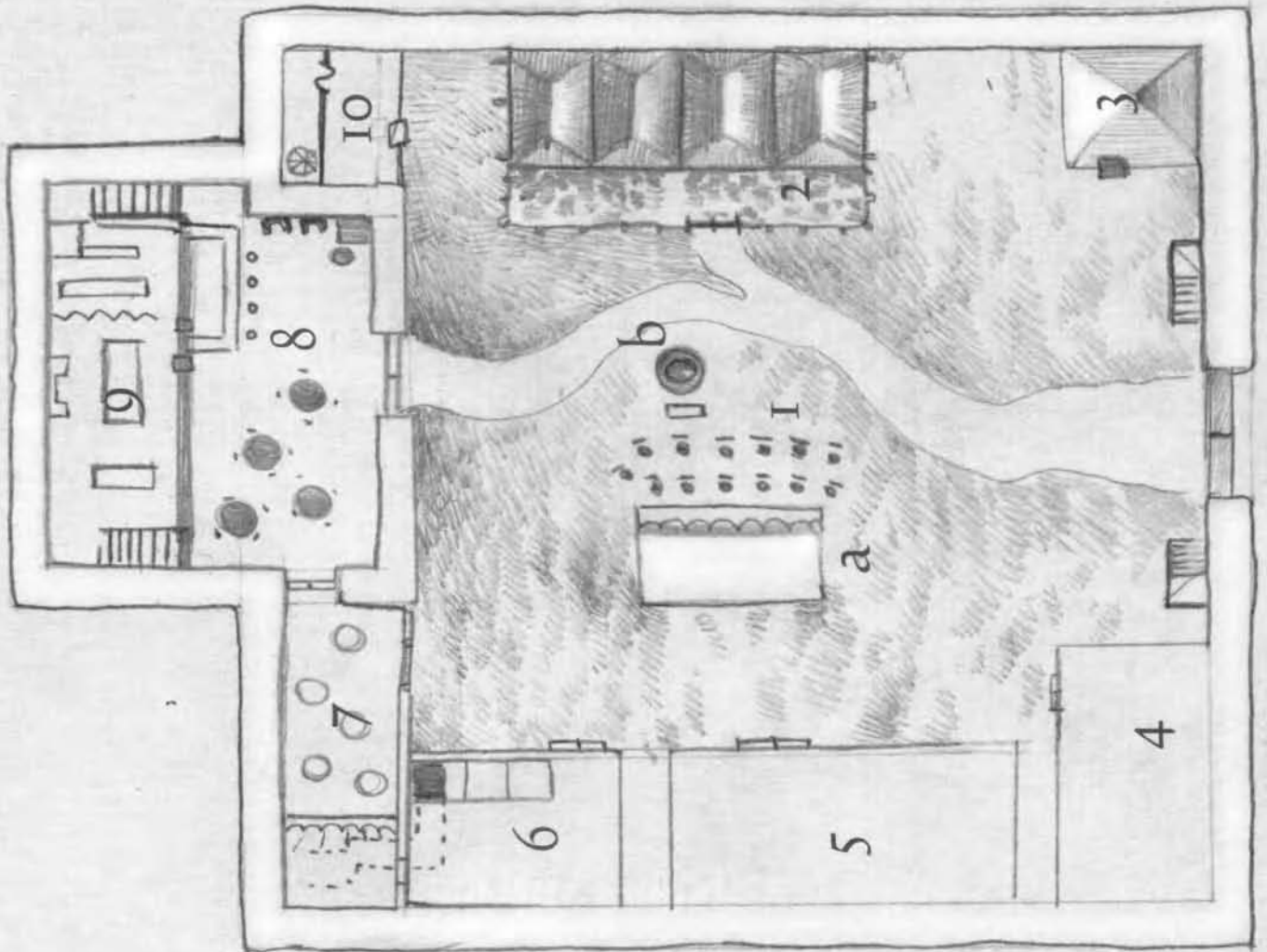
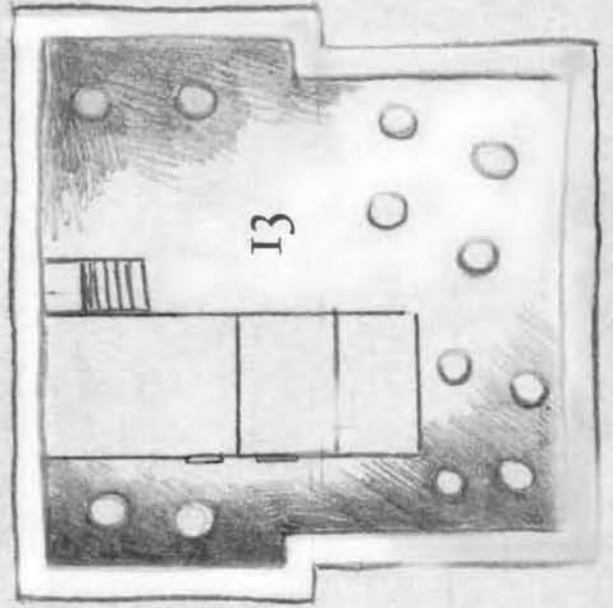
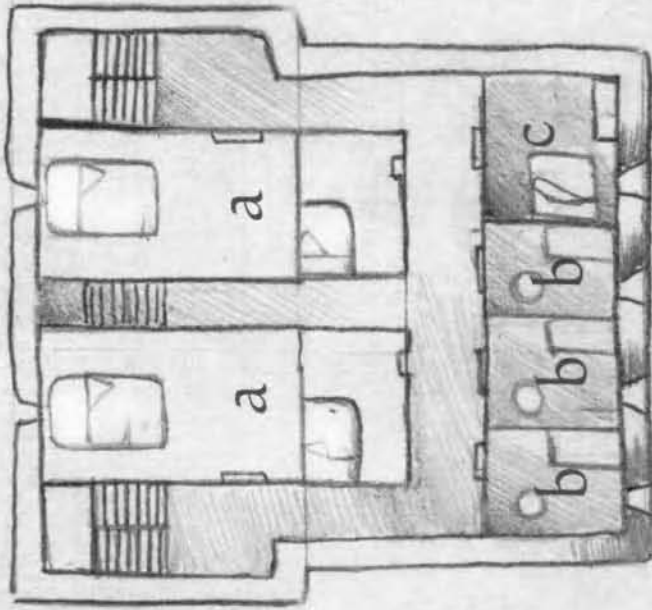
THE
SLAYER'S
GUIDE
TO

DEMONS

Alejandro Melchor

Twilight's Haven

11 and 12



The Slayer's Guide To Demons

Alejandro Melchor

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INTRODUCTION THE SLAYER'S GUIDES

Evil, chaos and destruction; depravation, insanity, unmitigated cruelty. Pain, horror and madness. The ultimate incarnations of darkness, this is what demons embody. As malignant as a necromancer or a demonologist may become, they are still no match for the limitless evil of the lowest dretch. There is no redemption for these outsiders, as they seek only the destruction and corruption of all that exists.

Long thought the most deadly of enemies, demons are so varied that even a party of inexperienced adventurers could face one of the minor fiends and be triumphant, but where there is one demon, there are bound to be others. From the lowest quasit and damned soul to the mighty balors, the hordes of the Abyss are like a boiling mass of putrescent bile ready to spill over into the lands of mortals.

Demons do not follow a strict hierarchy, relying instead on fear and treachery to govern over themselves. They are an embodiment of destructive madness, whatever form they take. The chaos they embrace gives birth to demons of every shape and purpose; some are simply brutes that relish in pain and suffering of others, while others are subtle manipulators that delight in driving a soul to the depths of depravity. Of all demons, the mightiest are the Brood of Tanar, so varied in form and power that they have effectively wiped out the rest of the demon families, subjugating the remnants and driving them into obscurity. The archdemons rule their own hordes punctuating their wars with the other families by overrunning the neighbouring Planes or extending their influence amongst mortals by promoting evil cults or investing their power in a worthy servant.

Above the eternal strife that marks what passes for life in the Abyss, the Demon Lords rule the infinite layers that make up the lowest of Planes. Occupying the fine line that divides a wicked spirit from a dark god, the Demon Lords are immensely powerful creatures that no mortal hero can ever hope to best. The Dark Lords of the Abyss stake their claim to godhood in ways that threaten the position of even gods of evil.

Demons fight an eternal and brutal war to impose chaos and darkness upon everyone and they have an eternity to wage it.

This series of supplements, designed for use in all fantasy-based D20 games systems, takes an exhaustive look at specific monster races, detailing their beliefs, society and methods of warfare. Typically, these will be those races often overlooked by Games Masters and players alike paying little heed to the obstacles that stand in their way as they acquire new levels and powerful magic items.

DEMONS – THOSE WHO PREY IN DARKNESS

Within these pages you will find a wealth of information concerning demonic essence, the Abyss and other haunts where these creatures thrive and the brutal society in which they exist, giving an additional level of understanding on how these outsiders interact with the rest of the world. Players will learn how to detect and eradicate demonic influence on the Material Plane and the perils of taking the fight into the depths of a demon's home. Games Masters are presented with guidelines on how to introduce these foul creatures into their campaigns. They will also benefit from material demonstrating how to actually portray demons to their players, thus giving their campaigns and scenarios much greater depth.

Finally, a complete evil temple and the Abyssal layer it connects to is detailed, to be used as an extended encounter, the basis for a complete set of scenarios or simply as an example of how these essentially evil creatures exist.

I know that the soft and warm hands that are struggling with the strings of my shirt are not true flesh and blood. While I cannot look past the illusion, I can sense the demonic stench emanating from the Princess' lady-in-waiting. I had agreed to return to the capital after a long absence to help the King, my brother, find and root out the corruption he knew was taking hold of his court. The lady was easy to find. It has not been two weeks since I was appointed the princess' bodyguard, unknown to all that I am actually her uncle, and this hellspawn tries to seduce me.

I play hard to get, instantly aware of her true nature. This foul creature had shared my niece's peaceful moments for far too long, and I hope that no irreversible damage has been inflicted on her innocent soul. She is eager; I can see it even if she is playing the naiveté card. She reaches up to kiss me, she realises her mistake; she realises that I am protected from her evil charms.

She mumbles an apology, trying to continue the charade. I am faster than that. The wards come to life with a single word and the creature cannot pass through the door to my chamber. She turns around, disbelief is resident in those eyes. Nevertheless she is trapped.

'It is pointless to maintain your ruse, demon.' I say calmly fixing my clothing; to my advantage, few people expect someone of my build to be a wizard. 'There is no escape from this room, and your masters will not help you either. You are mine.'

'Of course, sire... I am yours.' Still she tries, casting off her bodice to reveal perfect, silky skin. But I know the scales and claws that hide beneath the illusion.

'Do not insult my intelligence, fiend; I can and *will* destroy you if your answers do not please me.'

'You are not a paladin.' The ruse is over and her enchantments fell as easily as her clothes. She appears in her true form, both hideous and stunning. 'Yet you resist... and true, I cannot sense the presence of my masters; who are you, mortal?'

'I am your master from now on, so I declare upon the names of...' What follows is best not discussed, as I risked my very sanity by pronouncing those foul names I have learned from a rather dangerous tome in my possession. The succubus's skin, so like that of a human, drains of colour, and when I am finished, she kneels on the ground.

'A mortal tongue that can pronounce what no mortal mind can comprehend is a formidable and worthy master.' She said again, but I knew she was searching for a chink in my spiritual armour with her flattery. It would not be pride. 'I am honoured to serve you.'

'Then you will answer some questions, fiend.' I opened the chest in my room and put on the tabard I had earned in my days as a knight. 'And remember that I will know when you are lying. How many demons are in this castle? And where are they?'

'There are... six. One you see before you, ready to serve your every desire... two you will find possessing the bodies of the cook and his wife, one torments the Seneschal with dreams of power and two others are the pets of the person who first summoned us.'

'And this person is...'

'Princess Jaliene, of course.' The succubus smiles; she knows I will destroy her as I have promised, but she has made sure to deliver a wound in my soul... with the truth. What she does not know is that I had the power to destroy her permanently, not simply send her back home to gloat on how she and her companions had corrupted my niece.

My little brother will not like this.



DEMONIC PHYSIOLOGY

Demons defy a general classification of their frames because, as creatures of chaos, they come in such a great variety of shapes, sizes and functions that any real study of their physiology is doomed to failure and any who would try such a task risk madness.

What is true of all demons, however, is that they are all evil to their core. Their black hearts are so corrupt that this darkness has very physical effects on a demon's corporeal form, oft granting it unique characteristics.

WELLSPRING OF DARKNESS

The first step in trying to understand demons is in understanding what they are not, and then endeavouring to determine their origins. There are as many theories on demonic existence as there are religions and schools of the arcane, but most of them agree that they are the antithesis of creation.

Demons oppose the celestials with a degree of fervour only found in estranged brothers, and this is one of the persistent theories concerning the abyssal denizens. While many argue that it is devils who are the dark cousins of the celestials, the postulants of the heavenly ties theory point out that it may be that both fiendish races come from a split in the higher Planes. As celestials who espoused the strict obedience of Law and those who embraced the freedom of Chaos came to serious disagreements and that war broke out between the factions, turning so ruthless through the centuries that the combatants fell from grace and turned to evil. The gods banished the fallen celestials, whose spite towards both their opposing brethren and their former lords grew so great as to carve their mutual homes in the lower Planes; thus creating the Nine Hells and the Abyss.

Demonologists and captured cultists scoff at this theory claiming, instead, that demons and devils are not only as different as night and day, but they are also of a very different breed than the celestials. They believe that demons sprung forth from the pit

of creation. They existed long before the fledging gods arrived and shaped the chaos into the different planes and worlds. They did not have form until they had to adopt one because of the gods' meddling, a move they greatly resent. That is why demons seek the destruction of every thing that is; because when the last stone is disintegrated and the last dream crushed, then they can return to their amorphous existence.

A middle ground posits that demons came about to balance the creative forces of the gods, even the evil ones. As a force of primal destruction, demons are part of a great cosmic cycle, just like earthquakes, storms and other disasters are part of the Material Plane's natural cycle. To this school of thought, demons are merely the avatars of cosmic destruction and their eventual victory is inevitable because, once everything is destroyed, then everything can be made anew. It is from this philosophy that the most dangerous demonic cults arise, because they are so cursedly *reasonable*.

DEMONIC TRAITS

Finding redoubts of sanity in the madness of the Abyss is not an easy task, although demonologists have struggled to find general rules of thumb that would help classify demons for whatever purpose motivates them to study the foulest beings in the universe.

The first thing that many scholars of these fiendish beings note is that all demons, regardless of their power, are strong spellcasters. Demonic magic, despite any resemblance to mortal sorcery, is geared towards destruction and corruption and carries a particular taint that the knowledgeable may identify as demonic.

The energy that infuses all demons has additional effects on the creature's body, coursing through every sinew and fibre of their being. This essence strengthens their bodies against mundane attacks so that only magic and enchanted weapons may cause it harm. As if that was not enough, this same energy disrupts magic in varying degrees, from the mere annoyance of a dretch's resistance to the near-invulnerability of a balor.

Another trait that all demons share is their resistances and invulnerabilities to energy types.

Detecting Demon Taint

Demons of all types possess various spell-like abilities that they use to fulfil their unholy tasks. The very nature of their magic causes every magic effect they activate to have a trace of demonic taint that a perceptive character may detect, even when a demon is long gone.

The *detect evil* spell or ability picks up the demonic taint automatically as per the spell's description, but a character using a *detect magic* effect has a small chance of identifying the magic aura as demonic in nature during the third round of concentration. The spellcaster using *detect magic* can make a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15 + demon's HD), a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + demon's HD) or a Wisdom check (DC 20 + demon's HD); if successful, the character determines that the magic he is detecting is demonic in nature; he cannot tell anything else without a *detect evil* effect.

These resistances vary from one demon family to the next, but all demons possess this protection to some degree. This suggests that demons draw at least some of their power from a deep elemental connection. The members of the Brood of Tanar, for example, are immune to poison and electricity, while being highly resistant to cold, fire and acid. Demons of the Brood of Van'g are not immune to anything and have a lower resistance, but are better able to resist physical damage than their Tanar'ka cousins.

The False Hive

All demons share a telepathic link with one another. It is an eerie sight to watch these fiends organise a battle without a single word, bark or moan piercing the air. Their limited telepathic powers connect all demons with one another, although they do not create a true hive mind. Demons are selfish in the extreme, embodying the worst elements of individualism and are therefore unable and unwilling to form the bond with other demons that a hive mind can create.

Demons do, however, share a connection with each other deeper than their limited telepathic powers might suggest. All demons are capable of piercing the planar barriers and breaking the limits of space to summon one of their own brood to aid them, though this process does not always work. When they attempt to summon one of their number, a quick telepathic exchange takes place where by the summoning demon negotiates with its allies to bring

them together and is beholden to their ally when they arrive. Demons are loathe to owe anyone anything and would gladly betray this trust. A demon swears by its Name when making such promises to a potential summoned ally, which is compulsion enough for most of them.

Demons are keyed to a particular group of their peers and may summon only a limited number of them. Also, regardless of their power, a demon may only summon members of its own brood.

The Families

In the Abyssal tongue, the suffix '-ka' means 'the brood of.' Several tomes of demonic lore tell that millennia ago there were thousands of broods competing for power over the others in a conflict that has become known as the Brood Wars. It was those of the Brood of Tanar who rose to dominate the denizens of the Abyss. Any who opposed them were exterminated, allowing the Tanar'ka brood to multiply and conquer the Abyssal realm, but there are others who were spared, either because they did not pose a threat, swore allegiance or remained undetected by the brood and their minions. It has long been supposed that several of the casteless demons, such as the quasit and bebilith demons, may be the last survivors of an ancient brood all but wiped out during the Brood Wars.

Members of the same brood share similar qualities, and thus they are grouped together. Besides the Brood of Tanar, the largest surviving families are those of the Van'g'ka, who are warriors first and foremost, the Jar'taska'ka, master manipulators and planar explorers who survived the Brood Wars because most of their number were absent from the Abyss at the time; and the Nuyul'ka, who are disembodied spirits of madness. The casteless demons are so numerous that they defy classification.

Observed Traits

As followers of chaos, demons show a maddening variety of features even within the same family, but their forms are physical, even if they are improbable. The skeleton of a marilith will be encased in all the muscles required to power their many arms. Poison-spitting demons like the bebilith do have poison sacs and the wings of airborne fiends are large and strong enough to support their flight.

The brood of Tanar are the most humanoid in the



DEMONIC PHYSIOLOGY

general sense, possessing identifiable limbs and heads, as deformed or horrifying as they may be. Permutations of other material beings can also be found, like the vulture-like heads of the vrock or the snake tails of the marilith.

Van'g'ka frames are more insect-like and none have been observed with less than four arms. The hard carapaces of the Van'g'ka are a highly prized material for armourers and their stings and pincers make for excellent base materials for weapons.

The members of Jar'taska's brood have shifting forms and always covered by fleeting shadows. Only their remaining rulers, the Heratru, are humanoid in nature and all share an eerie and beauty allure. The remainder of the surviving brood are more akin to amorphous blobs that settled on a general shape. None of them possess a skeleton, though; their bodies are held together by a tough and slightly translucent membrane.

Nuyul'ka are largely incorporeal and generally shaped like floating worms. Some of them are blind while others have many eyes and appendages depend on the particular species.

The casteless are impossible to classify, hailing from thousands of fallen and forgotten broods as they do. The humanoid quasit has nothing in common with the arachnid bebilith or the canine barbeast; retrievers and demon ships are both demonic constructs but also totally different from each other.

When a fiend attains the status of archdemon, its features are accentuated but they retain recognisable qualities of their original members. Not so the Demon Lords, who have totally unique forms and powers. Cultists claim that this is because Demon Lords chose their forms through their divine will, ignoring the fact that they are not truly gods, although they may be dangerously close to becoming one.

Of all demonkind, the most mysterious and enigmatic are known only as The Nameless Ones. Only dark rumours and hearsay exists in the Material Plane about these beings, as even the demons themselves speak of them with fear and reverence.

Sustenance

Demonic feeding habits are as varied as the demons themselves. Despite common belief, souls are not a source of sustenance for demons, at least not the main



one. With so many different organisms found amongst demonkind, it is hard to determine any common source of nourishment. However, there is a disturbing element of truth in the saying that evil feeds upon itself. Many demons seem quite content to devour the flesh of lesser creatures native to the Abyss but are inclined to import rare delicacies from other planes, or bask in the negative emotions radiating from a tormented soul.

Demons eat more out of self-gratification than any actual need to feed and a common element in their various meals is the ever-present stench of evil. True sustenance may be derived from the taint that clings to everything that exists in the Abyss and may be the reason why demons prefer souls that are as corrupt as themselves.

Demons can, however, go without 'food' for long periods of time without any noticeable decline in their capabilities, except perhaps a fouler temper. Likewise, demons do not seem to show any decline as they grow older nor do they appear to fall foul of old age; they are effectively immortal.

Reproduction

Despite the best efforts of even the most heroic adventurers, the demon hordes are endless. Little time passes between a large battle involving the forces of the lower realms before the broods are back in full strength. Demon 'children' are unheard of, even if many demons can, and do, go through the motions of mating (sometimes with extreme violence) and are indeed fertile with mortals, as the existence of half-demons demonstrates. Succubi and incubi are the best example of demons that can have intercourse with mortals with fruitful results.

An interesting theory is that demons reproduce like reptiles, with an egg-laying demon (not necessarily a female in the true sense) producing huge repositories of eggs, while other fiends fertilise them, creating all manner of new demons. This theory is, however, difficult to prove.

A more plausible theory, not lacking in evidence to support it, is that demons mutate from lower stations to fulfil positions higher in demonic hierarchy. This would mean that a balor has not spent all its centuries of life as the top dog in the Tanar brood, but may have well been a dretch once, albeit long ago. Dretches in particular become greater demons by

long and meritorious service or through belligerent acquisition of personal power. Evil mortals who serve a demon lord may be rewarded, upon their demise, by having their soul transformed into one of the stronger demons, to continue its baneful service.

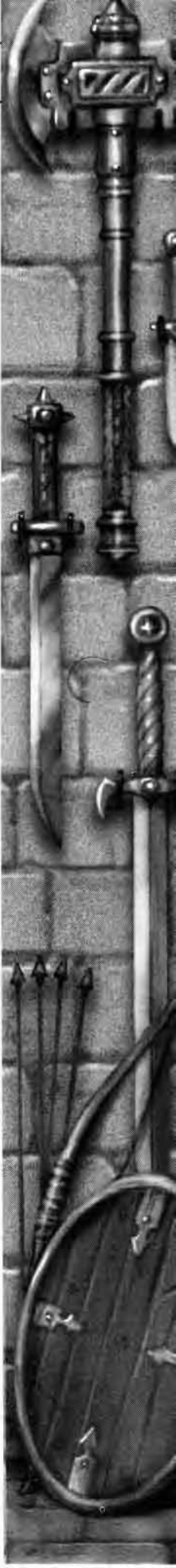
Legends also speak of the Demon Mother, one of the most ancient demon lords, perhaps even one of the first. She lies in an unreachable layer of the Abyss, continually spewing hordes of demons from her cursed womb. Demonologists have long sought to learn even the tiniest fragment of the Demon Mother's name, if she exists at all. Such knowledge would give them command over a great number of demons at once. They have even summoned demons to enquire as to her existence, with very mixed results. Demons who claim to remember their birth from the Demon Mother could either be lying or be utterly insane, either option is highly probable.

Destruction

Demons are confident and reckless when they venture into the Material Plane, for they cannot be permanently slain. When destroyed on the Material Plane, demons reform in their abyssal home amidst great pain, not to mention the scorn of its brethren. That particular demon cannot return to the Material Plane until a month has passed which is usually enough time to plan its revenge. They are far more vulnerable while in the Abyss where death is a very real possibility. A demon who is destroyed while in the Abyss, or any other plane other than the Material, is permanently destroyed, its demonic essence scattering to Astral winds and returning to the Abyss to become part of one of its layers.

DEMONIC ESSENCE

Evil spellcasters have long referred to demonic essence as a source of great power, and many demonologists strive to harness this energy, stealing it from the fiends and using it for their own ends. Demonic essence is far from a myth, being the one trait that all demons have in common. It exists in every fibre of a demon's body; it may be that this essence is the substitute for the soul that would sustain other creatures. The foul energy that makes them what they are can be harvested and reused and not only by ambitious wizards and evil priests, but also by the demons themselves. Powerful demons think nothing of decimating their own horde to



harvest the essence of their minions' in order to perform vile workings of magic.

Demonic essence permeates the Abyss, although neither demons nor spellcasters are able to harvest it from the planar layer. The Demon Lords may be able to use the essence in their layer as another mockery of gods' absolute control over their domains, but mortal scholars cannot tell for sure and no captured demon has confirmed their theory. Details of harvesting demonic essence are presented in the Methods of War Chapter.

THE POWER OF NAMES

One of the most curious things about demons and other fiends is how their names seem to be an integral part of their being. A demon does not choose its name but rather grows into it. It fills the syllables of Abyssal and darker tongues with the resonance of its own demonic essence which is why they are compelled to follow the commands of those who speaks their name.

Demonologists strive long and hard to learn the names of demons in order to control them, but this is a very dangerous endeavour. Demons are obviously fearful of hearing their names spoken by one of their peers, much less by a mortal, as they could be subject to the caller's commands if they know the demon's name.

Demonic names are very complicated, with the names of the most powerful of fiends even capable of driving a lesser mind mad with all the horror and depravity that they represent. The speaking of a demon's name is never done lightly, for the sound of the name alone resonates with an evil aura and, the greater the demon, the more terrible is the sound of its name.

Parts of a Name

Demonic names are as twisted as their owners; few mortals are so morbidly curious as to learn, speak or discover how to truly use them for magical purposes. But first, he must unravel the parts of the demon's name. Demonic names consist of four main components:

Common Name: What the demon is known as to all other fiends. This part of the Name holds no power

except to call the demon's attention. Summoning magic containing a common name will not compel a demon to answer, but will alert it that someone is *trying*. Cult leaders will use their patrons' common names to instil fear in their followers and enemies without truly compromising their power or inviting their master's anger.

Abyssal Name: The Abyssal name is the first part of a demon's name with any true power. All demons, even the lowest ones, have an Abyssal name, which would equate to the identifier of their family, species and position within its heirarchy. With the correct pronunciation, Abyssal names are useful in a summoning intended to bring about a random member of a family or species. Spellcasters may learn many Abyssal names when they come upon the formulae for the *summon monster* spells, for it is this knowledge that allows them to call lesser minions of the abyssal horde to aid them in battle. Of course, the demons are rarely happy with this, suddenly finding themselves in the Material Plane and being compelled to fight for a pitiful mortal is less than desirable to a demon. Unfortunately for the mortal, while the demon returns, it may remember the mortal and seek vengeance. All fiends have an Abyssal name, with the exception of condemned souls, as they are not real demons and may never be. Demons themselves use each other's Abyssal names, which is why their summoning ability does not always work if the fiend they are calling is not interested in aiding them or earning a boon from the summoning demon.

Greater Name: Only the greater demons include this part in their Names. The Greater name holds true and palpable power over its owner as it is a more intimately connected with a demon's essence. Demons hide their Greater names with zeal, for those who possess it, either mortal or another demon, will forever hold one end of a leash connected to the name owner's neck. *Gate* and *planar binding* spells require that the summoner use a Greater name, else no demon will answer the call. While Abyssal names are both general and only vaguely related to an individual demon, the Greater name refers only to the demon that owns it and to no other. Not every demon has earned the right to a Greater name, though and generally it is only demons with a Challenge Rating of 7 or more who have enough power to instil the quantities of demonic essence required by a Greater name.

True Name: Along the Greater name, the True name is the ultimate verbal component of a fiend's aura. It sums up everything that the demon is, was and can be. Learning a demon's True name is an almost impossible task that involves almost literally staring deep into the Abyss and letting it stare back. When another creature knows a demon's True Name, it becomes its master, capable of commanding it in all and every respect. Demons whose True Name becomes known will do everything within their power to destroy anyone else who knows it. All demons with a Greater name also have a True Name. For the lesser fiends, their Abyssal name is already powerful enough to compel them, and they have not earned the right to the personal power and individuality that a True name entails.

Using Demonic Names

Demons and mortals are engaged in a constant race to discover the names of other demons. In the brutal environment of Abyssal society, no trick is underhanded enough if it can increase the personal power of a demon. Demons have a prodigious memory for learning and remembering the names of all other fiends they come in contact with. It is this capability that grants them power over their minions and abuse them freely, these names also allow the summoning of others for aid. Using an Abyssal name, demons may use their summon ability to call a limited number and species within their brood; it is part of what they are and any adventurer that faces a demon should expect to meet others very shortly when the tables turn against their foes. The summoning fiend owes a favour to whatever ally arrives but, if the fiend uses a Greater or even a True Name, the extent of the favour is lessened or non-existent respectively. Part of the price for answering the call of a Greater name is that the summoning demon keeps its mouth shut about it, while

answering to a True Name is not a choice at all; the demon *must* answer the call.

If a spellcaster knows the language of the Abyss, he can make a Spellcraft check when a demon uses its summon ability to call for backup (DC 10 + CR of the summoning demon + CR of the summoned demon). If he succeeds, he understand enough of the call to discern one of the summoned demon's names. The Games Master determines what sort of name is being used, but unless the character has ranks in Knowledge (the planes) or an appropriate skill, he will not realise the importance of the name he has just heard.

A demon that uses the Greater name of another demon increases the chance of summoning by 40%, while using the True Name increases it to 95%.

Non-demons have a use for demonic names too. A Greater name will grant the user a +5 bonus to the DC of non-damaging spells directed against the demon and a +2 to his caster check to defeat the demon's Spell Resistance. A True Name is even more powerful, granting a +10 bonus to the DC of non-damaging spells, and the caster ignores the demon's Spell Resistance.

Learning the Common or Abyssal name of a demon takes some research in occult libraries. Treat it as a Knowledge (the planes) or Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 15 + the demon's CR) that takes 1d3 + demon's CR days. The Games Master can assign a bonus from +1 to +10 depending on the quality of the information source that the character is using. Obtaining the Greater or True Name of a specific demon should be an adventure in itself, demons guard them so closely and seek to destroy any mortal work that has them written down. Mortals and other

"I cast thee back to the Abyss!" The demons inside the cook and his wife are given no chance to mount any kind of resistance to my will. "By the power of your Names, Bandarremorden! Kaltarimonion! Be gone!"

The two servants double over, but the translucent image of the demons remain, an expression of shock and abject fear etched into their features, if any emotion can be ascertained from their twisted faces. I coaxed the Greater Names of these minor pests from the succubus who, as I had suspected, had orchestrated their arrival, using my niece as a conduit.

"Bandarremorden! Kaltarimonion! I take your strength!" I feel the influx of demonic essence pour into my body. I know what I risk, but I will need the extra edge their essence can give me if I am to face more of their kind before the day is over. The demons scream as their very beings were unravel. I smirk... they will not be well received by their peers.



spellcasters must learn the skills of the demonologist prestige class, detailed in the Roleplaying with Demons chapter, to be able to use demonic names in other ways, but for demons, abusing their fellows is a way of life and they have elevated it to an art form. Dominance through intimidation and violence is the way of the Abyss, and demons hoard every advantage they can get. Merely hinting at the possession of a Greater or True Name (and adequate proof, like saying the first syllable) will provide the +5/+10 bonuses to a demon's Intimidate, Bluff and Diplomacy checks against the fiend whose name is being used.

THE RULES OF CREATION

Despite their absolute hatred for the order of the universe, demons are still bound by certain rules. First and foremost are the rules related to their Names, but since they are an inherent part of their physiology, they have little choice but to comply to these.

The rules of planar interaction are vague and poorly understood even by seasoned planeswalkers. What spellcasters do understand is that the formulae in their spells are capable of piercing the barriers between the Material Plane and the Abyss in order to summon demons. The question remains, however, why the fiends do not invade in force? With such mighty warriors as the vrock and the terrible balor, many wonder why the hordes of the Abyss do not storm the world of mortals.

What demons will not admit is that they have as much difficulty travelling to the Material Plane as mortals do ranging out from it. Strongly aligned to Chaos and Evil, demons are uncomfortable in other Planes, even those as neutral to their presence as the Material. Most demons lack the discipline to master the magic that would allow them to leave the Abyss and so depend on a few of them opening gates into the Astral plane to mount any large incursion. Couple this with their eternal, internal war and the watchful eye of the servants of good and demons must believe mortals are not worth the effort. After all, the truly wicked will arrive in the Abyss in due time, anyway.

Demons play a dangerous game when they have dealings with the mortals of the Material Plane. On the one hand they loathe the compulsion to comply with a mortal's wishes, but trust to the limited imagination of the mortals. As mortals are blind to the opportunities created by having a demon in their service they are able to treat such service as a minor nuisance and a chance to corrupt and wreak havoc; especially if they are not the ones investing power into the breaching of the planar barriers.

THE TRADE OF SOULS

Like their enemies, the devils and the celestials, demons show a great deal of interest in souls and take great pleasure in the tainting of mortals. Scholars and demonologists suggest many theories and reasons behind this and adventurers have returned with several accounts on what happens to a soul owned by a demon. The swiftest and most merciful end for a soul is to be consumed as a delicacy by some archdemon or demon lord, but there is far more that awaits the condemned in the Abyssal wastelands.

Souls are also a sort of currency amongst demons and other extraplanar beings, similar to the slave trade except that souls are not only a potential source of indentured servitude, but are also a form of sustenance and even raw building material. Demons keep the souls they own trapped in a variety of obscene torments, least of which are the proverbial flames. The souls of mortals and other extraplanar prisoners are known to have any of the following fates when washing up in the Abyss.

Servitude: Souls can be made into servants in a demon's demesne. They are little more than half-sentient furniture, beaten and reshaped to serve the will of their demonic master.

Torture: The most likely end for a soul in the Abyss, but one that serves many purposes and express in many ways. The utilitarian purpose for torturing a soul is that its pain and despair strengthen the very essence of the Abyss as an evil realm and empowers demons. This suffering is also the favourite meal of some demon species who prey upon thoughts and emotions, which inflict subtle torments to extract a more delicate 'flavour.' Entertainment is another important reason for torture at the hands of demons; they grow bored easily and

watching or performing the torture on a hapless soul is pleasurable; if short-lived.

The instruments of torture employed by demonkind are the stuff of nightmares. Centuries of malevolent practice and experimentation have given birth to thousands of torments that demons use on souls and each other. Even the most perverse mortal mind is incapable of grasping the basics of demonic torture and its tools. Demons teach some of their tamer pastimes to mortal cultists so as to spread pain. Occasionally they will furnish their followers with instruments and magic items designed to siphon a victim's soul.

Soulforging: While the infinite layers of the Abyss have their own terrain features that can be used for construction, with many strange raw materials to use for crafting, souls are a more malleable material that can become quite sturdy. Unfortunately for the soul, forging does not extinguish its consciousness as a demon craftsman mauls it and breaks it into shape. The soul becomes irrevocably mad as it splinters into several parts and, if the constant moaning and weeping coming from a soulforged item is any indication, it never stops hurting either. Souls find their way into structures, weapons and serve as primordial components in constructs like the retriever or the demonship

Meals: A large demon can keep a plate of squirming souls nearby and grab a bunch as a snack, or they may be prepared and cooked with refined culinary techniques. However they are consumed, souls are always aware even when their very being is being torn apart by a demon's fangs.

Decoration: As garish as this may sound, souls do serve as decoration on the battlements of a demon's fortress. In a mockery of both servitude and soulforging, souls may wander about, moaning and writhing as grotesque adornments and a mark of a demon's status, for it is a powerful demon, indeed, that can waste precious souls on such frivolous pursuits.

Currency: As discussed earlier, a soul's multiple uses gives it an intrinsic value that is standardised enough to serve as currency amongst demons. A soul's power and strength are easily determined and therefore, makes assigning it a value quite simple. Demons trade and steal souls continuously, with the most powerful able to hold on to their 'purse' for longer.

Demon Fodder: Particularly wicked souls arrive to the Abyss not as part of the condemned ones, but with enough malevolence in its heart to guarantee its transformation into a demon upon arrival. The majority of these souls become dretches but, if the person was powerful in life, it may arrive as a member of the stronger species. If a demon was responsible for the person's corruption, his soul arrives within the brood of the demon to strengthen their ranks.

THE MIND OF A DEMON

Demonologists think they understand what motivates a demon. They think that their sacrifices of blood and souls please them and that they can be safely bound by magic circles. They think they come to an entrapped demon in a position of power. They are wrong; very wrong.

Even the simpler minds of dretches and quasits are alien to the ways of mortal psychology. While the people of the Material Plane enjoy a measure of choice when it comes to their outlook on life, all demons are irrevocably and irredeemably corrupt. This corruption is so inherently a part of what they are there is no hope that it can be changed.

This simple fact carries enormous implications as to the true motives of a demon. Their behaviour is unpredictable as they are slaves to their own whims and the only thing anyone can trust demons with is that they will act in a way that causes the most suffering and destruction. The lower demons will act this impulse out as mindless violence and a vicious disposition, but the lords of demonkind are subtle, possessed with an alien intelligence capable of crafting insidious plans and delicate cruelty.

Demons have only their own benefit in mind. Even the lowest castes obey their masters out of fear for their own safety, not because they feel any loyalty or obedience. This visceral selfishness is the strength and weakness of the demon hordes. They will often ignore their own injuries if they have the chance to inflict greater pain on others, and are forced to ignore them when faced with the promise of greater punishment by more powerful fiends.

To a certain extent, all demons are insane by mortal standards. Their chaotic minds and evil hearts create a very dangerous creature, due primarily to



their unpredictability. A demonologist can trust a devil to respect the wording of an agreement even if it will always try to find loopholes. The word of a demon, however, is worthless unless invoking the power of a Name or a clear show of power from the summoner enforces it. Such a display must make it clear that they can hurt the demon badly or that he has something the demon desperately wants and has no other way of obtaining it.

Even if they are impatient, the greater demons' minds span centuries and they can wait for a plan to come to fruition mostly because a couple of human generations are but the blink of an eye for them. Some may not grow impatient until a couple of centuries have passed or resort to extreme measures the first time something goes wrong with their plans.

Touching the mind of a demon is extremely dangerous. Even their telepathic contact is disquieting but, as it is normally limited to communication, it does not have any greater effect. When mortals try to listen in a demon's thoughts, it is an entirely different matter; they are not buffered by the demon's desire to convey an idea, but suffer the brunt of its malice and perversion. Any spell or psionic power that contacts a demon's mind without the demon's prior knowledge runs the risk of being driven insane. The character must make a Will save (DC 10 + demon's CR) or suffer 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. If the character fails the save by 10 or more, this damage is permanent.

SLEEPING DEMONS

Epic tales tell stories of heroes who have vanquished a powerful demon and driven it into an eternal sleep. This hibernation is common to all demons but is most notorious amongst the more powerful of them, whose sleep lasts far longer.

When a demon is destroyed in the Material Plane, it reforms, unharmed, in the Abyss but, if it is somehow bound to a place, person or object, the shock of breaking this bond sends it to sleep. A demon sleeps for a number of years equal to its Challenge Rating if it is slain while under the effects of a binding or while it possesses a mortal.

In this case, killing the demon's host merely frees the demon into the Ethereal Plane, where slaying it has the normal effect; the slaying must come about while the demon is *inside* its host. See the Roleplaying with Demons chapter for more information about bound demons and demonic possession.

Certain artefacts or divine spells are capable of more than binding demons; such magic effectively seals them away. They are trapped on the Material Plane, disconnected from their minions, allies and power. Unlike a bound demon, who remains aware of its surrounding and capable of exerting its will, a sealed demon eventually falls into a deep sleep when its power is drained; its consciousness latent and its true power reduced. A demon within this state may try to influence anyone happening upon its place of imprisonment, but at best this influence can only be exerted by means of slight telepathic suggestions. Often such bindings carry conditions that must be met to release the demon and if an imprisoned demon is aware of these conditions they will often try to get others to fulfil the conditions for them.



THE ABYSS

The natural habitat of demons suits them perfectly; the Abyss is an inhospitable, chaotic and downright hostile environment for any who would brave its conditions. Even demons themselves find that some areas of this plane are best avoided lest they risk their existence to its natural dangers.

As with anything demonic, the Abyss is a place of madness and uncounted horrors and even the quiet spots are home to disquieting atmosphere. Also, just as demons are hard to classify, so their homes defy attempts to map or understand it. The Abyss has several layers, some say that they are infinite and evidence tends to support this, as not even demons themselves can tell for sure. Each of these layers are subdimensions encompassed by the barriers of the overall plane, hosting so many different environments that, no matter the depraved tastes of any particular demon, there will be a place to suit it. Demon Lords, evil deities and other powerful demons stake their claim to one or several layers and mould it to his heart's content, either by divine will or profane magic and the territorial wars that periodically break out between these dark powers rock the entire planes.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Despite the utter chaos amongst the infinite layers of the Abyss, they all share similar traits that affect every visitor or denizen to set foot, hoof or other limb on their surface.

All of the layers in the Abyss resemble the general conditions of the Material Plane in that there is an identifiable up and down axis and that things can be trusted to remain where one left them barring an external force. As disgusting and hazardous as the nature of this land can be it remains capable of sustaining life and industry. The Abyss has been mined for resources and built upon with sufficient ingenuity, despite its inhospitable nature.

The details may change, sometimes dangerously so, but there is an atmosphere in each layer and many even have weather and meteorological phenomena. Rain is rain even if it falls as acid, burning on contact or is made from iron needles instead of water.

Evil deities find that the Abyss is malleable to their divine will and so once they have taken up residence in one layer, reshaping to suit their tastes and needs, they are loathe to leave it.

Last, but certainly not least, is the demonic essence that permeates the whole plane. The essence cannot be harvested raw, but it does regenerate individual demons' stores of it (which can *then* be harvested from their bodies). The essence recognises creatures akin to its nature and is magically toxic to creatures that do not espouse the demonic lifestyle. Creatures of good or lawful alignment suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to Charisma checks as the demonic essence identifies them to the rightful denizens of the plane. Creatures that are both lawful *and* good suffer a penalty of -4. The penalty is -3 for creatures with either the lawful or good descriptor in their type description, -6 if they have both. Such forces of order and light cannot expect to call reinforcements, as all Conjunction magic with the lawful or good descriptors suffer a -20 penalty to their casting roll.

LAYERS OF THE ABYSS

There is no counting the layers of the Abyss and classifying them is an impossible task even for those rare patient and inquisitive demons that would set out to complete such a task, though there are some that are mad enough to try.

This chapter describes several examples of layers in the Abyss where demons and dark gods make their homes and that make for dangerous proving grounds for adventurers with the ability, will and foolhardiness to go face demons in their own territory. The layer descriptions hold the following information.

Access

How can creatures enter, leave or travel through the layers of the Abyss. This includes gates to other planes, including the Material Plane. None of the abyssal layers are connected by the metaphysical structure that join the several planes together, this structure may be the River Styx, the roots of the World Tree or an Infinite Staircase depending upon the campaign's cosmology. Using these routes can sometimes be more dangerous than trying to find a gate, as several demonic predators are known to stalk their paths.



Conditions

In addition to the general conditions of the Abyss, each layer has its own environmental features such as terrain, weather, magical affinity and special features.

Locations

Every layer of the Abyss has at least one location worth visiting; be it a demon's fortress, a prison for captive souls, an interesting terrain feature, the location of a specific gate or encampment of renegade fiends.

Ruler

Most abyssal layers have a ruler, be it a Demon Lord, an evil deity or a powerful but minor demon. This field will give the ruler's name and its general characteristics, if not its actual statistics. It gives a description of how the ruler governs their layer and what visitors can expect.

Denizens

Demons are the most common denizens in the Abyss for obvious reasons, with the Brood of Tanar dominating over the rest. The different broods have their own damned souls arriving upon their domains and adopting their characteristics depending on their iniquities.

The casteless demons actually outnumber all of the broods combined, but they are so disorganised and their individual power so meagre that they are far from posing a real threat to the hierarchy of the Abyss.

Several intelligent beings travel to the Abyss for very distinct reasons, few of them fully understandable. The variety of extraplanar travellers who arrive in the Abyss for commerce, adventure or even research is staggering considering the danger of the place itself, not to mention its inhabitants.

The creatures that populate any given layer of the Abyss are listed in an encounter table. Many layers will have unique creatures that do not exist in any other layer or even on another plane. The following encounter tables refer to the creatures that a traveller may encounter while wandering the Abyss. Each layer will have a different chance of an encounter depending on how highly populated it is or the amount of traffic that normally passes through the area. The abyssal encounter table is a master

table that points to a suitable subtable of unique encounters. Games Masters are encouraged to insert creatures from other sources in place of those presented here.

Abyssal Encounter

d%	Subtable
01-15	Demon, Brood of Tanar
16-22	Demon, Brood of Van'g
23-26	Demon, Brood of Jar'taska
27-30	Demon, Brood of Nuyul
31-45	Demon, Casteless
46-51	Fiendish Creature
52-57	Extraplanar trader
58-62	Extraplanar traveller
63-65	Gate
66-88	Layer Encounter
89-94	Outsider, Other
95-00	Undead

Brood of Tanar Encounter

d%	Demon	CR	Number
01-25	Damned	*	2d10
26-50	Dretch	2	2d8
51-55	Chitterling	3	2d6
56-60	Predaska	8	2d4
61-64	Succubus	7	1d4
65-67	Teradrozu	9	1d4
68-73	Vrock	9	1d6
74-79	Glodretch	11	2d4
80-83	Hezrou	11	1d4
84-87	Glabrezu	13	1d4
88-90	Nalfeshnee	14	1d4
90-92	Marilith	17	1d2
93-94	Balor	20	1d2
95-00	Half-Demon	*	1d8

* Template

Brood of Van'g Encounter

d%	Demon	CR	Number
01-20	Damned	*	2d10
21-60	Vyin	7	2d10
61-80	Yavodai	10	2d8
81-90	Vengadi	14	2d6
91-94	Udvati	16	2d4
95-00	Half-Demon	*	1d8

* Template

Brood of Jar'taska Encounter

d%	Demon	CR	Number
01-25	Damned	*	2d10
26-40	Dark Lantern	3	3d10
41-60	Shadeling	5	2d10
61-71	Jar'ugr	8	2d4
72-84	Jethulet	10	1d8
85-92	Hamedu	13	1d6
93-96	Heratru	16	1d4
97-00	Half-Demon	*	1d8

* Template

Brood of Nuyal Encounter

d%	Demon	CR	Number
01-30	Damned	*	1d10
31-50	Diazhit	5	3d10
51-75	Mad Winds	10	2d10
76-86	Pyarian	9	2d4
87-00	Pereveshti	13	1d8

* Template

Casteless Demon Encounter

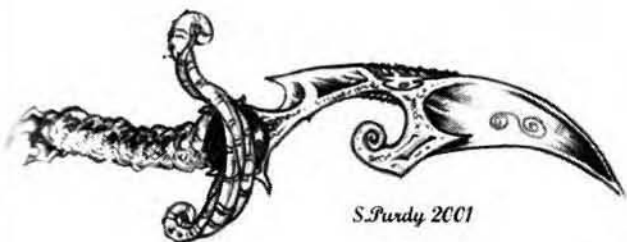
d%	Demon	CR	Number
01-30	Damned	*	1d10
31-40	Barbeast	8	3d10
41-55	Bebilith	10	2d10
56-58	Demon ship	17	2d4
59-63	Gaping Maw	15	1d2
64-75	Retriever	11	1d4
76-90	Quasit	2	2d4
91-00	Half-Fiend	*	1d4

* Template

Fiendish Creature Encounters

d%	Encounter	CR	Number
01-10	Fiendish Animal	*	As base creature
11-15	Fiendish Aberration	*	As base creature
16-23	Fiendish Beast	*	As base creature
24-32	Fiendish Construct	*	As base creature
33-36	Fiendish Dragon	*	As base creature
37-44	Fiendish Elemental	*	As base creature
45-50	Fiendish Fey	*	As base creature
51-60	Fiendish Giant	*	As base creature
61-67	Fiendish Humanoid	*	As base creature
68-76	Fiendish Magical Beast	*	As base creature
77-85	Fiendish Monstrous Humanoid	*	As base creature
86-94	Fiendish Ooze	*	As base creature
95-00	Fiendish Shapechanger	*	As base creature

Use an appropriate creature for the current terrain

*S.Purdy 2001*

Extraplanar Trader/Traveller Encounter

d%	Subtable	CR	Number
01-02	Chaos beast	7	1d2
03-05	Dragon, black, mature adult	14	1
06-08	Dragon, blue, mature adult	16	1
09-10	Dragon, red, young adult	13	1
11-16	Evil cultist	as class	2d4
17-22	Giant (any)	8-13	1d6
23-27	Humanoid evil cleric	as class	1d4
28-32	Humanoid sorcerer	as class	party*
33-40	Humanoid wizard	as class	party*
41-44	Night Hag	9	1
45-49	Nightmare	5	1 or herd
50-79	Plane-touched	as class	1d6
80-94	Titan	21	1
95-00	Other	varies	varies

Gate Encounters

d%	Subtable
01-07	Gaping Maw
08-25	To another Abyssal layer
26-34	To another Lower Plane (except Hell)
35-41	To another Outer Plane
42-50	To the Astral Plane
51-59	To the Elemental Plane of Air
60-68	To the Elemental Plane of Earth
69-77	To the Elemental Plane of Fire
78-86	To the Elemental Plane of Water
87-93	To the Ethereal Plane
94-95	To the Material Plane
96-00	To the Plane of Shadows

Undead Encounters

d%	Encounter	CR	Number
01-04	Allip	3	2d4
05-11	Bodak	8	1d2
12-14	Devourer	11	1
15-19	Ghast	3	2d4
20-24	Ghoul	1	2d6
25-26	Lich (roll in Extraplanar Travellers table for base creature)	*	1
27-31	Mohrg	8	1d4
32-36	Mummy	5	1d2
37-42	Nightshade	14-18	1
43-47	Shadow	3	2d8
48-54	Skeleton	1/6-8	3d10
55-58	Spectre	7	2d6
59-63	Vampire spawn	4	2d4
64-66	Vampire (roll in Extraplanar Travellers table for base creature)	*	1d2
67-71	Wight	3	2d6
72-77	Wraith	5	2d6
78-84	Zombie	1/2-6	3d10
85-00	Fiendish undead (roll again to choose base creature)	*	*

* Template

RANDOM LAYER GENERATOR

Travelling the Abyss has one unique danger; falling through a gate into one of the infinite layers, with no way to predict which one it will be, will force unwitting visitors to strain their resources just to survive. As such Games Masters need a quick way to generate an abyssal layer with enough detail to keep his players entertained, but not bogged down in information. The system in this section can be used

Access Point

d%	Characters arrive...	Characters can leave...
01-11	in immediate danger, roll for an encounter.	Through an accessible gate
12-22	and danger looms ahead, roll for an encounter that will reach them in 2d6 rounds.	through a hard to find gate
23-33	and nothing is around; describe the terrain (see under Conditions)	through a gate that is in an inhabited settlement
34-44	on an isolated portion of the layer's terrain	through a gate in a known, but inaccessible location
45-55	on a normal road	through a gate in an archdemon's fortress
56-66	on a busy pier in a demonic port city	through a gate in a twice-cursed ruins
67-77	through a terrain feature	by booking passage in a demon ship
78-88	falling from the sky	by finding the way to an adjacent layer
89-00	on a gate inside a demon's fortress	using the cosmological byway (River Styx, World Tree, Endless Staircase and the like)

to generate a quick layer that may later evolve into a fully-fledged location for a campaign, just follow the steps below:

Determine Access

Figure out how the characters stumbled into the layer and what they need to do to escape. Roll once for the characters' arrival and 1d4 times for possible methods of departure, or choose the options that best fit with the Games Master's campaign. Other methods of entry into the layer can be determined later, but the most important things to know are the conditions in which the characters find themselves upon arrival. The methods of departure need a destination too.

Destination: Access points need a destination. For points of entry, the place on the other side would be where the characters are coming from entrances might even be one-way. Roll on the Gates Encounter table in the earlier section, replacing the 'gaping maw' result with 'random Abyssal layer' and consider the 'another Abyssal layer' result as a *known* layer.

Define Conditions

The layer's conditions are one of the most fun aspects of designing a layer by random chance or conscious decision. The layer's conditions may present characters with additional complications

and can range from the merely exotic and decorative details like a blue sun in the sky to the life-threatening and hostile nature of acid rain. A layer may contain more than one condition, in the shifting chaos of the Abyss it may be as diverse as the material plane or be composed of only a few different conditions. The first conditions rolled or chosen are the ones that the characters encounter upon their arrival on the abyssal layer, but they may reach other areas.

Terrain: The terrain of the Abyss corresponds to that which could normally be found in the Material Plane and as defined by the climate/terrain field in a creature's description. Frozen and Blistering climates have abysmal cold and heat conditions respectively, dealing 1d6 points of damage every minute and requiring characters to make Fortitude saves every 5 minutes (DC 15 +1 per previous check) or take a further 1d6 points of subdual damage. Refer to *Core Rulebook II* for additional effects. The terrain's composition describes what material the terrain is made of, as abyssal features do not have to conform to commonly acknowledged ideas of nature; roll for 1d4 composition features and determine their manifestation in the exotic terrain features sub-table.

THE ABYSS

Terrain Type

d%	Terrain Type	d%	Climate
01-10	Aquatic	01-20	Frozen
11-20	Desert	21-40	Cold
21-30	Forest	41-60	Temperate
31-40	Hills	61-80	Warm
41-50	Mountains	81-00	Blistering
51-60	Plains	d%	Composition (roll 1d4 times and combine)
61-70	Swamp	01-30	Normal
71-80	Underground, natural	31-60	Exotic but harmless terrain features
81-90	Underground, dungeon	61-75	Exotic, hindering terrain features
91-00	Urban	76-00	Exotic, dangerous terrain features

Exotic Terrain Features

d%	Harmless	Hindering	Dangerous
01-10	The ground is of an odd colour.	Uneven, -2 to Balance, Tumble, Climb.	Jagged, inflicts 1d4 damage to anyone who slips and falls.
11-21	There is a strange smell present.	Terrain is a collection of floating lumps of rock.	Made of teeth that gnaw for 1d6 damage to any who falls.
22-32	Soulforged moans are ever present.	Muddy; reduce base speed by 10ft.	Brittle ground, random Reflex save (DC 15) or fall to unknown fate.
33-44	Faces are carved into any vertical surface.	Tall vegetation imposes penalty to orientation and travel time.	Vegetation attacks randomly with a +8 bonus and 1d8 damage.
45-55	Terrain composed entirely of staircases.	Sticky ground makes grapple checks with a +10 bonus every hour.	Rock formations fall randomly for 2d6 damage. Reflex (DC 14) negates.
56-66	Terrain features are angular and blocky.	Highly reflective terrain blinds characters for 1d4 rounds. Hourly Fortitude (DC 14) negates.	Bodies of 'water' made from dangerous material like acid, hot lava or carnivorous worms.
67-77	Terrain features speak nonsense as if under the effects of the <i>magic mouth</i> spell.	The ground tilts and rises, making running and spellcasting difficult.	Screaming stones alert demons of the character's presence
78-88	Terrain features bleed when cut	Slippery, constant Balance checks.	Features are searing hot or biting cold and deal damage when grasped or held onto.
89-00	Everything is made from sculpted, mummified bodies of all shapes and sizes.	Terrain layout changes when characters are not looking.	Terrain may try to crush random character for 2d8 damage. Reflex (DC 16) negates.

Meteorological Conditions: The conditions of the sky and other weather related phenomena. Roll twice to determine if the weather is normal, exotic or a combination of two other features, as with terrain. This does not mean, however, that the climate cannot change at a moment's notice.

Climate Type

d%	Climate
01-30	Normal
31-60	Exotic but harmless
61-75	Exotic, hindering
76-00	Exotic, dangerous

Exotic Weather Features

d%	Harmless	Hindering	Dangerous
01-10	The sky is an odd colour.	The air echoes strangely, -2 penalty on Listen and bardic music checks	Rain inflicts 1 hp acid damage per round
11-21	The sun is an odd colour, shape or has strange features.	The air 'orates' what characters are thinking	It hails sling bullets. Make attack rolls at +8 bonus and deal 1d4 damage.
22-32	It is always day.	Constant noise makes sleep difficult.	The air is mildly toxic, requiring a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15) or suffer one point of Constitution damage.
33-44	The stars or clouds move noticeably at random, with the naked eye	Heavy haze reduces long-distance visibility by 1/4.	Flash frosts or heat waves deals 4d6 points of damage. Fortitude (DC 15) halves.
45-55	The stars or clouds form disturbing and easily identifiable shapes.	Erratic wind, roll 3d10 x 10mph every few minutes to determine speed and 1d8 to determine direction.	The air is poisonous. Save vs. Fortitude (DC 14) every hour or suffer 1d6 Dexterity initial damage, paralysis secondary.
56-66	All precipitation falls upwards. Bad news for kilts, skirts and robes.	The air is thick and syrupy. -2 on all Fortitude saves and Constitution checks.	It hails upwards. <i>Really</i> bad news for kilts, skirts and robes. Treat as sling bullets above.
67-77	Air makes food taste dull, even imported food	Heavy fog reduces visibility as a <i>fog cloud</i> spell.	Fog banks made of vermin as a <i>summon swarm</i> spell.
78-88	Precipitation such as rain, snow and hail falls as gross matter such as blood, bile or spinach soup.	Thin air deals 1d6 points of subdual damage per round of exertion. Fortitude (DC 14) negates.	1d6 rays of searing unholy energy fire at random targets every hour for 3d6 unholy damage. Reflex (DC 16) halves.
89-00	It is always night	A weather feature follows characters around. Roll again for the specific weather that covers a 60ft-radius area, encompassing as many characters as it can.	Wind drives characters mad. Make Will save (DC 15) every hour or suffer 1 point of Wis damage.

Appoint Ruler

The nature and demeanour of a ruler can *really* complicate matters for visiting characters. A layer's ruler will determine the kinds of opposition characters are likely to face while travelling in the ruler's demesne. The location modifier column in the table below applies to the number of locations as described later.

No ruler: A layer without a ruler is either prime target for conquest or too insignificant to attract demons of any real power. The layer is likely governed by anarchy and characters are as likely to find potential, if utterly untrustworthy, allies as they are to find enemies. Such as a ruler-less layer may also serve as the battleground between rival demon lords or even a buffer zone against intrusions from the legions of Hell and other extraplanar incursions. An example of this style of plane is The Wasteland of Gates. A single ruler does not govern this layer; instead, petty leaders vie for dominance but it never reaches anything resembling a layer-wide rulership.

Archdemon: Demons that have distinguished themselves or lived long enough to gain great power, can claim a layer for their own personal use. These layers are small fiefdoms of demonic power where the personality of the archdemon permeates everything, beating everything into shape that meets their personal needs. Roll as indicated in the table above to determine which demon family the ruler of this layer comes from. To determine its exact

species, roll in the appropriate encounter tables in the previous section, adding +50 to the roll and ignoring the half-demon result in favour of the highest ranking demon. Alternatively roll 3d6+10 to determine the archdemon's CR, choosing the demon species with the nearest CR and advancing its HD by the difference in CRs. Apply the archdemon template in the Roleplaying with Demons chapter. The Swarming Jungle of Ic'vnigh, for example, is ruled by I'tkk'chavni, the sole remaining archdemon amongst the Van'g'ka, originally from the udvati species.

Demon Lord: The layers of a demon lord are well-known and its rulers are already infamous amongst the hordes of the Abyss. Demon Lords are unique beings approaching godhood, so choose a demon lord, rather than trust to a die roll. Demon lords command vast armies and characters can expect heavy opposition if they are foolish enough to try to start a fight. Depending on the demon lord, visitors may be tolerated and even welcomed. The Putrescent Gorge is ruled by one such Demon lord, Gulacki, Lord of Pestilence.

Evil Deity: As good deities make their homes in the Celestial planes, so the gods and goddesses of darkness make their homes in the Abyss. The layer of an evil deity reflects their philosophy and portfolio and is not to be entered lightly. The souls of the damned and worshippers alike mill about tasked with the detection of trespassers. Roll as indicated on

Layer Ruler

d%	Ruler	Location modifier
01-05	No ruler	+0
06-25	Archdemon (1d10: 1-5 Tanar Brood, 6-8 Jar'taska'ka, 9 Van'g'ka, 10 Nuyul'ka. See text)	+1d6
26-50	Demon Lord	+4d4
51-70	Evil deity (1d10: 1 quasi-deity, 2 demideity, 3-4 lesser deity, 5-7 intermediate deity, 8-10 greater deity)	+4d6
71	Nameless One	+0
72-79	Powerful demon (1d10: 1-5 Tanar Brood, 6-8 Jar'taska'ka, 9 Van'g'ka, 10 Nuyul'ka. See text)	+0
80-90	Powerful outsider	+2
91-92	Powerful undead (1d4: 1-3 lich, 4 vampire)	+1
93-00	Other	varies

the table above to determine the power of the deity, then integrate this foul being into the campaign's cosmology or possibly make an entirely new deity or an obscure deity of quasi- and demi- status. The Ashen Waste of Zahhak is the domain of Apathy, an obscure intermediate deity.

Nameless One: These are domains of madness and horror beyond mortal comprehension. Here lies one of The Nameless Ones. Alien aberrations scour the landscape and the characters may not be able to leave with their sanity intact. Demons of this status are always sleeping, but its servitors watch in their stead, so it is in their best interest to flee as soon as possible. The Foundation is a primordial demon of such size that it consumed its layer long ago and now the layer serves as his own body.

Powerful Demon: Small layers often fall into the hands of a strong demon striving for archdemon. It likely has a small band of lesser fiends at his command, each bullied into subservience, but the layer may still have a lot of ungoverned and ungovernable areas that lie outside the demon's control. Roll as indicated in the table to determine which demon family the ruler comes from. To determine its exact species, roll in the appropriate encounter tables above in the previous section, adding +30 to the roll and ignoring the half-demon result in favour of the highest ranking demon. Alternatively roll 2d6+10 to determine the demon's CR, choosing the demon species with the nearest CR and advancing its HD by the difference in CRs. The Wasteland of Gates has many fiefs and domains in its infinite expanse; with many demonic warlords establishing a domain there ruling them as if they were a demon lord.

Powerful Outsider: Evil outsiders find the prospect of ruling a layer of the Abyss very attractive, due primarily to the fact that the Abyss has virtually infinite real estate, unlike their home planes. The outsider must be either chaotic or evil, preferably both, but its followers' mould the layer to accommodate the nuances of their alignment. To determine the outsider, roll 3d6+10 to determine its CR and choose a creature with the outsider type from *Core Rulebook III* or another d20 product that matches the CR as closely as possible, advancing its HD by the difference in CRs. The Elemental Wastes are each ruled each by such a fiendish elder elemental.

Powerful Undead: It is very rare to find an undead creature ruling an abyssal layer. Those that tend to be liches and vampires with spellcaster levels, it is this magical might that has added them in their will to snatch a layer of their own. Select an appropriate Non-Player Character from the tables in *Core Rulebook II* and apply the lich or vampire template. The Dead Lands of Necrodus were once ruled by a powerful lich until a demon lord returned to snatch the layer back.

Other: The Abyss allows for any mode of brutal government and sometimes holds a surprise for its visitors. The Shadow Fortress is ruled by a council of elder Jar'taska demons, three for each of the jethulet and hamedu and five for the heratru species, with the demon lady Iyaviht acting as some sort of chairman and co-ordinator.

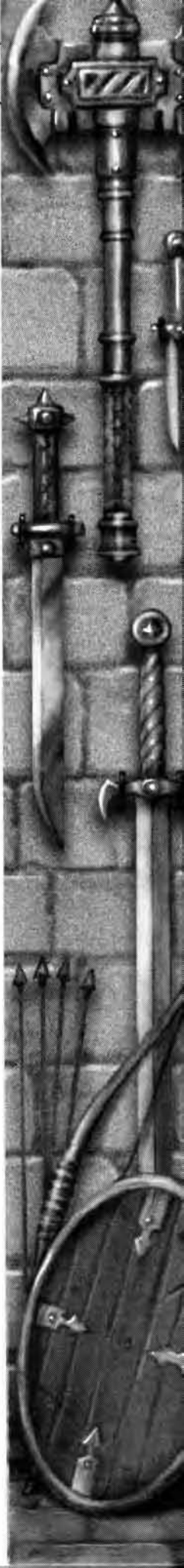
Define Denizens

Either use the ready-to-use tables in the previous sections or create a special layer encounter table detailing the creatures that are most likely to be found depending on the ruler and conditions. List the creatures individually and assign them a range in a d% range to come up in a random encounter. The layer encounter table can include creatures from any other sub-table if they are likely to be found in greater number. For example, a layer governed by a succubus archdemon may be devoted to hedonism and depravity, so succubi and heratru can be found in equal measure, along with shapechangers and visiting outsiders, all attracted to this extraplanar brothel.

Determine Locations

Unless the Games Master decides that the layer is a featureless plain extending from one end of infinity to the other, layers have locations that are either worth visiting or staying away from. Layers will have more noteworthy locations the larger they are and the more powerful their ruler. Roll 1d6 to determine how many interesting locations a layer has, adding the location modifier from the layer ruler table. Roll or choose for each location from the following table.

Unique Terrain Feature: Choose a terrain feature like a waterfall, a mountain, a valley, a big rock and the like and give it a spell-like ability and a hindering or dangerous feature from the exotic terrain or weather features tables.



Notable locations

Location	Population
Unique Terrain Feature	-
Access Point	-
Outpost	20-80
Settlement, tiny	81-800
Settlement, small	801-1,800
Settlement, medium-size	1,801-4,000
Settlement, large	4,001-10,000
Settlement, huge	10,001-24,000
Settlement, gargantuan	24,001-50,000
Metropolis	50,001+
Fortress	Any
Dungeon	2d12 encounters

Access Point: This is a gate that serves as a transit point, both for characters wishing to enter and leave the layer. Roll in the access point table to determine its characteristics.

Settlements: Demon settlements are appalling and quite horrifying given the tastes of their inhabitants. They can grow to be as big as a mortal metropolis and spread to encompass the whole layer. The population of a settlement varies widely and depends upon the make-up of the layer's possible encounters; for example, The Shadow Fortress is quite hostile to individual members of Tanar's Brood, although the Jar'taska do not have the strength to repel their subjugators if they come in force.

Fortress: A fortress is the stronghold of the layer's ruler, or one of them at least. They range from small keeps to impressive fortified metropolises, overflowing with combat-ready demons.

Dungeon: The layer may host one or more 'dungeons' in the way that adventurers know them: forgotten ruins, underground complexes, abandoned cities. Some of the dungeons may not be as deserted as they first appear, but they definitely do not have the numbers of demonic citizens an organised settlement would have.

Name It

Give the layer a threatening name based on the attributes rolled or chosen along the way. The

options presented here are merely a sample of the myriad conditions that the Abyss may possess.

THE WASTELAND OF GATES

The Wasteland of Gates is the Abyss' 'top' layer. The easiest to find and enter, it is so called because the barren and infinite terrain gives way to millions of gates, each capable of taking travellers deeper into the layers or to other planes altogether. Demons that take residence here are amongst the most rugged and brutal, as The Wasteland often serves as the battleground against invading Hellish legions. As the resident demons are used to seeing many extraplanar travellers, visitors are in less danger than if they were on a deeper layer, but still it is by no means safe. Slaver caravans go from settlement to settlement selling souls and unwary wanderers who catch the demons' attention. Casteless demons roam the broken and barren landscape in search of victims, not caring if they stumble on other demons or on visitors from the Material Plane.

As the Abyss' major entry point, the Wasteland of Gates also sees a lot of commerce, with all manner of extraplanar beings trading their rare and dark commodities, from the distilled emotions of Zakhak or the undead mercenary troops from Necrodus. As a hub of planar travel with its uncountable gates, the top layer of the Abyss is also a hotbed of information. Adventurers looking for the captured soul of a companion or a legendary artefact should start their quest in the Wasteland, as information of their goal is indispensable as they cross the infinite layers that constitute the demons' planar home.

Access

Anyone with the courage to enter the Abyss may do so through the Wasteland of Gates, arriving from the Astral Plane with no impediments, regardless of the method of travel. The gates that give the layer its name connect the Abyss with practically every other plane in the cosmology, although no one has yet found a gate to the Celestial realms, many believe that exists. Gates to the Material Plane are also extremely rare; they tend to open and close periodically and without warning. The cosmological byway also stops here, depending on the form it takes in a given campaign, its tributaries, roots or

staircases descending from the higher planes all have access to this place.

The most numerous gates are, however, those that connect the Wasteland with the rest of the Abyss. There are up to ten times the number of gates as there are Abyssal layers, each taking different forms, depending upon their destination. Elaborate gates made of strands of shadow-stuff would mark one of the layers ruled by the Jar'taska, a boiling pit of lava could be the entrance to any fire-aligned layer or a column of noxious smoke that smells of decaying flesh could be the entrance to Necrodus. It takes a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20) to identify any given terrain feature as a gate, although a *detect magic* does so automatically. This and other magical or supernatural senses reveal the nature of a gate but not its destination or even if it is one- or two-way. A successful Knowledge (the planes) check DC 20 reveal the gate's destination, although the only way to tell exactly where a gate will open to is by stepping through it.

Conditions

The conditions of the Wasteland of Gates are the most similar to the Material Plane. Even if the air smells bad, laden as it is with sulphurous fumes and the stench of putrescent corpses, it is breathable. The sky is a dull green and the sun is a deep crimson that casts a reddish tint across the land. There is no night in the Wasteland of Gates and the climate is quite warm. The terrain is completely flat, with only the scattered fortresses interrupting the continuous horizon. The dry ground is stained with scorch marks, some of them with an identifiable silhouette. Cracks criss-cross the broken land of this layer, interrupting the solid rock and reminiscent of the basin of a drought-stricken riverbed.

Travellers can take one of the many dirt roads that connect settlements together and trust it with their destination or try to impose their desire upon the road. A successful Will save is required to impress on the road the destination that it must take the travellers to. The DC of this saving throw depends upon the obscurity or danger of the location, which can range from 15 for an easily-accessible location to 40 for incredibly remote or unknown location. Success on the save forces the road to take the characters in the right direction and they will arrive in 20 days minus 1 day per point that the Will save exceeded the original DC.

Ruler

The Wasteland of Gates has no ruler. The rulers of all the connected layers are expected to defend the territory around the gates to their domains even if new gates open and are not identified for centuries, even by the denizens of the connected layer. There are, however, several petty warlords and leaders that claim dominion over a patch of broken terrain. They take over the functions and resources of their domain ensure travellers and trespassers understand the perils of crossing their boundaries.

Denizens

As the common ground amongst demonkind, the denizens of the Wasteland of Gates correspond exactly to the tables presented earlier in this chapter. If a 'Layer Encounter' result comes up, roll again.

Locations

The Wasteland of Gates is littered with settlements and strongholds. Finding a demon fortress is a matter of time, not a matter of chance, as archdemons or lesser demons of great power build their abodes and garrisons.

There are a few locations of interest in the Wasteland of Gates, apart from its gates themselves:

Anchortown: A sprawling metropolis made from black iron and concrete, it is a gathering point for extraplanar travellers. Demons have established many sources of entertainment for their visitors, not to mention employment and information gathering services. Adventurers use Anchortown as the starting point of any foray into the Abyss, as it is the only place that strangers are not attacked on sight.

The Mining Grounds: Several mining grounds exist, some dried up and abandoned, others thrive and bustle with activity. These are the places where demons extract raw materials for their weapons, armour and equipment. A mining ground could actually be a quarry or a gigantic slave pen, as demons call any encampment that has resource extraction as its main goal. Many such mines are built close to bizarre natural features such as lakes of readily available molten iron, plains of salt or a slaughterhouse for the manufacture of soulforged items.



Artifice: This grand city is ruled by an avaricious marilith archdemon, Jn’Nias, that has made the city into their prime source of fabrication in the Wasteland. She has imprisoned the souls of the most diabolical craftsmen in all the multiverse and has them create the most ingenious and malevolent devices known to demonkind. Torture engines, soul distillers, undead-spewing machinery and transfiguration chambers are the most impressive devices to come from Artifice’s workshops. Several smithies and artisan schools also produce more commonly items, from weapons to demonic constructs like the bebilith or the demon ships.



The gates from the first abyssal layer reflect the nature of each of Elenur’s constituent layers; the Fire Waste has gates made of columns of green and noxious flames. The Earth Waste’s are a crevasse in the ground, those from the Air Waste are wide ranging vortices and those that lead to the Water Waste are polluted, foul-smelling pools. There are no gates to the Elemental Wastes from the Material Plane.

ELENUR: THE ELEMENTAL WASTES

Elenur is not a single layer but four and perhaps more, joined together by a phenomenon called the Elemental Maelstrom. Each layer has a direct connection to one of the Elemental Planes, but their primal energy is corrupted by the influx of demonic essence that permeates the Abyss. The elementals that spawn in these wastes are utterly evil, embracing wanton destruction in the darkest aspects of its elements. Several Demon Lords battle each other for dominion of Elenur, facing resistance from their rivals and the de facto rulers of the evil elementals, the Eldest. The Elemental Wastes are a dark reflection of the Elemental Planes but where there are a semblance of harmony in the latter, the former are marked by violence and endless conflict.

Access

The Elemental Maelstrom connects to the cosmological byway and there are gates to the Wastes from the corresponding Elemental Planes.

Conditions

The condition of each Waste is very similar to those of their spawning Elemental Plane, though they are perverted in many ways. The Air Waste is filled with storm clouds that flash greenish lightning and the sudden gusts of wind can tear unprotected travellers apart. The Earth Waste is much more inhospitable than its counterpart on the Elemental Plane, as the rocks that comprise it grind together constantly, as if intent on their own destruction. The flames in the Fire Waste are a shifting mass of colours and burn to the very soul. The ocean in the Water Waste is sluggish and thick, smothering, more than drowning unwary travellers. The borders of each layer overlap with those of the next, creating mixed conditions that are no less foul than its contributors, like the razor-sharp ice between the Air and Water Wastes or the toxic fog banks that mark the boundaries of the Fire and Earth Wastes. It is worth noting half of any damage inflicted by elemental conditions is actually unholy damage.

Ruler

Four fiendish elder elementals called simply 'the Eldest' lord over their corresponding Wastes, largely ignoring the wars of conquest the demons wage to become Elenur's ruler. They are confident that the unleashed power of their elemental servitors will smash any surviving demon and teach the different broods to keep to their own lands. The Eldest have no discernible personality aside the vicious streak added to what can be expected from any elemental, regardless its age.

Denizens

Fiendish elementals are the most common inhabitants of Elenur, although demons with immunity to a certain element can be found there as well, either trying to do business, politics or espionage. Elemental aligned outsiders also prowl the wastes, either corrupted by demonic essence or wallowing in the layer's ambient evil.

Locations

Just like the Elemental Planes, there are no real settlements except those built by more intelligent outsiders.

The City of Brass: Rumours tell that the city of the efreets lies partly in the Fire Elemental Waste as well as on the corresponding Plane.

The Elemental Maelstrom: The axis of Elenur, the maelstrom is a whirlpool the size of a whole city, swirling ponderously and collecting material from all of the Wastes, mixing it into a chaotic elemental sludge. Each element deals 5d6 points of damage per round (for a total of 20d6) which can be lessened or prevented by the elemental protection of magic. With a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20) a character can jump from one Waste to any other by risking the maelstrom, or use it to go to a different abyssal layer altogether (DC 25).

IC'VNIGH: THE SWARMING JUNGLE

It is impossible to judge the size of Ic'vnigh, as it is covered in dense vegetation. The jungles of Ic'vnigh are one enormous hunting ground where the remnants of the Brood of Van'g have made their

home and fortress. The hordes of the Tanar were not able to penetrate into the heart of the layer even after decimating its defenders and is now the last bastion of these insect-like demons. Ic'vnigh provides the Van'g'ka with the protection needed to gather the larvae they harvest from the damned souls consigned to them and raise them to be warriors. Anything that wanders the trails of the Swarming Jungle is fair game for the Van'g'ka and the great variety of monstrous demonic vermin that populate it from ground level to highest canopy. Even lone Van'g'ka demons can be deemed prey by their brethren, as only those who live life on their toes can survive.

Access

The gates to Ic'vnigh are strange and alien, with seemingly organic outgrowths like webs and anthills. Surrounded by plagues of insects who cluster around any entrance to the Swarming Jungle. Inside the layer itself there are very few access points. A single great river crosses the layer and is believed to connect with the greater cosmological byway leading to other layers in the Abyss. In the Material Plane, gates to Ic'vnigh can form in the deepest recesses of a jungle or in the midst of a battleground, but are most often invoked by magic enacted by mortals who wish to hire the vicious demons as elite mercenaries. There is one major gate in the deepest part of the layer's main stronghold which can open into the Astral Plane or several neutral planes, at the Van'g archdemon's whim.

Conditions

There is an almost unbearable heat day and night under the oppressive greenery. Any breeze is slow and humid under the canopy of the alien trees that comprise this layer. The sky is mostly invisible from the ground, with weak light from the white and relentless sun filtering through the gigantic branches and leaves of the layer's native foliage. Travel is difficult for anyone without wings or insect-like limbs, with speed reduced by half and a journey of more than six hours considered a forced march, rather than the normal eight. The whole layer is as the most extreme of rainforests on the Material Plane, with all the perils accentuated three-fold.

Ruler

The archdemon I'tkk'chavni tries to keep the remnants of the Van'g Brood alive from the central hive at the layer's heart. I'tkk'chavni is a powerful



udvati strategist who rose to archdemon status in the throes of the Van'g'ka's fight for survival and was thus ignored by the generals of the Tanar horde. The archdemon is extremely bitter and vengeful but also infinitely patient, a rare trait in a demon. I'tkk'chavni plans to rebuild the brood by building power bases outside the Abyss, in small and hidden corners of other planes and by fostering the study of magic amongst the Van'g'ka castes, one of their greatest weakness. I'tkk'chavni is considering pledging the Van'g'ka's allegiance to the spider-goddess of the drow, but has held off knowing that its brood is fiercely independent and would not bow their heads to an evil goddess, besides, spiders are known to eat their mates.

Denizens

Tanar demons are not welcomed here and those who dare enter are seldom seen again. The Van'g'ka have little tolerance for demons of other families but have no 'kill on sight' directive. Other than the insect-like demons, fiendish vermin are comfortable in the layer's tropical climate, with plant monsters completing the danger to casual travellers.

Locations

It is practically impossible to know how many settlements the Van'g'ka keep in the middle of the Swarming Jungle and it would seem that they are nomadic except for their main hive.

The Great Waterfall: The river crossing the layer passes over a precipice at least a thousand feet high. The waterfall is a powerful magical nexus that few Van'g'ka demons can properly use, however, they fiercely defend it against anyone outside their brood attempting to exploit it. Water taken from the great waterfall can act as a grenade-like weapon with a *bestow curse* effect when thrown. If imbibed, grants a spellcaster a +2 enhancement bonus to his caster level for the purpose of determining spell effects, without affecting the number of spells he can cast in one day, this bonus lasts one full day. All spells cast within 30 feet of the waterfall gain a +4 bonus to their caster level as well, although creatures likewise receive a +4 circumstance bonus to all their saving throws against magic.

T'klith: The heart of Van'g'ka power, T'klith is a gigantic maze of tunnels and chambers not dissimilar to an anthill. As the only artificial structure in the

Swarming Jungle, this pseudo-city stands out as it is made from organic materials and the various excretions of the demons themselves. Its entrance is a great hole in the ground, surrounded by earthen towers and hidden pit traps. Van'g'ka overseers supervise the work of fiendish ants and termites or the odd enslaved formian. The twisting tunnels are full of traps and hidden weapons caches and only the most powerful of each demonic caste knows the way to the hive's heart, where I'tkk'chavni plots the return to power of its brood.

NECRODUS: THE DEAD LANDS

Many myths put Necrodus as the ultimate source of all undead. Contested multiple times with varying degrees of success, the theory claims proof in the nature of the layer and its direct links to the Negative Energy Plane. Necrodus is definitely a realm of undead, where any source of life burns brightly, attracting its denizens like the proverbial moth to a flame. The debate as to whether this layer is the true origin of undeath or is simply its abyssal reflection will never be resolved, but Necrodus will continue to be the foothold of powerful creatures like liches and vampires into extraplanar influence.

Access

The entrances into Necrodus, as well as its exits are easy to identify; one simply has to look for the huge boneyards and the roaming bands of undead creatures to know that an access point to Necrodus is nearby. A few graveyards, battlegrounds or places of malevolent death in the Material Plane may produce spontaneous gates, but they are unreliable unless a necromancer or demonologist secures them with the proper rituals. Despite the beliefs of many good churches, Necrodus is *not* the realm of the dead that feature in many barbarian religions; this layer is clearly a place of demonic excesses, not the final resting place of ancestor spirits.

Conditions

Unlike the Wasteland of Gates it is always night in Necrodus. The stars form obscene sigils of death and damnation and a blood-red moon hangs from a point near the horizon, changing its phases as its counterpart in the Material Plane, but somehow

always skipping the full phase. There is a pervading sense of dread and a smell of decay in the bleak landscape, which contains a wide variety of features like mountains, forests and otherwise normal topography, except that everything is dead but still living. There are withered flowers growing in blackened fields and putrid fruit growing from leafless trees. All healing magic works at a 50% capacity while in Necrodus and all undead have a +4 turn resistance in addition to any turn resistance they may naturally have.

Ruler

The demon lord, Uruhz, rules from his mighty throne of bones and rent flesh. His skin is pulled taut against its bones and is a sickly green colour. His head, the skull of what could easily be a horse, enveloped in thick black smoke, little balefire flames shining deep inside its eye sockets. Uruhz, dresses in fine garments of rich purple and crimson, always holding a staff made of black wood with pieces of coal inset along its surface instead of jewels. Uruhz hates all living things and, besides being a demon, it is also a lich. All of his closest lieutenants are undead in one way or another, with an abundance of Tanar ghost-demons and previously mortal liches and vampires.



Denizens

All of the inhabitants of Necrodus are undead, even the demons. If a demon enters servitude to Uruhz, it is ritually sacrificed, its demonic essence tainted with an influx of negative energy. Apply any of the undead templates in *The Slayer's Guide to Undead* to existing demons or apply the fiendish template to any existing undead. All the damned souls that arrive in Necrodus are promptly turned into undead creatures.

Locations

There are a few mining outposts where skeletal demons and fiendish zombies process a number of unholy materials like bone powder. Huge necropolises extend in a mockery of large metropolises and various undead go through the motions of living, although the most violent do not refrain from attacking their 'neighbours.'

Tötencrantz: The major necropolis in the layer and home to Uruhz. Visitors are not encouraged and well-advised to stay away, for the constant moaning of the tortured souls both within the walking dead and the various torture chambers there can drive anyone mad. The narrow and twisting streets of Tötencrantz are claustrophobic in the extreme, with the structures on each side being more akin to crypts and tombs than they are to real buildings. The food served is highly poisonous to all living beings but curiously nourishing or at least satiating for the dead. Uruhz sponsors many mortal necromancers and often brings them to its capital city where terrifying lessons are burned into their minds to take back home and inflict upon others.

THE SHADOW FORTRESS

Deceit and treachery are the hallmarks of the Shadow Fortress, a unique layer that resides both in the

Abyss and the Plane of Shadows. The home of the Brood of Jar'taska remained untouched because the assaulting demons from the Tanar hordes could not find its entrances, sealed shut by the planeswalking Jar'taska'ka. Opened only after the demon nobles of the brood bargained for their survival with the balors of the Tanar, the Shadow Fortress is still seldom visited from the Abyss, although it sees regular traffic through its entrances from the Plane of Shadows. The Fortress is a very important information hub; the Jar'taska'ka have been quite busy since they saw their power diminish in the face of the Tanar Brood's rise to power and have devoted their time and efforts towards gathering lore from all corners of the planes in an attempt to return its accuracy, lending the shadelings and dark lanterns as demonic familiars so they can spy on mortal spellcasters; the minor Jar'taska'ka can betray their mortal masters because, unlike the quasit, they still have a demon family.

Access

The capital city of the Jar'taska brood has access gates to the Abyss' top layer in the form of areas of unnaturally deep darkness, where shadow should not exist but is nevertheless there. The demons keep a constant watch for these openings and shut them down, keeping the layer as isolated as possible without actually cutting it off. The layer is much more accessible, however, as it leads directly to the Plane of Shadows. The Jar'taska'ka have mastered planar travel through the deep darkness of the demiplane and used it to survive the purge of the Tanar.

Conditions

All points of entry into the Shadow Fortress open to the moat, a black sea that extends towards infinity to all sides. Creatures without the ability to fly or swim will depend on the Jar'taska'ka ferrymen who wait for any scheduled entry into their layer. The second complication to unannounced arrivals is that the whole layer is submerged in magical darkness. Only creatures with Darkvision or under the effects of *see invisibility* or *true sight* are able to see at all, although characters with the Blind Fighting feat find that they can 'see' by echolocation up to a range of 30 feet. The Fortress proper is a sprawl of streets and structures where Jar'taska'ka scuttle about, plotting and scheming in extraplanar conspiracies and against each other. There is a central keep that extends for hundreds of miles into the unseen sky where the Jar'taska council convenes.

Ruler

The governing of the Jar'taska is suitably baroque in its complexity. A council argues, bullies and back-stabs for its rulings amongst two elder demons and one archdemon from the jethulet and hamedu species and three elder demons and two archdemons from the heratru. Presiding this conflictive council is Iyaviht, a female demon of considerable power that adopted the Jar'taska'ka as her own just after they sealed the Shadow Fortress against the onslaught of the Tanar Brood. Iyaviht is a solid silhouette with only a small cluster of twinkling lights for eyes, wearing the shape of a voluptuous humanoid female but looking oddly two-dimensional, although it is impossible to determine this as she offers a solid outline from any point of view. She finds the shadow demons amusing and close to her scheming heart, she intends to use them to further her influence in the mortal world.

Denizens

Only creatures of darkness populate the Shadow Fortress, from the Jar'taska'ka to a few incorporeal undead, although many natives from the Plane of Shadows take residence in its black streets. The Jar'taska'ka welcome extraplanar scholars and spellcasters, tempting them with the vast stores of arcane lore hidden in the Shadow Fortress, with the price being only more knowledge. In this way, the streets of the layer city are probably the most cosmopolitan in the Abyss, barring the Wasteland of Gates.

Locations

The Shadow Fortress is one single gigantic location, with many libraries and workshops dotting its sprawling blocks and streets. Under the false veneer of hospitality, the demons have an incredible network of secret passages and spyholes that run across the entire layer.

Darkstone Keep: The central structure of the shadow city, this multi-level keep hosts the best and worst of the shadow demon family. Not given to outward violence, the Jar'taska'ka are master backstabbers and the convoluted corridors of the keep reflect this, twisting in maddening circles and spirals that span several levels, so that unwary visitors never know exactly where they are. The heart of the keep holds the council chamber where Iyaviht and the most powerful members of the

brood gather to try and outmanoeuvre each other in extraplanar politics and in the subtle corruption of spellcasters and further acquisition of their secrets.

The Shadow Isles: The great moat surrounding the Shadow Fortress is not as empty as the Jar'taska'ka would like. Several islands made of solid shadow-stuff float about, detached from the neighbouring Plane of Shadows and sometimes carry with them uninvited visitors from that plane. Some of these isles serve as refuge for spies from other broods and undead, although they do not last long until the Fortress' patrols find them and destroy them, dissolving the isle into the black waters of the moat.

ZAHHAK: THE ASHEN WASTE

The 28th layer of the Abyss is overlooked by most, if not all of the important movers and shakers of extraplanar conflict. It holds no armies to threaten its neighbours and no hordes that would contribute to the eternal war against the legions of Hell; its cultists do not promote world conquest or destruction and even their archdemons are considered pathetic by the standards of their peers. What very few recognise is that Zahhak is a layer of very subtle evil, as it erodes slowly what other demonic forces seek to corrupt with their brutal methods: the hopes and dreams of mortals. Zahhak is a place of quiet despair, the demons that inhabit this dismal layer are gripped by boredom and apathy, but still retain enough maliciousness to torture all the unfortunate that find their way here.

Governed by a pentad of five archdemons under the orders of an evil god, Zahhak is a waste of ashen dunes and eroded volcanic rock, with settlements connected by roads in need of maintenance and treaded by demons whose pleasure comes in watching visitors lose the core of their beings just by standing unprotected beneath the layer's dull sun.

Access

Zahhak is perhaps the layer with the most gates to the Material Plane. Its evil is so subtle that such links have gone unnoticed by other Abyssal powers that could benefit from it or even by Celestial forces and their agents in the mortals' world. Such is the power of the layer to suck a being dry of any sense

of purpose that many explorers could have uncovered this secret and simply lost interest or forgot why they were there and then became part of the landscape. The gates leading from the Wasteland of Gates are in the form of extinct volcanic craters covered in ash. Any gate to Zahhak exerts a little influence on its surroundings, making them dull and instilling a lacklustre feeling into creatures nearby.

Conditions

Everything about Zahhak is dull and worn. The rolling ashen hills are moved lazily by a non-existent wind and the sky and sun are greyish, with no break from any cloud or other phenomena. The areas around settlements have been cleared of ash and rest on beds of flat volcanic rock. One of the most notable features of the Ashen Waste's landscape are the ash statues, the remnants of visitors and damned souls that succumbed to the layer's influence; anyone standing close to one of these statues can still hear the moans of utter despair that the dulled souls still emit.

The most dangerous feature of Zahhak is unnoticeable until a couple of days have passed and it may take victims even more time to realise the danger they are in. The ashen dunes and statues are combed by a wind that has no physical existence but can still be felt blowing from the layer's centre in visitor's minds. These are the soulwinds that take away a visitor's sense of purpose and inner strength. Every full day a living creature spends in Zahhak without protection, it must succeed at a Will save (DC 15, +1 per previous save) or suffer 1 point of temporary Charisma damage. This effect is barely noticeable at first, but as the creature begins losing its self-worth and drive, it begins to take an ashen appearance. A creature whose Charisma reaches 0 while in Zahhak becomes an ash statue.

Ruler

An obscure god known only as Apathy resides at the bottomless pit at the centre of the layer, feeding incessantly on the suffering of the layer's damned souls and the influence its cultists spread in the Material Plane. Apathy is a formless mass of black hunger and is rumoured to actually be asleep, consuming everything out of instinct. Beneath him, are those who do the actual work, five archdemons from Tanar's Brood that Apathy co-opted, robbed of their former existence when they pledged service to the dark god.





Denizens Encounters in Zahhak are dominated by lesser demons of Tanar's Brood as well as the Nuyul'ka, who delight in the psychic suffering inflicted by the layer and are immune to its effects without

having to pledge allegiance to Apathy. Slaver caravans are more common than in other layers, with demons looking for the listless husks of visitors who have fallen victim to the layer's influence and herding them to an outpost or fortress. Once there their souls will be made into Zahhak's unique delicacy, a liquor called 'dreamspur' that can even intoxicate demons with the distilled essence of the souls' dreams. Some adventurers who clung to life even after they lost their souls become undead, wandering about and attacking everything in sight out of spite and envy, the only emotions they are left with by the soulwinds.

Locations

The featureless domain of Apathy is seldom broken by small demonic outposts and tiny settlements, with the layers' population concentrating around the archdemons' fortresses.

The Maw of Apathy: This deep canyon is the residence of the dark god Apathy, lying at the layer's centre and at equal distance from each corner of the pentagon made by his archdemon's fortresses. The soulwinds take on real strength around the Maw and suck in everything not strong enough to resist. All soulwinds flow from and return to the Maw, where all the stolen dreams and hopes eventually disappear into Apathy's ravenous self. Nuyul'ka gather around this place, the winds not affecting them in the least.

The Pentad's Fortresses: The five fortresses are named after their ruler and the aspect of Apathy that they represent. *Aphoria* is governed by a nalfeshnee who continually constructs and demolishes parts of its fortress, dedicated to sucking out joy. *Disire* is actually more a collection of rubble than a true fortress as it was smashed by the infinitely bored balor that rules it, responsible for destroying any feeling of anger and rage, righteous or profane. *Erathos* is one of the cruellest archdemons in Zahhak, a spurned succubus sorceress that takes delight in the death of love; her fortress is a maze of empty corridors and hollow walls. *Inanis* is the haven of mediocrity and Zahhak's great archives, whose insane and utterly incompetent method of classification could drive any researcher insane, which is actually the intent of its glabrezu lord. The marilith ruler of *Imvehere* reflects the lack of purpose and pinnacle of indecisiveness that is its domain, full of half-finished and unrelated things.

OTHER LAYERS OF NOTE

The Exile Lands: This layer is the haven of those demons who do not wish to partake in the eternal war against Hell; they are freebooters, exiles, fugitives and renegades that are even more unpredictable than their brethren who remain loyal to their brood.

The Warped Mirror: All visitors believe that they are returning to their home plane, but it is actually an illusion created by the layer. Demons play the role of friends and acquaintances, slowly sapping the visitor's will and driving them mad.

The Putrescent Gorge: The layer is a wide and deep ravine, the walls and bottom of which are a melting pot of oozes, plant monsters, fungi and magical diseases.

The Dark Web: This layer is the home of the drow spider-goddess, set up as a gigantic cavern with all sorts of webs hanging from the different formations and demon-spiders hunting out trespassers.

The Training Ground: A place where archdemons send one of their minions when they want it to die a horrible death or emerge as a stronger fiend. Most visitors to this layer die in the most terrible of ways.

The Foundation: A sleeping demon whose body is the layer itself. It sleeps for now, but too much activity inside it could stir it from its slumber.

DEMONIC SOCIETY

One thing must be said about demonic society. There is none, or at least not in the sense that the term 'society' is understood in the Material Plane. Even the malevolent drow or the savage orcs have a measure of societal rule that can be put into perspective, but demons are creatures of chaos and destruction; building and maintaining a society is a concept alien to them.

By observation and careful analysis, demonologists and scholars of planar matters have derived a series of common patterns between demons and recognised that, despite their madness and brutality, demons have a society of sorts.

LEADERSHIP

The most obvious trait of demonic interaction is the rule of the strong. A leader retains its position through fear and violence, mercilessly killing anyone and anything that it feels is a threat and need answer to no one.

The term 'caste' is used rather freely by scholars when speaking about demons. One species holds a higher position from another, not because of any inherent authority but, because in general, members of the higher species are strong enough to abuse those of the lower castes. These are not fixed social echelons; however, in any given group or layer, a demon of an apparently 'lower' caste may gain enough personal power to dominate others of supposedly 'higher' castes. Demons are brutally egalitarian in this respect: whoever can rip a rival's innards out and use them for decoration often leads.

Nonetheless, demons tend to group with others akin to them. Teams of dretches stick together and give a modicum of support to each other, not because they feel any filial obligation, but because they trust that others similar to them are less likely to step on them. Others, like the vrock, see an advantage in working with others of their kind and accept and ask for assistance, such arrangements always come with a catch that will somehow give them the upper hand in further dealings with the same demons.

For species like the all of the Van'g'ka, working together is a matter of instinct, though they see it more as exploiting their brethren than any true spirit of co-operation.

That the social order of the Abyss works never ceases to amaze outside observers and frustrate enemies. While the tendency of demons to fall against themselves has kept their hordes from becoming a greater terror, many fear that it will only take a Demon Lord strong enough to beat opponents into submission and canny enough to avoid attention.

GANGS AND HORDES

Demons do not co-operate easily but they do find that there is strength in numbers, at least the weaker of them. A demonic gang forms rather spontaneously and more out of geographical convenience; a group of demons find themselves together and decide to stick that way for the time being. Stronger demons may notice these gangs and claim leadership (or even ownership) by bullying the weaker ones and thus a gang gains a purpose besides base survival: the new leader's whims.

A gang will prowl an abyssal layer doing what demons do best: create chaos. They will fight other gangs and generally do their best to steal, plunder and murder anything they stumble upon. Such gangs abound in most abyssal layers except where a strong power claims dominion or where a ruling demon is blind to the gangs, though it may send its own forces to annihilate or assimilate such gangs into its own forces should they become aware of them.

A horde is more or less a gang that has grown too large. The chain of command fluxes constantly on the whim of the horde's leader as well as the conniving and back-stabbing amongst the lesser members. The more authority a demon has the more spoils of any conquest he claims, mostly because it can take them away from its subordinates at a moment's notice. The removal of a leader and the usurping of their power are the prime motivations, these power-hungry individuals want to lead only to revel in the pain and suffering of their subordinates.

A demonic horde assembles quicker the more demons fear the Demon Lord or archdemon that has



called it. Tardy warriors can find themselves being used as raw materials for weapons and experiments. Hordes are often unable to perform sophisticated military manoeuvres as they are consumed by their own rage and bloodlust, charging the battlefield without order or reason. The more cunning strategists amongst demonkind know this and rather than try to instil discipline, they foster greater violence, using numbers to overwhelm any organised opposition.

THE DEMONIC EXISTENCE

It is hard to imagine what life as a demon is like, if it can be called life at all. There is no routine or tradition that demons hold dear, only the rule of the strong over the weak, and sometimes not even that. Fear is one of the main motives for which demons engage in any kind of activity. Dretches work on the demons' fortresses because they fear the punishment that slacking will bring and because they are not smart enough to plot against their oppressor. Damned souls are too tormented by their suffering to be able to do anything about their condition except wallow in their own self-pity.

Ambition, hatred, envy, lust... all the dark urges are the carrot to fear's stick, driving demons to their excesses or to strange fits of patience. It is, however, impossible to predict what a demon will do.

That said, demons do have a number of roles that they fill within their interactions with each other:

Slave: One of the most obvious and prevalent roles for disgraced fiends, recently elevated damned ones, or demons whose True Name become known. Also, it is the only way that a demon will perform hard labour. Not all slaves look the part or toil endlessly at menial tasks; some demons are quite skilled and their masters use them to fulfil other roles, but never let the slave forget his allegiance.

Warrior: This is just another form of slavery, but often carries more perks. For one, it allows the warrior demon to prove itself in battle and grow in strength, perhaps even arranging an 'accident' for its leader so as to take its post. Warriors wallow in the demonic lust for violence and brutality and have ample opportunity for both.

Corrupter: Working for themselves or for a master, corrupters have some way to reach the Material Plane and have the task and pleasure of tempting mortals into depravation and the ultimate fate of the fallen: passage to the Abyss upon their death. Or maybe even earlier. Succubi are best suited for this task amongst the Brood of Tanar, but the vengadi Van'g'ka, the hamedu and heratru Jar'taska'ka and most of the Brood of Nuyul also like to corrupt mortals with offers of martial prowess, forbidden knowledge and raw emotion.

Defiler: Similar to a corrupter, but a defiler's role is to despoil a whole area, not merely a few mortals. Defilers are usually leaders of their own gang and use a variety of methods to make an area more to their liking. This could entail anything from terrorising a mortal community to capturing a patch of territory in the Wasteland of Gates.

Artisans: Some demons have a talent for creation, if not the patience. Demonic artisans are valued property, treated much better than regular slaves but watched closely and punished should their performance dwindle. A few demonic artisans dedicate to their craft with mad abandon, reaching pinnacles of skill that mortals only dream about, even if their work always bears the taint of evil.

Taskmasters: Those who watch closely the comings and goings of slaves, taskmasters rise to their positions because they have a knack for intimidation and abuse. The ultimate bullies of demonkind, taskmasters hate their charges as much as they fear their superiors.

Tormentors: There are two kinds of tormentors: the subtle and the indiscriminate. Subtle tormentors often double as corrupters and also have a way to reach the Material Plane. They will haunt a mortal in very subtle ways in order to drive him mad or to make him commit the atrocities the tormentor wants perpetrated. Indiscriminate tormentors work in a Demon Lord's fortress or in slave pens, inflicting all manners of torture upon other demons and particularly damned souls.

Stratego: The intelligentsia in the Abyss, strategoi accrue power and domination by using their heads, although they are quite capable of destroying those who defy them. Not a title but a general classification, strategoi make long-term plans that they impose by manipulating support or because they

have the grudging respect of the fiends who call the shots. Strategoi will often have access to magic and almost assuredly have a wide collection of Greater and True Names with which to compel others.

Warlord: Warlords and other leaders within a horde are not so much slaves as they are cowed followers of a stronger demon, with the only social contract between them being the threat of being beaten up and devoured. The greatest warlords have their own horde and vie for the position of archdemon, warring with other warlords almost as often as they battle their masters' enemies.

Nobles: This is just a name used for classification purposes, as there is nothing noble about a demon. The aristocrats of the Abyss have gained power either from their magical power or their skills as warlord, but they have reached a point at which they do not bother to take to the fields of battle themselves, rather they enjoy the slaughter their minions cause from afar. Demon nobles have climbed the brutal ladder in demonic power and have no intentions of relinquishing their positions to upstarts while simultaneously doing everything they can to take rivals down.

THE DEMON FAMILIES

As has been mentioned before, demons belong to a brood, a family with similar characteristics. This is the only stable differentiation in demonic society. A slave might become a warrior and a warrior may gather enough power to overthrow a warlord, but there is no way that a Van'g'ka will ever join the ranks of the Brood of Tanar.

In ancient times, the Abyss was rocked by a war of purging. The Brood of Tanar launched a massive and brutal campaign of conquest across all layers of the Abyss, hunting down and destroying other demon families, taking their domains and enslaving or devouring any who resisted. This war was stopped only by a massive invasion from the devils of Hell, who saw the inner strife as an opportunity to deal a telling blow to their eternal enemies. The demons of other families did not rally behind the Tanar, but used the distraction to escape, scatter and re-organise while the prevailing brood fought off the hellish legions. The new masters of the Abyss were too

exhausted to continue the purge, so they allowed the defeated to exist, no longer a true threat to them.

The Brood of Tanar

The uncontested masters of demonkind, the members of the Tanar'ka have a very clear view on who is the dominant species in the Abyss. Even a dretch will mistreat a vyin warrior despite the very real capability of the latter to destroy the former, but the vyin will back away nonetheless, fearing that killing the dretch will attract the attention of stronger Tanar demons. This is rarely the case, but no demon from a defeated family would like to take the chance and see the purge resumed.

From their position at the top of the demonic food chain, the Tanar'ka take the lion's share in damned souls and hold most of the fortresses in the Wasteland of Gates, so it is logical that extraplanar travellers believe the Tanar to be the only demons in the Abyss. Even as the Van'g'ka have many mentions in mortal occult texts, very few of them acknowledge the Brood of Van'g as a family, rather considering the insect-like warriors to be oddly independent demons, like the quasit.



The Tanar resent the consequences of their fame, as it is far more likely that one of their brood will be summoned by mortal magic than a member of other families.

The Brood of Van'g

The insect demons of the Brood of Van'g survived because overall, they are better warriors than those of the Tanar'ka, but not as strong sorcerers and more vulnerable to magic, which proved their downfall when the higher demons amongst the Tanar arrived amongst them. After the purge, the Van'g'ka regrouped in the last layer they had left and, rather than try to resist the Tanar, they offered their services as mercenaries not only to the new abyssal masters, but also to any power that could pay their price. In this way, the insect-like demons can be seen fighting in many battlefields across the planes, sometimes confused with formians or minions of the drow goddess, but always their own masters.

They hold very little power outside their home layer but members are common in areas where fighting is common, and more often than not are shock troopers in any invasion to Hell by a demonic horde.

When not snatched by the Tanar taskmasters, the souls of cruel and bloodthirsty warriors tend to become soul larvae that hatch into vyin demons. Any wizard paying for the services of a Van'g'ka squad should take great pains to use them quickly and dismiss them as soon as possible, as they are prone to take payment from anyone who offers it even in the middle of a mission.

The Brood of Jar'taska

Darkness is the calling card of the Jar'taska'ka, demons who prefer to inflict pain and terror without being seen instead of basking in the horror of their appearance. The Brood of Jar'taska are all about shadows; from their appearance to their home layer and their power, everything they do or think is shrouded in darkness. They soon learned to slip past the planar barriers into the Plane of Shadows using their own nature to respond to the primordial darkness.

The Tanar have never been sure how many of this brood they were able to finish off before receiving an offer of surrender and a pledge of service as spies and messengers from the leaders of the Jar'taska'ka. The truth is that more than half of the brood's

species survived as they were away from the Abyss and did not return until the purge was ended. They seldom abandon the shadows that protect them and make them strong, so it is never certain how many of them remain and what they plan to do. Because they attracted the attention of the Demon Lady Iyaviht they have a measure of protection against their enemies, but they are cautious to the point of cowardice, all the same.

The Brood of Nuyul

These elusive spirits embody two of the pillars of demonic existence: madness and despair. They escaped the purge because they were never many to begin with and they lack the ability to pose a serious physical menace. Besides, the mind worms, as they are called, have proven valuable corrupters who care little for whom they harvest souls, just as long as they are allowed to feed while they are doing so.

The Nuyul'ka feed on emotions and embody some of the darkest that a sentient creature can harbour. They bore deep inside their victims, provoking dark urges and feeding on the actions they unleash. Other demons leave the Nuyul'ka alone for various reasons: they show an utter indifference for what passes for politics in the Abyss, they are completely insane and... they do not discriminate victims. Nuyul'ka are capable of penetrating other demons' Spell Resistance, boring into their demonic essence and feeding from them as easily as they do from mortals. Demons are not affected as mortals, though, already being the embodiment of dark emotions and even find the experience exhilarating at first, until the mind worms start sucking their host dry.

Believed to be pests, most demons do not pay much mind to the nuyul'ka, but there is a method to their madness. Even they do not understand what drives them, but they increase their own numbers with each soul they drive insane or leave empty after driving it to depravity. In a few thousand years, their numbers will be large enough to challenge the Brood of Tanar itself.

The Casteless

There is no way to account the thousand of demonic species that exist in the Abyss and sometimes wander into the Material Plane, summoned by the unwary. The casteless demons would be the largest force in demonkind if they ever organised, but if members of

the same brood find that difficult to achieve, for the casteless it is impossible.

Casteless demons are aimless and, as a group, unpredictable. Most of them are little better than beasts like the bebilith, hunting other demons for food and sport. Others, like quasits, serve the Brood of Tanar as their agents in the Material Plane, as they are the most summoned species in the Abyss. Their families long gone in the Tanar purge, the casteless survive as they can, the strongest of them stomping around in misguided pride until they are killed by the Tanar and the weak skulking about, hoping to go unnoticed or pledging allegiance to stronger demons.

Besides the survivors of destroyed broods, other casteless demons never had a family to begin with; they are the exceptions that chaos always introduces to a seemingly understandable order. The Abyss generates its own flora and fauna, aping those of the Material Plane but with the essence of evil running through every fibre of their bodies.

The Damned

The bottom rung of the demonic pecking order are the damned, the souls of mortals who were corrupt enough to end up in the Abyss after they have died. The damned are as hard to classify as the casteless demons because mortals find their ways into this lower plane for a great variety of reasons. These souls were evil in life, but lacked the dedication or the force of will to arrive as anything other than damned souls. Each demon family receives its portion of damned ones, but it is the demon that hunts that gathers the largest slave pen. Damned souls wander around, wracked by the demonic essence they are exposed to without the protection of their living flesh until a demon finds and claims them, and then the real suffering starts.

Damned ones arrive at different layers depending on the reason for their condemnation, and demons work hard to make sure that many souls are sent their way. More prized than the souls who committed evil on their own, the corrupted souls of beings once pure and good are welcomed with evil laughter and accolades for the demon who engineered the soul's downfall.

The mortals who escape the fate of a damned one are those who were conscious of their own wickedness, who did not try to rationalise their actions but instead

embraced them fully. Members of demon cults are some of these souls that are rewarded with a station as lesser demons instead of enduring the torture of a damned one. Being demons, of course, this does not work all the time. The Abyssal denizens find it very entertaining to reward their mortal agents with an eternity of pain and suffering just like any other soul. The criteria to turn a mortal soul into a demon change hourly and depends upon the demon that holds the soul's fate in its hands.

ARCHDEMONS

The title of archdemon is not only one of authority, but also separates the fiend from its lessors in very tangible and unassailable ways. Archdemons are much more powerful than the strongest demon of their brood, their power clear for all to see, so there is absolutely no dissent. Archdemons are everything they were as normal demons, only worse.

The process by which an archdemon is born is confusing at best; that it rises from the ranks of normal demons is a given, as the creatures themselves boast many times, but the question remains as to *how*. Demonologists agree that captured souls figure somewhere in the process, probably in some dark ritual that enhances the demon by infusing it with so much demonic essence that it grows both in size and in power. Archdemons are easy to spot in any horde, towering over even the largest normal fiends and emanating a terrible aura that only the greatest heroes can withstand.

Some archdemons manage to snatch a whole layer for themselves, but the norm is that they are the generals of any horde, direct servants of either a Demon Lord or an evil deity. Their word is law, and that word changes, so none know what to expect. Not even a mighty balor would dare to challenge an archdemon of nalfeshnee origin unless it somehow increased its power too, because there would be no contest as the archdemon crushed the insolent balor and spread its remains over the Wasteland of Gates.

THE DEMON LORDS

The mightiest of the Abyss' denizens, Demon Lords are almost deities, unchallengeable by mere mortals except with the help of the gods themselves. Demon



Lords have existed forever, or that is what they would like everyone to think. Their form defies classification and their power is indescribable. They are outside the demonic horde's petty squabbling and back-stabbing, as they could annihilate even an archdemon with but a thought.

Each Demon Lord is a unique creature of unrepentant evil, dedicated to some purpose and with its own dark plans. Only the Gatekeeper lacks an abyssal layer and complementary demon horde to call its own, as all of them strive toward godhood, something that makes the actual gods residing in the Abyss more than a little nervous.

Demon Lords are powerful enough that only their True Names will compel them to do anything, and even then they have a very good chance of resisting if the mind that dares to call their name is not as strong as theirs. They are also commonly known to demonologist circles and even gain their own cults. Unable to grant their priests with divine magic as even the lowest deities can, Demon Lords instead grant two-pronged favours to their worshippers, which can go from forbidden knowledge to the service of a minor demon. The most loyal and amusing of these mortal agents can even receive a part of their master's demonic essence in the form of a demonic investiture, a free magical talent that raises the recipient from his peers, but also carries a terrible price: ownership of both body and soul by the Demon Lord.

Demon Lords war against each other constantly, but open conflict is short-lived even if grudges are not. They soon lose interest in the battle in favour of a new plan and leave their hordes to annihilate each other. The last major conflict that saw Demon Lords take to battle directly was the purge that the Brood of Tanar enacted on the rest of the demonic families. These ultimate rulers of demonkind now content themselves with pursuing their personal plans for the rest of the universe, turning a wary eye to their neighbours, both divine and demonic.

THE NAMELESS ONES

Even demons would wish that The Nameless Ones were a myth, but they do exist. Dormant in the most inaccessible layers of the Abyss, the Nameless sleep as they have for millennia, showing no signs of stirring. Even the gods themselves change the

subject when asked about these fiends, and Demon Lords grunt and order the questioner executed.

These primordial beings are an enigma. Some extraplanar scholars question that they are not demons at all, perhaps not even gods but something far greater, but they fell into a deep slumber as the universe could not sustain them any longer, slowly sinking to the deepest level of the wheel of the cosmos, namely the Abyss. The Foundation is the only one of The Nameless Ones to have been encountered, and the explorers that stumbled upon this living Abyssal layer barely escaped with their bodies intact. Their minds, sadly, were not so lucky.

A few mentions of other Nameless Ones can be found on obscure libraries in equally obscure planes, but the information is scarce and not entirely unreliable as it seems that the subject itself is capable of unhinging the mind of anyone researching it.

What the awakening of one of The Nameless Ones entails for the entirety of creation is not clear, but there are mortal cultists insane enough to try and find out.

GODS AND DEMONS

The relationship between gods and demons is a thorny one. The gods of good continually send their Celestial servants to oppose the demons at every possible turn, matching forces to fight against both the Abyss and Hell. Evil deities have a more troubling situation on their hands. They will never admit that they reside in the Abyss by the Demon Lords' sufferance or that, if the demons were capable of assembling into a single force, they would kick all of the gods out. On the other hand, demons make excellent followers for evil deities if the divine beings stoop to the demons' tactics of intimidation and coercion. With gods and goddesses as degenerate as the demons, this is not a problem.

Demon Lords expect to be treated as equals by an evil deity; fortunately for all involved, interaction between these cosmic forces of darkness is kept to a minimum, with deities keeping themselves aloof from the internal workings of the Abyss and its residents.

METHODS OF WARFARE

Demons are always at war in one way or another; their violent nature makes it impossible for them to enjoy peace for any lasting period. Demons are the enemies of everything, even themselves and have developed many innovative and ultimately sadistic tactics to prolong the suffering of their foes, be they Celestials, outsiders, mortal meddlers or even other demons.

Given their summoning ability, as much as they are loathe to use it, demons may count on reinforcements at any given time, even if that help is unreliable. Coupled with the demonic engines of destruction and weapons made from unholy materials, demons can fight a more vicious battle than many opponents expect.

DEMONIC TACTICS

The tried and true combat tactic of most demons is to attack with abandon, getting as close and as dirty as possible. Other demons are more cunning, preferring to use their numerous spell-like abilities to give them an edge either by hindering their opponents or enhancing themselves. The apparent savagery of their tactics are not without some degree of planning, however, for demons of higher castes are psychopathic, if intelligent, and will present even the most obscure of strategies that do not necessarily involve reducing casualties in their own hordes if it will guarantee victory.

Against the Legions of Hell

Demons fight the strict discipline found in the devils' ranks by sheer strength of numbers. Much more prolific than the fiends from Hell, the abyssal hordes assault the rigid formation of their enemies with wave after wave of angry demons. While this may cause them to suffer heavy casualties, it takes less time and energy to spawn cannon fodder from the demons' side than it is to train and cow into discipline a scheming devil.

The eternal war between Hell and the Abyss has many fronts, even if demons prefer a full frontal assault. In the Material Plane, demons battle with

devils for the souls of mortals, with the foremost troopers being the succubi and quasits and their devilish counterparts the erinyes and imps. Cultists loyal to the demons often fund research into the Greater and True Names of devils, or steal any occult tomes that compile them. Demons use these names both in their own sorceries as well as spreading them amongst mortals, so that more devils can suffer the indignities of service to mortal masters. These wars of influence often have a quasit familiar imparting just the right knowledge about devils to their masters, who can tell the difference in an intellectual sense but remain blind to the implications their work has in the greater war between the two races of fiends.

When demons and devils encounter each other, even in small groups, devils prefer to evaluate the threat while demons care nothing for the risks. If they are outmatched, they will retreat but not before drawing first blood.

Against the Celestial Hosts

Demons are more cautious when fighting against Celestials, preferring to either call for reinforcements with the promise of angel flesh or using all available magical options before engaging in direct combat. Demons and Celestials have many abilities that cancel each other out, although the balance tends to tip to the Celestial's side in the long run, so the fiends will retreat if a quick assault is unsuccessful.

The abyssal hordes engage the Celestial hosts with the same ferocity they reserve for devils, but more archdemons will be present in such a battle, as well as extraplanar mercenaries, who can sometimes slip past the Celestials' defences in ways that demons cannot. Magic will be employed more often and the demonic generals will have no compunctions about using a ready cache of slaves to drain demonic essence from if it will ensure the defeat of their heavenly opponents.

Although Celestials have both a tactical and defensive superiority over most demons, a battlefield filled with mortal souls is one place where demons have an advantage. It is decidedly easier to nudge a soul into corruption than it is to keep it righteous and when it comes to corruption, demons show a level of subtlety lacking from everything else they do. It takes the concerted efforts of clerics and paladins of good churches to pinpoint a case of demonic possession, with simple manipulation being much



harder to detect until it is too late, so demons learn to bide their time when driving a mortal to their own darkness, lest the forces of good learn about it and ruin their hard work.

Against Other Demons

The fiends from the Abyss grin wickedly at the prospect of fighting each other, all sides of the battle relish in their mutual brutality and competition is rife; who can inflict the most horrendous wounds or commit the greatest atrocities? Fiendish scavengers follow a demon horde and have the feast of their lives in the aftermath of a battle between demons.

After the purge of the demon families, the rest of the broods take great care in avoiding fights against the Brood of Tanar, so these fiends are left to fight amongst themselves, snatching territory, souls, artefacts and other goods from each other, or attacking just for the fun of it. A sick mutual agreement between fighting demons, ensures they have as much fun in the massacre as possible, feeding the other's bloodlust in a vicious cycle of carnage. The victor of such encounters wins prestige and slaves from the defeated, if there are any survivors left, of course.

Against Mortals

Demonic hordes rarely face mortal armies because neither side has the resources to transport all of its troops to the others' territory. Only small patrols make it through a gate or a summoning gone astray. When faced with mortal opposition, demons fight with obvious contempt, secure in the knowledge that little a mortal can muster is capable of damaging them. This is their greatest weakness, for they tend to be very overconfident until a holy warrior smites them with the power of his faith or a powerful sorcerer defeats their natural resistance to magic. Then they get angry.

Demons tend to be more reckless than usual when fighting mortals, refusing to acknowledge them as worthy opponents even when faced with evidence of said mortal's true power. Until they are forced to take the opposition seriously, demons toy with their foes, mocking them at all times, pulling their punches to prolong the agony and so make victory more palatable. They will use their innate magic sparingly and will avoid at all cost summoning reinforcements because not only will the summoning

demon owe a favour to the summoned, it also has to face the indignity of receiving help to fight *mortals*.

If not actually looking for a fight, a demon in the Material Plane will actively look to find a mortal to tempt and corrupt. The most likely candidates are spellcasters who summon them, giving them entry into the world. If they should find a way to escape a summoner's bindings, however, a demon has the option of looking for a single victim or indulging in senseless violence until its activities attract the attention of a powerful agent of good. The intelligent ones will opt for the first choice, biding their time and using their talents to find a victim and offer it gifts and aid, preferably hiding their true nature for as long as possible. The innocent are their favourite targets, for such souls taste much better, seasoned as they are with evil. People already corrupt are seen as a means to an end, tools to be used and consumed, but pure souls are a real challenge and the most treasured prize.

Possession is one of the most direct ways to push a soul to darkness, but it is too blunt a tool and not every demon is skilled at it, despite the myths many religions hold to that respect. If a demon possesses a mortal, it is because it wants to use him in the process of corrupting someone else or to ruin the host's life. The smartest fiends will act in ways that their host is isolated from friends and family and leave him in such despairing positions that the host, when regaining control of himself and looking at what has transpired around him, has little choice but to commit suicide to end the torment. Such actions of course send the soul



'Daddy? What are you doing?' My niece cries as the priests hold her down to her bed. My brother is with me, along with a detachment of guards. I fear it will not be enough.

'Hush, my child...' the king tries to reassure her, but his armed and armoured figure is less than calming.

'The two demons must be around here.' I say this more for the demons' benefit than for that of the people around me. 'Be prepared.'

'You cannot prepare for the power of the Abyss...' At last... my niece hisses, her once pretty face contorts into a mask of hatred and condescension. 'We are legion!'

At her words, the air shimmers. The guards grip their swords as I begin casting the spell that will allow those blades to rend demonflesh. I draw my own sword; I have not forgotten how to use it and I will need it for the battle ahead. Half a score of fiends against a dozen guards, an ageing wizard knight and a young king. This will be hard.

flying straight towards the Abyss. The less subtle of possessing demons will commit great acts of darkness wearing the host's body and cause his death at the hands of outraged neighbours or dutiful guards. The demon then leaves just before the host dies from his wounds so as to allow them to realise what is going on in their last seconds.

In short, demons employ a wide variety of tactics when dealing with mortals, but all of them are anchored in the fiends' total disrespect and disdain for the mortals' lives.

REINFORCEMENTS

Demons would be even more dangerous if they were not as reluctant to use their summoning ability to call for help. Demons loathe showing weakness by calling for help, as the arriving fiend now owns part of the summoner. Not keen to be bound by rules, some demons have taken the time to hunt down the Greater and True Names of their brethren so that summoning is not a request for assistance, but command obedience.

Conjuration

Demons who take the time to develop true spellcasting ability have their options suddenly widening. As they know naturally how to breach the planar barriers, spells like *summon monster* and *planar binding* are almost second nature to them. The following summoning spells can be used by spellcasting demons and work with certain differences; even when cast by mortals there are some peculiarities that must be taken in consideration when calling a demon.

Gate: A demon with the level of expertise necessary to cast *gate* is either on the verge of becoming an archdemon or has already gained that position.

Demons casting this spell to call members of their own brood without actually using their natural summon ability are in a very real position of power, as demons are compelled to answer by the spell's power. There is little negotiation necessary when a demon calls its peers with *gate*. Reduce the price for the approximate cost a called demon may ask for by the percentage that the calling demon has for summoning it with its natural ability. This means that a balor or a heratru jar'taska'ka, with their automatic chance of summoning aid, do not have to actually pay anything to the arriving fiends. If the demon does not have the ability to summon the demonic race he is calling with *gate*, the price is reduced by 10%. Calling demons of a different brood works normally.

Mortals calling demons through *gate* are playing a very dangerous game, as demons are uncanny negotiators and the spellcaster may end up paying something much more valuable than just money. The price a demon may ask for its service when arriving through a *gate* can go from the bizarre to the gruesome. Many of these prices are double-edged, designed to not only satisfy the demon's greed, but also to tempt the mortal into doing something he would not normally do. Such prices include:

- The heart of a young girl
- Memories of childhood (lose one point of Intelligence permanently)
- The spellcaster's first-born (or a close relative's, if the spellcaster is childless and single)
- Seven years of the spellcaster's life (age instantly)



- A year and a day of the spellcaster's future (disappear into the Abyss for a year and a day, details are better left unspoken)
- A year and a day of the spellcaster's past (lose XP or an entire level)
- The spellcaster's familiar
- The left eye
- The Greater or True Name of another demon, a devil or even a Celestial
- The spellcaster's spellbook (no copying allowed)
- The first breath of the morning for a varying number of days (roll Fortitude against DC 15 or lose 1 point of Constitution to suffocation)
- The spellcaster's capacity to love (shift alignment one step towards evil, no save allowed)
- The life of a complete stranger (whose death furthers the demon's plans or puts the spellcaster in serious trouble)
- One of the spellcaster's hands (+10% arcane check penalty)
- The spellcaster's dreams for one month (lose 1d4 points of Wisdom due to encroaching insanity)
- One of the spellcaster's senses for a week or more (sight, hearing, taste, touch or smell; apply relevant penalties)
- The spellcaster's shadow (at the Games Master's discretion, the shadow may be part of the soul, a vital component of the character's magical ability or may just look freaky)

(Lesser/Greater) Planar Binding: Demons use this spell to call other demons weaker than themselves or even devils and Celestials just to see one of their hated enemies compelled to fall into a trap. When calling demons whose CR is lower than its own, a spellcasting demon can use an Intimidate check instead of a Charisma check to force the newly arrived prisoner to comply. It also gets a +1 morale bonus to all checks and DCs involved in the spell for every three points that its CR exceeds that of the called demon. This bonus increases to +2 if they both belong to the same brood. Calling a more powerful demon carries no particular benefits and even greater risks, as the called demon can use its Intimidate check against the summoner. A demon may call and control 4HD over the spell's limit if calling a demon of its same family, 2HD over the limit if calling a casteless demon and 1HD over the limit for members of another demonic family.



Mortals follow the rules for the spell as described, but they may use Greater and True Names as part of any of the required spells (*planar binding*, *magic circle* and *dimensional anchor*) or as part of a calling circle. A Greater Name grants a +5 to the spellcaster's checks and DCs to control the demon, while a True Name grants a +10, and no negotiation is necessary; the demon *must* obey (and swear revenge on the spellcaster and his progeny).

(Lesser/Greater) Planar Ally: Demons rarely enter the service of a deity with such devotion that they become its cleric, but it happens. These spells work similar to the *planar binding* family, with the demon cleric's power making a difference in how an answering demon will react. Mortals may not use True Names for calling a *planar ally*; it is a great

offence to their god and to the demon that answers the call.

Summon Monster I-IX: A demon can summon other outsiders to fight for it, with no service, oath or price required. When summoning demons outside its family, the spellcasting fiend may cast a spell as its immediate superior (*summon monster I* has the effects of *summon monster II*, for example) and, if calling a demon or group of demons of its own family, the spell works as two versions higher (*summon monster IV* works as *summon monster VI* for example). In contrast, the spell works as one version lower when calling devils, and two version lowers when calling Celestials. Summoning other outsiders works normally for a spellcasting demon.

Mortals can enhance the power of their *summon monster* spells in the same way that they can enhance their *planar binding*: Names. Possession of a Greater Name allows the spellcaster to summon the desired demon with a spell of two levels lower than would be required (a vrock normally requires *summon monster IX*, but if the caster knows a particular vrock's Greater Name, he can summon it with *summon monster VII*). Likewise, using a True Name in conjunction with *summon monster* requires a spell of four levels lower than required (a vyin of the van'g'ka requires *summon monster VII*, but if the caster knows a particular vyin's True Name, he can summon it with *summon monster III!*). The demon realises at once that one of its Names was used with such petty magic as *summon monster* and repeated use will definitely raise the demon's ire. A particular name can be used as part of a *summon monster* spell a maximum of three consecutive times; after the third, all summoning attempts require the insolent mortal to make a caster check (DC 10 + demon's CR -1 per previous caster check for this same demon); success indicates that the spell works normally, but failure means that the demon arrives, but it is not compelled to obey, or even respect, its summoner.

Trap the Soul: Demons love this spell. A powerful demonic spellcaster will have several trigger objects prepared that it hands to lesser demons who are likely to be summoned or interact with mortals. The carrier demon handles this object with utmost care, lest his own essence be the one trapped instead of a mortal soul. The carrier will find a way to have a mortal touch the object and be sucked into it, such as a Jar'taska'ka telling a mortal wizards they needed to place their palm on a certain crystal ball in order

to access freely the vast libraries of the Shadow Fortress. A rather mundane contest of wits is required for this trick to work with demon and mortal rolling opposed Bluff and Sense Motive Checks.

For mortal spellcasters, this spell is a sure-fire way to get a demon to comply with their wishes without going through the hassle of crafting a calling circle and risking the demon to break loose. A demon trapped in such a way will perform the task imposed on it upon its liberation but, will seek to subvert it or to cause more harm on the way than necessary.

Gates

A favourite pastime of demons that filter into the Material Plane is to force cultists to open direct gateways to the Abyss. Individual layers may have gates connecting them to obscure parts of the mortals' world, but they are either too small, sporadic or well-guarded to be of real use to the demonic hordes. Archdemons and Demon Lords vie constantly for their mortal followers to gather the power necessary to open a large enough gate that the demons may cross in full and overwhelm any resistance by puny mortal armies.

In other planes, demons find it more difficult to establish lines of communication with the Abyss, although only the ones who worry about strategy are overly concerned about this. This is one of the reasons that demons are interested in mortal servants, as high-level cultists or soul slaves may have access to gate-opening magic that demons have little patience for.

Summoning

Only once has a demonic horde used a massive summoning by its warriors to surprise and overwhelm the defences of Hell, and they were almost successful. This tactic left so many demons indebted to the reinforcements that it will be many millennia until archdemons convince their hordes to try it again. The following presents the chances that the demons of the different families will have of summoning each other as well as their Challenge Ratings for reference by ambitious demonologists who want to test their will against them (see the demonologist prestige class in the roleplaying with Demons chapter).



METHODS OF WARFARE

The Brood of Tanar

Demon	CR	Summon
Dretch	2	1 dretch 35% (1/day)
Chitterling*	3	1d4 chitterlings 20% (1/day)
Predaska*	8	2d4 chitterlings or 1d4 predaskas 35% (1/day)
Succubus	7	1 balor 10% (1/day)
Teradrozu*	9	1d4 dretches or 1 succubus or 1 teradrozu with a 35% chance of success.
Glodretch*	11	1 glodretch 35% (1/day)
Vrock	9	2d10 dretches or 1d4 predaska or 1 vrock 35% (1/day)
Hezrou	11	4d10 dretches or 3d10 chitterlings or 1 hezrou 35% (1/day)
Glabrezu	13	4d10 dretches or 3d10 chitterlings or 1d2 vrock 50% or 1 glabrezu 20% (1/day)
Nalfeshnee	14	1d4 vrocks or 1d4 hezrous or 1d4 teradrozu or 1 glabrezu 50% or 1 nalfeshnee 20% (2/day)
Marilith	17	4d10 dretches or 1d4 glodretch or 1d4 hezrou or 1 nalfeshnee 50% or 1 glabrezu or 1 marilith 20% (1/day)
Balor	20	4d10 dretches or 4d10 chitterlings or 2d6 predaska or 1d4 teradrozu or 1d4 glodretch or 1d4 hezrou or 1 nalfeshnee or 1 glabrezu or 1 marilith or 1 balor 100% (1/day)

* Appears in this book

The Brood of Van'g

Demon*	CR	Summon
Vyin	7	1d4 vyins 35% (1/day)
Yavodai	10	1d4 vyins or 1 yavodai 35% (1/day)
Vengadi	14	2d10 vyins 50% or 1d4 yavodai or 1 vengadi 35% (1/day)
Udvati	16	4d10 vyins or 2d6 yavodai or 1d4 vengadi or 1 udvati 100% (1/day)

* All of these demons appear in this book

The Brood of Jar'taska

Demon*	CR	Summon
Dark Lantern	3	1d4 dark lanterns or 1d4 shadelings or 1 jar'ugr 35% (2/day)
Shadeling	5	1d4 shadelings 35% (1/day)
Jar'ugr	8	1 jar'ugr 35% (1/day)
Jethulet	10	1d4 shadelings or 1d4 dark lanterns or 1d2 jar'ugr or 1 jethulet 35% (1/day)
Hamedu	13	2d4 shadelings or 2d6 dark lanterns or 1d2 jar'ugr 50%, or 1d2 jethulet or 1 hamedu 35% (1/day)
Heratru	16	2d10 shadelings, 3d10 dark lanterns or 2d4 jar'ugr 100%, or 1d2 jethulet or 1d2 hamedu or 1 heratru 50% (2/day)

* All of these demons appear in this book

The Brood of Nuyul

Demon*	CR	Summon
Diazhit	5	1d4 diazhits 35% (1/day)
Pyarian	9	1d4 pyarian 35% (1/day)
Mad Wind	10	1d4 mad winds 35% (1/day)
Pereveshti	13	2d4 pyarian 50% or 1 pereveshti 35% (1/day)

* All of these demons appear in this book

ESSENCE MANIPULATION

Demonic essence is more than a demon's life-force, it is also part of what passes for a soul inside their bodies. It can be harvested, stored and used for a variety of effects and in ways that demons and mortal spellcasters are still researching.

Mortal Harvesting

Mortals have access to demonic essence in two principal ways: stealing it or receiving it as a gift. Essence robbers are demonologists and spellcasters with an unhealthy amount of lore concerning demons and the means to trap and control them.

Spellcasters who specialise in demonology have a better grasp of the process of extracting demonic essence through various rituals (see the demonologist prestige class in the Roleplaying with Demons chapter). Other spellcasters must improvise with the spells they know. They must use a combination of *magic circle against chaos/evil*, *greater planar ally/binding*, *lesser planar ally/binding*, *planar ally/binding*, *dimensional anchor* and/or *summon monster I-IX*, trusting that they have enough personal power to contain the fiend when it arrives. The next step is to cast *steal essence* (see Demon Magic chapter) in order to reap the benefits of the captured demonic essence.

Demonic essence is measured in power levels, and a demon has as many power levels as its Challenge Rating. Once harvested, a mortal spellcaster may store the stolen essence inside his body or in a specially prepared receptacle as part of the spell or ritual used. A mortal may store a maximum number of power levels equal to his caster level multiplied by the modifier for his spellcasting ability (Intelligence for wizards, Wisdom for clerics and Charisma for sorcerers). Also, a mortal can only hold any number of power levels in his body for one hour per point of Constitution modifier (minimum of one hour). The Endurance feat adds two hours to this limit.

Powerful demons can gift mortal servants with part of their essence. The mortal recipient of this baneful gift can choose to store the essence in his body or in a receptacle. As an alternative, a powerful demon can grant investitures to the mortal by channelling demonic essence directly into his soul. The mortal cannot use this essence freely, but gains a demonic power as described in the Methods of Warfare chapter.

A demonic receptacle is a minor magical item that a demonologist is well-advised to create prior any summoning with the purpose of harvesting essence.

Demonic Receptacle

This item stores demonic essence for later use. The caster determines the receptacle's capacity at the moment of its creation as this capacity will determine its final cost. Anyone with the right command word may release the demonic essence by any amount and direct it into the user's body or as part of a magic item creation process. A demonic receptacle can take any form and shape, from a plain ring to a rich urn. Subtract the item's cost from the receptacle's creation cost; any leftover money from the item does not grant any particular bonus, but increases the final market price by the same amount. A *detect evil* spell detects the stored demonic essence depending on the number of power levels stored within it. See the table to determine the receptacle's aura strength for purposes of the duration of the lingering aura. A receptacle with a capacity of 20 power levels will give a faint aura if it only has three power levels stored, for example, although it will be in the middle of an overwhelming lingering aura if it was at full capacity the previous day and lying at the same spot. *Caster Level*: see table; *Prerequisites*: Craft Wondrous Item, *dimensional anchor*; *Market Price*: see table; *Weight*: varies.

Demonic Receptacle Prerequisites

Capacity (power levels)	Caster level	Market Price	Aura Strength
1-5	9th	12,960 gp	Faint
6-10	11th	15,840 gp	Moderate
11-15	13th	18,720 gp	Strong
16-20	15th	21,600 gp	Overwhelming

A demon remains trapped until its last power level has been drained, at which point it returns to the Abyss with an axe to grind against the spellcaster. Demons do not regenerate their essence while away from the Abyss, so it is a matter of time before the demon is completely emptied if the spellcaster is greedy, triggering its liberation. Demons who are dismissed before being entirely drained are not as bitter as if they were emptied of essence by a mortal, but they are not happy either.

Demonic Harvesting

Demons can harvest the essence of damned souls, lesser demons or from their own bodies. To harvest essence from other demons, a fiend makes a Will save opposed by the target demon's own Will save. If defeated, it cannot harvest the essence of this particular fiend for a full day but, if successful, it can extract as many power levels as desired. Demons who do not wish to oppose the will of their target's save must simply hold their target helpless, either bound, unconscious or magically disabled so they cannot resist. Draining a damned soul of essence takes no effort from a demon and the process yields one power level of essence for every two character levels or HD of the original living creature if harvested at the moment of the soul's arrival to the Abyss; otherwise, its life-force is reduced to one power level (see the damned soul template in the *Creatures of the Abyss* chapter). The harvesting demon can store the essence in its body, in a receptacle or as a free-floating ball of energy.

Demons can build receptacles freely and without costs with materials from the Abyss. A demonic artisan only needs an appropriate Craft check to create a demonic receptacle, but the item must be a masterwork. The fortresses of some archdemons have a

special storage room full of abyssal clay jugs, filled with the essence of impertinent minions that are considered more useful as batteries of essence than as independent entities.

A free-floating ball of essence is a strange object, nearly immaterial but manageable. An essence ball is one foot on each dimension and weighs one pound for every five power levels it contains. It loses a power level each month it spends unused while in the Abyss, each week it spends in the Astral or Ethereal plane, each day it spends in the Material Plane or each hour it spends in a plane aligned to Law or Good (or 10 minutes if the plane is aligned to both Law and Good).

A demon can harvest essence from its own body at will as a move-equivalent action. The process is painful (although some demons like it that way) and the demon must make a Will save (DC 10 + power levels harvested) or be dazed for one round, unable to take any action other than defending itself normally.



Essence Loss and Recovery

A demon that has been drained from its essence is weakened in accordance with how many power levels it loses. Each power level lost imposes a -1 penalty on attack and damage rolls. Additionally, a demon that loses more than half its power levels cannot use its spell-like abilities. A demon left with one quarter of its power levels halves its Damage Reduction, Spell Resistance and Energy Resistance. When a demon is drained of its last power level, it returns to the Abyss immediately where it recovers one power level on arrival. If it already is in the Abyss, the demon is destroyed.

Demons recover power levels as if it they were ability damage at the rate of one power level per day. They could possibly recover twice that amount by receiving full-time care by someone with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15) in lieu of a Heal check, but it would be rare indeed that someone (or something) in the Abyss would go to the lengths of caring for another.

Using Essence

There are several ways that mortals and demons may benefit from harvested demonic essence, but the fiends gain the most as they have more opportunities to practice and bored demons are very dangerous.

Spell Capacity: Mortal and demonic classed spellcasters may benefit from harvested essence quite easily. Power levels used during spell preparation add a spell slot or prepared spell of a level equal to the number of power levels burned in this way. For example, a spellcaster with three stored power levels can use them to prepare an extra 3rd-level spell (provided he can cast 3rd-level spells), an extra 2nd and 1st level spells or three extra 1st level spells. Sorcerers, bards or demons who cast spells as sorcerers can use stored essence to recover their spell slots, adding an additional open spell slot rather than a prepared spell. Demons can use this ability if their description states that they cast spells as a character class spellcaster or for spells from a class they possess. It does not apply to their spell-like abilities. Note that spells powered by demonic essence have a descriptor of 'evil' in addition to their normal characteristics. Damage type is unchanged.

Item Creation: Demons and mortals can use demonic essence to empower the creation of magical items. This is covered with more detail in the next section.

Extra Ability Use: Demons and mortals with spell-like abilities as demonic investitures may use demonic essence to activate one of their spell-like abilities without it counting against its use. The number of essence power levels necessary depends on the frequency with which the spell-like ability can be used:

Frequency	Power level cost
At will	N/A
Each random number of rounds	1
Measured in minutes or hours	2
3/day	3
1/day	4
1/week	5
1/month	6
Other	Find closest approximate.

Metamagic Ability: Demonic essence can substitute for the extra levels required by metamagic feats. One power level can 'pay' for one extra spell level. Demonic essence used with the Heighten Spell feat can only pay for up to 5 extra levels. The character or demon must possess the metamagic feat in order to use the one-for-one ratio. If he does not possess the feat he wants to use, the cost is double (2 essence power levels per extra spell) and the character or demon must make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level + metamagic extra levels). Failure indicates that the character or demon was unable to infuse the spell with the demonic essence and the power levels are wasted, although the spell can still be prepared (for wizards and clerics) or cast spontaneously (for bards and sorcerers) as normal. Spells powered by demonic essence have a descriptor of 'evil' in addition to their normal characteristics. Damage type is unchanged.

Corrupt Spell: A spell that causes a specific damage type can be corrupted so that it deals unholy damage. Changing the damage type costs one power level per die of damage converted into unholy damage. For example, an 8th level wizard prepares a *lightning bolt* by infusing it with 5 power levels he had stored in a receptacle. Of the 8d6 he rolls for damage with that *bolt*, 5d6 are unholy damage, while the remaining 3d6 remain electrical damage.



METHODS OF WARFARE

Investitures: Demons can grant investitures to mortals by channelling demonic essence into their souls. This creates an unholy bond between the mortal and its patron demon and the latter gains a claim on the former's soul. The possible demonic investitures and their effects are discussed at length in the Demonic Cults chapter.

Curses: In the Material Plane, a demon may lay down a curse before it is slain and sent back to the Abyss. They usually reserve this if their defeat was particularly humiliating as such power weakens them permanently. They can sacrifice 4 power levels to mould their demonic essence into a virulent effect similar to the *bestow curse* spell, but the process drains them permanently of two HD with the subsequent decrease in base attack bonus, saving throws, hit points and CR. They may alternatively bestow the curse upon an object, structure or patch of land, which grows infertile and spawns poisonous vermin every night with no moon. A cursed object would impose on its owner half the penalty that would affect the victim of *bestow curse*, while a cursed structure would only impose a -1 or -2 penalty on a specific set of die rolls to anyone standing inside. All versions of this curse can be removed as per the *remove curse* spell.

Infection: A demon with the Infectious Essence feat may infuse a mortal's body with demonic essence, twisting them in subtle yet horrifying ways. The demon must somehow touch its target, either by guile or with a touch attack. The target must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + demon's CR + power levels spent) or contract a demonic disease of the fiend's choosing. The demon must spend the minimum of power levels that each disease costs, using additional levels to increase the Fortitude DC. All of the diseases last until dispelled or cured. All of these diseases carry an evil aura of varying strength, listed in the table below. The afflicted character seems to give off this taint, but a successful Spellcraft or Heal

identifies the true source of the evil aura. Paladins and high-level monks are immune to these diseases, as are characters under the effect of a *protection from evil* spell, which prevents the infection but does not stop a demonic disease already in progress.

- **Corrupting Touch:** The target is struck with an insidious malady that slowly twists his mind. At the end of every week after contracting the disease, the victim must make a Will saving throw (DC 17) or suffer an alignment shift towards either Chaos or Evil. For example, a Lawful Good character who fails a roll can have its alignment shift to Neutral Good or Lawful Neutral. If the character becomes Chaotic Evil, he becomes contagious, passing on the disease to the first person he touches after his last alignment shift. The new victim has the same save DCs as the original character, who is no longer diseased but is now evil. A *break enchantment*, *dispel evil*, *heal*, *miracle*, *limited wish* or *wish* spell removes the disease while it is taking its course, while a *dispel evil*, *restoration*, *miracle*, *limited wish*, *remove curse* or *wish* spell restore the character's original alignment.
- **Demon Slip:** The character suffers from a nervous tic that plays up on the worst possible occasions. Once per day, the Games Master may declare any die roll by the character results in a natural 1. A *break enchantment*, *dispel evil*, *heal*, *miracle*, *limited wish* or *wish* spell removes the disease.
- **Evil Aura:** The target of this disease gives off a subtle stench of evil. He generates an evil aura of a strength equal to his level (see the *detect evil* spell description). He also has the effect of the frightful presence ability; neutral and good creatures within 60-feet and with fewer Hit Dice or levels than the character must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 character's level + Cha modifier) or be shaken.

The acolytes tend the wounds of the guards. The battle has been as I had expected, but it has gone much better too... in their overconfidence, the demons were so reckless that even the guards were able to score several strikes before being brought down. I kneel next to my brother, who clutches his side, covering a wound dealt by his own daughter. He examines the black dagger that she had used. The girl is now tied down, kicking and screaming. I do not know if she is possessed or if her soul has been corrupted past the point of salvation.

'Brother...' The king says, staring at the short blade in horror. 'What manner of weapon is this!?'

'Soulsteel.' I answer with the authority that my studies provide me. 'This weapon is not made from mineral ores; it is made from a damned soul.'

- **False Enemy:** The character suffering from this disease will hear movement behind him in the middle of combat. At the beginning of an encounter, he must succeed a Will save (DC 18) or believe there is an opponent behind him and act as if he were flanked, giving his real enemy a +2 flanking bonus and the opportunity to use a sneak attack.
- **Nightmares:** There is a 50% chance every night that the character will suffer from disturbing nightmares he will not be able to remember. On a nightmare-laden night, the character heals only half his level in hit points, does not recover any ability damage and is fatigued until he can rest properly. If he suffers from nightmares while fatigued, he becomes exhausted and, if he has nightmares again, he suffers 1d4 points of Wisdom damage and recovers from the fatigue. If his Wisdom ever reaches 0, he goes insane. Curiously, the chance for nightmares only occurs if the character goes to sleep at night. A *break enchantment*, *dream*, *dispel evil*, *heal*, *miracle*, *limited wish*, *remove curse* or *wish* spell removes the disease, while a *sleep* spell allows a character to have a dreamless sleep.
- **Tongue Twister:** Demons reserve this disease for spellcasters and bards, but it affects any person with equal measure. The victim of this disease will find him tripping over his words at the worst possible moment. A spellcaster will suffer a 15% chance of spell failure that also affects divine spellcasters and stacks with the chance of arcane spell failure from armour. This chance applies also to bardic music and the activation of magic items with a command word or spell trigger.

Demonic Diseases

Disease	Power level cost	Evil aura strength
Corrupting touch	5	Strong
Demon Slip	2	Faint
Evil Aura	3	varies
False Enemy	2	Faint
Nightmares	4	Moderate
Tongue Twister	2	Faint

THE DEMONIC ARSENAL

Demons craft weapons and sometimes armour to complement their impressive natural weaponry. Balors are known for their vorpal blades and mariliths are a cyclone of steely death. Although many demons prefer the feeling of their opponents' innards on their hands, many archdemons do not trust some of the weaker demons to do an adequate job, and therefore has tons of steel forged into weapons. The best of them go to the archdemons themselves, of course.

Demonic Materials

Raw material is available in the Abyss in many of the forms that mortals know, although not necessarily their method of extraction. Forges may be built on the shores of lakes of molten steel or next to the massive graveyard of forgotten beasts with iron bones. Sometimes there are regular mines where dretches and the souls of the damned rub shoulders under the abuse of demonic taskmasters.

In the infinite possibilities of the Abyss, demons can find all the materials found on the Material Plane, but they have their own native materials found nowhere else. These materials are used not only in the forging of weapons, but in the crafting of many of the dark and terrible items that demonic artisans produce.

Raw Souls: Artisans must labour hard in order to shape a soul, which can be either a damned soul or a lesser demon condemned to such fate for incompetence, treason or the whim of a powerful fiend. Items made from souls carry with them an aura of dread and are unnerving to hold. The souls that comprise them are still horrifyingly aware, feeling their very being twisted into shape in unending torment. A soul covers the cost of 500gp of material per level or HD of the creature while it was alive, but it cannot be 'splintered' so that the demonic artisan has spare pieces of soul lying about; any spare cost from the soul's value over the item's cost is lost. Using souls adds a +10 to the DC of Craft checks. Weapons gain an unholy bonus to attack and damage rolls according to their damage die, while armour gains an unholy bonus to AC according to its type. These bonuses stack with an enhancement bonus from an enchantment, but the sum of enhancement and unholy bonuses may not be greater than +5. If the enchantment bonus overlaps the unholy bonus, it cancels it out. A weapon's unholy bonus counts against defeating Damage



METHODS OF WARFARE

Reduction and for adding extra qualities to the weapon. Items made from souls equally grant a +2 unholy bonus to a skill check they are related to.

Non-evil creatures handling a soulforged weapon, armour or item are disquieted by the soft moaning coming from them; creatures of neutral alignment lose one character level and all abilities, saves and bonuses applicable to that level when using such cursed items. Good-aligned creatures lose two character levels and all abilities, saves and bonuses applicable to those levels. These levels and abilities are not returned until the character stops using the soulforged item. Items made of forged souls have a hardness of 12 and 10 hit points per inch of thickness and scream whenever they are hit with the intent to destroy them (as with the *sunder* action); all non-evil creatures within 60-feet of the point of impact must make a Will save (DC 10 + amount of damage rolled against the item) or flee in terror from the object. Accidental damage does not make a soulforged item react in this way.

Soulforged Weapons and Armour

Unholy bonus	Weapon damage die	Armour type
+1	1d4, 1d6	Light armour
+2	1d8, 1d10	Medium armour
+3	1d12, 2dx * and higher	Heavy armour

* Any weapon whose damage is expressed by two dice of any type.

Demonbone: The bones of demons (those who have any) have long been coveted by mortal spellcasters for the crafting of magical items. Demons of high stations, having the bones of their minions readily available, do not see it at such a great thing, although they recognise the bones' inherent power and sometimes make an example of unruly subordinates by having them executed, their remains made into weapons and items. Demonbone can be used in much the same ways as normal bone: sword hilts, musical instruments, spear points or ornaments. One pound of demonbone is worth 100gp multiplied by the previous owner's Challenge Rating. 50 pounds of demonbone yields one power level of demonic essence, usable for several purposes as described earlier, but most commonly used for magic item creation. Demonbone has a hardness of 15 and, for every inch of thickness, it has 15 hit points and one point of Spell Resistance. If the demonic essence

within the bone is spent for other purposes, the item loses its Spell Resistant quality.

Note that only some casteless demons and the Brood of Tanar have bones. The Van'g'ka have chitinous exo-skeletons, the Jar'taska'ka are solid shadows that dissolve upon their destruction and the Nuyul'ka are incorporeal.

Demonhide: Whether scales, chitin, hide or membranous... something, the skin of a demon can make garments and armour. Like demonbone, high-ranking demons use demonhide from subordinates they wish to get rid off in a spectacular manner and often give it as a sign of favour to devout cultists to make with it what they will. What can be made from demonhide varies according to the demon's size. One demon produces enough hide for a single suit of masterwork hide armour for a creature up to one size smaller than the demon. If the demon had a natural armour of +10 or more, an armoursmith can produce one suit of masterwork banded mail for a creature up to two sizes smaller, one suit of masterwork half-plate for a creature three sizes smaller or one masterwork breastplate or suit of full plate for a creature four sizes smaller.

Demonhide can produce a suit of fine clothes for a creature up to one size smaller, two suits for creatures two sizes smaller and so on. A piece of demonhide holds one power level of demonic essence usable for several purposes as described earlier, but most commonly used for magic item creation.

Bone Powder: Grinding the bones of several demons along with those of whatever carcass the demons throw into the mix, produces bone powder. This particularly foul type of mortar is used by archdemons and Demon Lords to build their fortresses, as well as in the construction of fiendish constructs like the retriever or the demon ship. Bone powder costs 150gp per bag, which can be used to hold together a 10ft. x 10ft. section of wall, granting it +5 to its hardness and hit points per inch of thickness.

Demonic Essence Items

Using demonic essence to create magical items presents the spellcaster with several advantages, as the essence burns with magical potential, however desecrate that potential may be. Harvested or stored essence can be poured into the item during

the process of creation, so that it infuses it with its unholy power and saves the creator some effort, as well as granting it several advantages.

- Buy missing caster levels to meet the item's requirement, or reduce the caster level at which an item is created to reduce creation costs.
- Use the essence's demonic resonance to replace missing spells.
- Buy XPs instead of sacrificing the caster's own.

Any of the above applications is optional. The caster may devote all of the essence's power levels to cover for caster levels, XPs or sheer missing spells and is not forced to spend a fixed amount in any of the fields.

Caster Level: Items require that the crafter be of a minimum caster level. Sometimes, this is the level to cast the highest level spell to enchant the item, but in the case of enhanced weapons and armour, it is only to judge whether the caster's power is high enough to create a certain enhancement level. If he is not, he can use the power inherent in the demonic essence to make up for missing caster levels. The demonic essence's power levels can replace missing caster levels at a rate listed in the table below. Each missing level must be paid for independently, so that, if a 5th level caster wants to create an item that requires a 7th level caster, he must buy the 6th level in addition to the 7th. These artificial caster levels can be considered when casting a higher level spell from a scroll, but do not grant the crafter the ability to prepare or cast spells of a higher level than he is currently capable of. When using demonic essence to enhance his caster level,

the crafter must roll a caster check (DC = caster level desired +6) to see if he can channel the corrupt power levels and continue with the process of crafting the item. If the check fails, the power levels are wasted and he is unable to use the essence in this way; he cannot attempt to craft the item until he complies with the caster level prerequisite or after one month per caster level of difference, whichever comes first.

Caster Level Cost

Caster Levels	Power level cost (per caster level)
1-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16-20	4

Spells and Feats: A caster must possess the appropriate feat to create a magic item of a given type. There is no way around it, as the demonic essence does not confer instant knowledge of how to make a certain item. They can, however, replace spells that the character does not have at hand, but is of sufficient level to cast.

Demonic essence can replace any of the spells corresponding to the demon's spell-like abilities with a number of power levels equal to the desired spell's level. For example, a character wishing to use the *darkness* spell inherent in a most members of Tanar's Brood only needs to spend two power levels from the demonic essence stolen from one of them. Even if the demon does not have the spell desired, its essence can still replace for any spell with the chaotic or evil descriptor by spending an amount of power levels equal to the desired spell's level +5.

In order to use demonic essence to replace spells, the crafter must have enough levels in a spellcasting class to cast the desired spell and cannot use the essence to replace missing caster levels or reduce the experience cost for this.

Experience Cost: The last application for demonic essence in the process of creating magic items is one of the most sought after by seasoned arcane crafters, for they can tap into the demon's power to replace their own when imbuing the item with its power. A power level can contribute with a number of XP equal to the contributing demon's CRx50.



DEMONIC CULTS

It is almost unthinkable that anyone would throw their lot in with a demon, whose only design for the Material Plane is a source of souls to devour and use as building materials. It happens nonetheless and many adventurers' first brush with demonic influence is with the cultists that worship an abyssal power.

Although the motivations of demons are incomprehensible, their cultists are easier to understand, even if not to comprehend. They make less formidable and terrible opponents for the forces of good and are often treated as a disease that must be expunged lest it grow to be uncontrollable. Even evil churches look warily at demonic cults and work almost as ardently to wipe one out, preferring worship be directed to their dark deity rather than a fiend.

Only in the most depraved communities would a demonic cult be tolerated and only then in isolation or a great position of power, for word would surely spread of its existence and attract the attention of the righteous. Demonic cults are found amongst humanoids like the gnolls and sahuagin more commonly than they do amongst the civilised races. Even the dark elves would frown upon the worship of demons, as their goddess is both jealous and terrible enough for them.

FORMATION OF A CULT

A cult begins when a mortal and a demon reach an accord of mutual support. The demon is not compelled to fulfil its promises except as a means to corrupt the mortal and spread its taint around whatever followers that mortal could attract. Demons who understand the advantage of having obedient mortal agents actually encourage the formation of cults and dispatch a minion to foster them if possible. Half-fiends are chief amongst the instigators of cults amongst civilised races, while succubi are sent primarily to promote worship amongst savage humanoids, where their true nature is less likely to be discovered. Even if it is, they have pretty good chances of being elevated to a demi-deity in the cult's belief structure.

The seed of a cult lies in contact between the demon and its followers. In a mockery of divine worship, such contact is conducted through the cult's head priest. Through manipulation, bullying, brain-washing and actual displays of power, the head priest orders followers around and dispenses some of the gifts their demonic lord bestows upon them... while retaining the lion's share for themselves, of course.

Sponsorship

Although even small demons can cheat their way towards having their own cult, only a Demon Lord commands the respect and power sufficient to be confused by mortals as a being worthy of devotion. Unlike devils, demons will not ask a petitioner to sign a contract in blood; it will be a given that if the mortal does not hold up his end of the bargain, his demonic lord can eat him. The demon will give the head priest a way to contact it in the Abyss that is not as costly, dangerous or rare as the head priest to have his own magical means like spells and scrolls. This form of contact often takes the shape of a magic item or device that allows for two-way communication with the demonic sponsor of the cult, although demons can give off a bit of their essence to grant the cult's priest with its first investiture: contact. If the head priest is an instigator like a half-fiend, they already have some form of reliable contact.

Cult Members

The first member of a cult is its founder, the head priest. Whether extraplanar instigator or mortal dupe, the head priest has the responsibility of gathering like-minded individuals to form the cult. The cult can take a variety of shapes depending on its members, their motivations, goals and methods.

The Fanatics: One of the most dangerous forms of demon cult and also the easiest to spot and eradicate, fanatic cults are those deeply convinced of the demons' cause to the point of insanity. The head priest of a fanatic cult is just as crazy as the others, but has the presence of mind not only to interact with the demon sponsor, but also to formulate overall strategy and management of the cult. Fanatics espouse the ideals of the demon, the ones their puny mortal minds can comprehend, at any rate; they actively seek to corrupt, enslave and destroy everyone around them. When captured, a fanatic cultist will shout and curse his pleas to his demonic master and start spewing nonsense, with frothing at

the mouth being popular amongst prisoners taken by the forces of good.

The members of a fanatic cult tend to come from the disenfranchised portions of society, the destitute, rejected and hopeless. In the worship of a demon they often find a perverse sense of revenge against their fellows for their lot in life or a sick hope that life will be better for them when they make it worse for everybody else. Misguided philosophers often find themselves in the clutches of a charismatic leader, convinced of the demon's tenets in a very abstract sense. Whatever their origins, fanatic cultists are thoroughly brainwashed by the head priest into believing that evil is a good thing.

The Arcane Menace: The danger posed by an arcane cult is that its members know exactly what they are doing and wield considerable power. An arcane cult is made of wizards, sorcerers, bards and other arcane spellcasters who have delved into demonology a little too far and now obey the orders of a powerful demonic patron. The leader of an arcane cult is not considered a head priest by his fellow cultists, but simply the most knowledgeable caster in the group, the most experienced or at least the one capable of blasting others of them into dust. He is the leader of rituals and the dispenser of knowledge. Arcane cultists do a demon's bidding for a simple purpose: power. They exchange their considerable services in exchange for increased magical prowess and occult lore, with riches being mostly redundant to their arcane pursuits.

A spellcaster embraces demon worship with a very pragmatic mindset and it is often the spellcaster who contacts the demon and makes the initial offer. Arcane cults are the proverbial secret societies, often a cabal within a magic school or a centre of knowledge that is always on the lookout for ambitious and promising apprentices to recruit as acolytes. Truly evil spellcasters enter or form an arcane cult out of a genuine belief in the tenets of darkness and these are the most dangerous of all, because they know what they are getting themselves into and are glad to do so.

The Heretics: A reflection of the arcane cult, a heretical cult is started by divine spellcasters or people otherwise tied to a religion. This kind of cult is the one that most resembles religious worship, complete with periodical ceremonies and actual reverence for the power the cultists pledge

their souls to. The head priest of a heretic cult is often a cleric serving the abstract forces of evil and darkness, rather than a specific deity. Such clerics enter a bargain with a demonic patron for a variety of reasons: they may see the demon as a peer in the service of evil who is simply in a more advantageous position or a true messenger of darkness akin to a saint. Whatever is the case, the cleric is not deluded into thinking that his powers come from the demon. Lesser heretical cults are headed by a powerless priest who depends upon demonic investitures to exert his authority, resembling a fanatic cult leader in his devotion to the demonic patron.

Members of a heretical cult are disillusioned with the gods, their work and their mortal agents. The more extreme believe that complete destruction is a chance for a fresh start, with new deities correcting the mistakes of the old ones. The battlefields of crusades and holy wars are a prime seeding ground for heretic cults, as commoners experience firsthand the animosity between two deities, with their forces more concerned with killing each other than the destruction they reap on the countryside. Opportunistic demons send instigators to convince people that worshipping a being that does not require their devotion for their power is the way to go.

The Dupes: A duped cult resembles either a fanatic or a heretic cult on the surface, but has a very important factor setting it apart from the others: they are being made fools of. Dupe cults are short-lived affairs, at least in the immortal eyes of their demonic sponsors, intended as decoys or expendable weapons. The head priest of a dupe cult is aware of the nature of his deal with the demonic sponsor and is manipulating his followers, ready to bail out and abandon them when the local paladin comes knocking. The head priest is a charismatic fraud and the demonic sponsor a knowing partner. Minor demons often ally with a spellcaster or persuasive conman, too weak to actually grant investitures but strong enough to communicate with their mortal partner and give a few displays of power.

Members of a dupe cult enter for the same reasons than fanatic or heretical cultists, but they have the misfortune of having found a fraudster instead of a true demonic patron. In the long run, these people have no idea how fortunate they were for not being part of a real demonic cult because, as misguided as their beliefs are, their souls were not compromised in the process.



DEMONIC CULTS

The Hedonists: Just like an arcane cult is in it for the power, a hedonistic cult is in it for the pleasure. Considered 'entertainment' cults by many demons, a hedonistic cult is nonetheless a powerful tool for corruption and moral decay. The head priest for a hedonistic cult is worried with self-gratification and it is more probable that an instigator contacted him than spellcaster making contact with the demon. The head priest is the dispenser of favours, gifted with demonic investitures to elevate his status and cement his power.

The members of a hedonistic cult are easy to push towards darkness, offering greater pleasures in exchange for greater depravities. Coming often from the idle rich and bored aristocracy, hedonistic cults have many resources under their command and eventually find contacts in the criminal underworld to provide them with their forbidden delights, if they do not start their own criminal ring themselves.

The Corrupted: A corrupted cult is very small, as only the most powerful of demons can sustain its patronage. All of the corrupted cult's members have

a number of demonic investitures or are somehow above average in terms of power, even if they are as manipulatable as normal cultists. Orphaned half-fiends, undead, humanoids and others of equal nature are attracted to a cult of the corrupted, already manifesting evil in their hearts, with the cult only giving it direction.

Goals

The goals of a cult and its method for reaching them depend on the nature of its members and their demonic patron. The goals of arcane, hedonistic and heretical cults are rather abstract and hard to understand by the lay person, while fanatics can be very simple in their pursuits.

A demon's goal in sponsoring a cult can be subtle or overt as well; Demon Lords with a finger on the pulse of history understand that a certain task requires a certain cult. If it wants to topple a dynasty of good rulers, it will create both a fanatic and a hedonistic cult; the latter to undermine the support of the nobility, and the first to deal the telling blow when things have degenerated to a given point. Other times, the demon just wants a quick and dirty way to get souls in the light of an impending conflict in the Abyss.

The overall goal of both cultists and demons is selfish in some degree, even if they profess a total commitment to a cause, it is for very personal reasons. A fanatic may shout that he wants to destroy the world so it can be made anew for the good of all beings, but deep inside he just wants to destroy the world out of spite or to end a tormented existence, ignorant that, by pledging his soul to a demon, greater torments await him in the afterlife.

The purpose of a cult, in exchange for a demon's patronage, is to be as a cancer on the land, festering and growing, infecting others with its evil. Some more specific goals include:

Corrupting local authorities: With bribes, favours and offers of membership, a cult can start subverting the social order by making the figures of authority into corrupt and depraved people. They may offer a disgruntled heir the chance to take the throne, or invite a sybarite sheriff to grand orgies until he is a slave to his own desires. Corrupting the authorities does not only serve to increase the chaos in a



community, but also helps the cult to gain certain leeway in its activities, cashing in on favours so that the disappearance of one or two virgins a week before the full moon go unchecked.

Destroy a force of good: This removes an obstacle for the demon patron and can take many forms, from assassinating the head of a church to making a famous paladin fall from grace, the goal is to make the force of good stop bothering them.

Spread confusion: Uncertainty is the root of many evils and, if the cult manages to make an entire community fear the unknown, they can push them to greater extremes and erode the moral order. A series of murders may start pushing a small town into desperation and fear. When the cult starts dropping hints about a scapegoat, people will eventually try to take the law in their own hands and lynch an innocent. Also, fear and prejudice will keep a community from accepting the help of strangers.

Blood and souls: Simple, straightforward slaughter. The cult will engage in ritual killings just for the satisfaction their demon patron feels at seeing such mayhem unleashed on the Material Plane. Blood and soul sacrifices have different effects on both demon and cultist.

Awaken sleeping demon: Many cults have existed for hundreds, if not thousands of years and are a steady source of unexpected support for a demon. When a Demon Lord falls asleep, it can count on its cult to try and wake him through sacrifices and by committing atrocities in its name. The few cults devoted to The Nameless Ones do not really understand what they are trying to do by waking a primordial demon.

Open gates: The ultimate goal of many cults is to blast open the barriers between the Abyss and the Material Plane, so that the demonic hordes can arrive in force, crushing everything in their path.

Personal power: Most of the time, the goals of a cult leader or its members have nothing to do with the overall battle between good and evil, but merely focus on their own greed and ambition. Demons have no trouble with this, as it only furthers the cultists' corruptions, arriving to the Abyss when they are as a much tastier morsel. An arcane cult may stop at nothing to learn the secrets of the universe, while a dupe cult leader would for riches.

Claim godhood: If a cult manages to become a full-fledged religion, chances are that their demonic patron will shortly become a true deity. Head priests will suddenly find themselves able to cast divine magic granted by their master.

Gain immortality: Mortals should learn that asking demons for the secret of immortality or eternal youth is one of the worst ideas possible. A demon may curse the petitioner with undeath if it is feeling light-handed, but they can grant the wish by infusing the cultist with so much demonic essence that yes, immortality is achieved. The mortal's soul, however, becomes so twisted in the process that he either goes mad or dies, becoming an immortal demon of the lowest castes, to be abused by other demons.

BLOOD AND SOUL SACRIFICES

This unsavoury activity of cults and demonologists merits its own section, as it is a cornerstone of the interaction between mortals and demons.

Blood sacrifices are stimulating for the demon, who sees spilt blood as invigorating entertainment and predisposes it to treat the sacrificing person or cult as nicely as a demon is able. Blood sacrifices consist of killing a victim and offering its blood to the demon, doing so grants +1 to checks to call, control and bargain with the demon in question. Of course, what a demon would prefer to receive instead of blood is the sacrifice's soul.

Demons use souls for a great variety of purposes as described earlier in this book and are all too happy to receive them for free. The souls of evil beings arrive on their own to the Abyss (or to Hell, which is one of the reasons for their eternal war) but demons are hardly the type to be content with this trickle and they actively search out loopholes in the laws of creation that give them greater access to souls. When a soul is sacrificed in a demon's name, that soul belongs to that demon, regardless of the creature's true alignment. A demon keeps its cult very secret from other fiends because, even if it has a claim on the sacrificed soul, it is no guarantee that a stronger demon will not snatch it away.

Sacrificing a soul gives the cultist a bonus to checks to call, control and bargain with the demon equal



to the HD or levels of the sacrificed victim. As an added bonus, if the victim is a paladin or a good cleric, the bonus is double as the demon is much more impressed and appreciative of the gift. Once on the other side, a sacrificed soul gives the demon additional resources to apply however it sees fit. A demon can use a sacrificed soul just like any other soul arriving in the Abyss. Because of the violent and unholy act by which the souls becomes property of the demon, it becomes tainted with demonic essence which disappears if the soul is rescued and brought back to life but, while in the Abyss, this essence may be used normally. A sacrificed soul yields as many power levels of demonic essence as it has HD or levels, minus one. The soul of a paladin or good cleric gain no additional essence over that of any other sacrificed soul; it just tastes better.

Sacrifices also taint those one who performs them, increasing their evil aura's strength for one week per his character level. When calculating the evil power level of the character who performed the sacrifice, add +1 for a blood sacrifice and a different bonus for soul sacrifice according to the following table:

Victim's Alignment	Evil power bonus
Lawful Good	+6
Neutral Good	+4
Chaotic Good	+3
Lawful Neutral	+4
True Neutral	+2
Chaotic Neutral	+1
Lawful Evil	+3
Neutral Evil	+1
Chaotic Evil	+0 (this soul would end up in the Abyss sooner or later)

For multiple sacrifices in the same ceremony, the bonuses do not stack as they are; only the highest victim's bonus to evil power applies, with each additional victim granting a +2 bonus or lower, if its bonus is +1 or +0 due to alignment. Participants on the sacrifice ritual gain a bonus to their evil power level equal to half the enactor's (round down) and the taint lasts for one day per their own character level.

For example, the leader of an arcane cult sacrifices the survivors of an adventuring party that had the

gall to storm his sanctum. One is a 4th level, chaotic neutral rogue and the other is a 3rd level, lawful good paladin. The cult leader is thoroughly corrupt and sacrifices the souls of both adventurers, granting him a +4 bonus for the rogue's soul to the checks used to call, control and bargain with the demon, and a +6 for the paladin's. The demon is quite pleased with the offering and, once he grants the cult leader's request, goes back home to the Abyss with two souls worth 5 power levels together, which can later be soulforged into a magic sword. The cult leader, a 6th level wizard of neutral evil alignment, normally has an evil power level of 1 (HD or level divided by 5, as stated in the description of the *detect evil* spell) but the sacrifice ceremony raises this number to 8 (+1 for a chaotic neutral soul and +6 for a lawful good soul) for a strong evil aura that lasts for six weeks and lingers for 1d6 hours. The other ceremony participants raise their evil aura by +3 and this effect lasts for one day per their character level.

DEMONIC INVESTITURES

Demons cannot grant spells to their worshipers like evil deities do with their clerics; what they can do to attract followers is grant demonic investitures. Minor investitures involve the kind of simple gifts that appear in old stories, like asking a demon for a bag of gold or for a magic weapon. Powerful demons can grant these little wishes without batting an eye, and are thoroughly amused that mortals would sell their souls for such trifling things. The fiends have a grudging respect for those mortals who are more ingenious in their requests, the kind that make them spend part of their demonic essence and infuse the mortal with it, making him better and more powerful.

Investitures are gifts of power that demons bestow on mortals by giving them part of the demonic essence that makes up a fiend. The mortal may ask for an investiture when he summons a demon whether he is a cultist or just a crafty spellcaster with access to some forbidden knowledge. The demon will usually grant it, because he will recover the spent essence eventually and he will pull the mortal a step closer to his doom.

The Price of Investiture

For the demon, the price of investiture is measured in power levels of demonic essence. As has been stated

before, all demons have a number of power levels equal to their Challenge Rating, which they can use to achieve a variety of effects, one of which is grant an investiture. Each investiture costs a number of power levels, which is why the weaker demons are unable to provide a mortal with certain expensive investitures, as doing so would destroy themselves in the process. Demons may use essence harvested from other demons and stored in receptacles, as well as the power flowing from the souls of sacrificial victims.

For the mortal, an investiture would seem to grant a great advantage for free, but when dealing with demons, nothing comes without a price. An investiture is temporary; the demonic essence fades with time as it dissipates in the environment of any other plane other than the Abyss. Each power level in an investiture lasts for a certain time and, when the last power level is gone, the investiture disappears, sometimes with grave consequences for the mortal. The investiture can be renewed, the problem is that with each investiture, the demon takes away part of the mortal's soul until it is totally drained, a soulless creature in total thrall of the demon.

Each time an investiture is granted on a mortal, he must make a Will save (DC 20 + number of power levels invested), if he succeeds, he receives the investiture without a problem but, if he fails, he gains a corruption point. Corruption points register with the *detect evil* and *detect chaos* spells, and a *detect alignment* will read the recipient of an investiture as chaotic evil, whether that is his true alignment or not. When the character gains a number of corruption points equal to the sum of his Wisdom and Charisma modifiers, he becomes a soulless entity (see the soulless template in the Role-playing with Demons chapter); he cannot refuse the orders of his demon master and, upon his death, he will go directly to the Abyss.

Investiture Descriptions

The following are just a few of the possible investitures a demon may grant a mortal; Players and Games Masters should feel free to come up with new ones, comparing them to the existing ones to assign price, duration and consequences.

- † **Cost:** How many power levels a demon must spend to grant the investiture.
- † **Duration:** How much each power level lasts in the mortal's body. For example, an investiture with '1 day' in the duration field lasts one day per power level invested. A demon may invest more power levels than the basic cost to extend the duration of an investiture. Very few do this, wanting the mortal to ask for power with greater frequency.
- † **Effect:** What the investiture does.
- † **Dissipation:** The consequences for a mortal when the last power level in an investiture fades away. The demon can invest more power levels to keep this from happening but, again, few of them do unless compelled by a summoning ritual.

Caster Level

Cost: 2 power points per extra level.

Duration: 1 week per power point.

Effect: All spells cast and spell-like abilities used by a mortal with this investiture are as if they were cast or used at a higher caster level than normal. The bonus caster levels cannot exceed +5.

Dissipation: After the investiture ends and, for one day per power point invested, the mortal's caster level is reduced by -2 both for spell effects and for caster checks such as for the *dispel magic* spell.

Demonic Attendant

Cost: 2 power levels per the attendant's HD.

Duration: A year and a day, total.

Effect: The mortal gains a cohort in the form of a demon as if he had the Leadership feat. The demonic patron selects the kind of demon, whose HD cannot be higher than the mortal's level minus two. After a year and a day, the attendant returns to the Abyss, happy to be rid of the service that binds it to do the mortal's bidding. The mortal can ask the demonic patron for another attendant, which may be more powerful than the last if he gained levels during that time.

Dissipation: None except an angry demon, which the Games Master can note down for future adventure ideas.



Demonic Form

Cost: 2 power points per HD or level of base creature.

Duration: Permanent.

Effect: When a demon grants this investiture, the mortal becomes closer to becoming demonkin. Once per day, the mortal may assume an alternate form as per the *polymorph other* spell. This alternate form is his own basic form with the half-fiend template. The transformation lasts one hour per character level, maximum of 10 hours. As a side effect, the character is now affected by all spells and effects that target outsiders, although he does not gain the outsider type. He does gain the chaotic and evil descriptors, so he can be repelled or contained by a *magic circle against evil*, for example.

Dissipation: There is no dissipation effect for this investiture but, should the mortal be slain, he travels directly to the Abyss as if he were a summoned demon and becomes a damned soul, property of his demonic patron.

Demonic Familiar

Cost: 1

Duration: Permanent.

Effect: If the mortal is a spellcaster with a familiar, the familiar gains the fiendish template as it is infused with demonic essence. If he does not have a familiar, he gains one in the form of a quasit or, if his patron is a Jar'taska'ka, a shadeling. The new familiar has all the power and abilities it would have for a sorcerer of its mortal master's level or HD. The familiar is not completely loyal to the mortal, however and, at the Games Master's discretion, may betray him or trick him.

Dissipation: None, although if the mortal dismisses the demonic familiar or the familiar is killed, the loss of XP inherent to familiar loss is double for both a successful and a failed saving throw.

Demonic Protection

Cost: 1 power point per 2 points of Damage Reduction and Spell Resistance.

Duration: 5 days per power point.

Effect: The mortal gains Damage Reduction and Spell Resistance scores at the rate of two points per power level spent. The Damage Reduction type is the same as the demon patron, and neither score can go above the demon's. For example, a succubus



grants her head priest demonic protection, spending 5 of its 7 available power points of demonic essence. The mortal gains DR 10/+2 (5 power points times 2, with the +2 because of the succubus' own score of 20/+2) and SR 12 (a succubus' SR is 12, so it cannot grant a mortal more than that).

Dissipation: For 1 day per power point invested after the investiture ends, the mortal suffers a -2 on all saving throws, suffers +2 points of damage from any physical attack and, if a spellcaster, casts all spells at -1 caster level.

Enchant Weapon or Armour

Cost: Depends

Duration: A year and a day, total.

Effect: The demon enchants a weapon or armour using whatever method at its disposal, whether using demonic essence, a soul as material or by natural spellcasting ability. If no power points are spent, the DC to resist the corruption point is 20 + the total enhancement of the weapon or armour (enhancement bonus plus special qualities).

Dissipation: None; the demon takes the equipment away at the end of the duration.

Immortality

Cost: 10 power points.

Duration: 10 years.

Effect: The mortal stops ageing. It does not suffer the penalties to Strength, Dexterity and Constitution but does gain the bonuses to Intelligence, Wisdom

and Charisma. In addition, the mortal automatically stabilises if brought to -1 hit points but not below -10, at which point he dies normally. After 1d6 rounds of being brought down to negative hit points, it bounces back to 0 hit points.

Dissipation: The exact moment at which the investiture expires, the mortal takes one negative level for every 5 years he has not aged through this investiture. For example, a mortal that has taken this investiture twice has not aged 20 years by the end of the second application, so he would take 4 negative levels. These negative levels cannot be removed in any way, not even a *wish*. If by the end of the day the mortal has not received this investiture again, the negative levels translate into actual level loss. The count does not reset if he misses an application of the investiture, so a mortal cannot lose 2 levels for an application of the investiture, wait one year before receiving it again and lose another 2 levels when the second investiture fades. Instead, he suffers 4 negative levels after the second application of the investiture fades, even if he already lost 2 levels for the first application. If the mortal loses more levels than he has, he becomes an undead creature in thrall of his demon patron. If he ends up with up to one half his level in negative levels, he becomes a ghost; if he ends up with half to his number of levels minus 1 in hit points, he becomes a vampire. If he ends up with as many negative levels as he had levels, he becomes a lich. For example, a 10th level sorcerer would need to lose from 10 to 15 levels to become a ghost (leaving him at negative 5th level), 16 to 19 levels to become a vampire (leaving him at negative 6th to negative 9th level) and 20 levels to become a lich (leaving him at negative 10th level).

Increase Ability

Cost: 1 power point per ability point for scores 1 to 14, 2 power points per ability point for scores 15 to 16, 3 power points power ability for scores 17 to 18, 5 power points per ability point for scores 19+

Duration: Permanent.

Effect: The mortal increases one of his ability scores by one or several points, depending on the power the demon is willing to invest. A mortal increasing a score from 13 to 16 would cost 5 power points (+1 for score 14, +2 for score 15 and -2 for score 16). The source of this greater might is apparent as the mortal gives off demonic taint, identifiable as such by any *detect evil*, *detect chaos* and *detect magic* effect. If the mortal fails or is beaten in any Charisma-based check, reactions are

worse than normal, there is a 5% chance per power point spent on accumulated ability increases that people will recognise him as demon-tainted.

Dissipation: None; the effect is permanent.

Increase Skill

Cost: 1 power per +2 insight bonus.

Duration: 1 month per power point.

Effect: The character gains an unholy insight in the use of any of the skills for which he already possesses ranks. The bonuses do not qualify as extra ranks.

Dissipation: The mortal suffers a -4 competence penalty to the augmented skill check for one day per power point invested after the investiture ends.

Regeneration

Cost: 2 power levels per point.

Duration: 5 days per power point

Effect: The mortal can regenerate damage as if he had the regeneration ability, recovering a number of hit points equal to half the power levels invested, with a maximum of 5. Blessed and holy weapons deal normal damage to the mortal with this investiture.

Dissipation: After the investiture ends the mortal gains one negative level per power point invested. If the mortal gains more negative levels than he has levels or HD, he dies instantly and his soul travels to the Abyss to be the property of his demonic patron. The negative levels fade after a time equal to one day per power point invested.

Spell-like Ability

Cost: 1 power point per spell level +2

Duration: 1 week per power point.

Effect: The demon patron grants a mortal the power to use one of its spell-like abilities. The mortal can use the spell-like ability once per day, or with the same frequency as the demon patron, whatever is more inconvenient for the mortal. The ability is the same as the equivalent spell as if cast by a sorcerer of the mortal's level, but cannot exceed the level at which the demon can use the ability. Thus, a 6th level aristocrat who receives this investment from a demon whose abilities are likened to the spells cast by an 8th-level sorcerer uses the spell-like ability as if he were a 6th-level sorcerer, but a 10th-level aristocrat would use it as an 8th-level sorcerer, the



demon's maximum.

Dissipation: For 1 day per power point spent on the ability, the mortal suffers a -2 to Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities from the moment that this investiture fades.

Spells per Day

Cost: 1 power point per spell level.

Duration: 1 month per caster level.

Effect: The demon may grant a mortal spellcaster the ability to cast more spells per day. The mortal can prepare an additional spell or has an extra spell slot if the demon invests enough power points. For example, 3 power points grant a mortal one 3rd-level spell slot, one 1st-level and one 2nd level slots or three 1st-level slots. The mortal must be able to cast spells of that level in order to gain any advantage.

Dissipation: After the investiture ends and for one day per power point invested, the mortal cannot cast spells of the levels for which he received extra spell slots.

Summon Ability

Cost: 1 power point per CR of creature summoned.

Duration: A year and a day, total.



Effect: The mortal gains the ability to summon demons. The demon patron can grant this ability so that, once per day, the mortal can summon 1d4 demons with a 35% chance of success. The kind of demons summoned must be of the same type and brood as the demon can call upon with his own summon ability. Each time the summoning succeeds, the mortal owes a simple favour to the demons he summoned, which he must pay before the investiture fades. At the Games Master's discretion, there is a 20% chance that a demon that has already answered the mortal's call will do so again, increasing the number of favours owed to it or increasing the favour's magnitude.

Dissipation: None, but if the mortal has not paid the owed favours to the demons he summoned, he suffers the effect of a *geas/quest* spell until he does so.

Telepathic Link

Cost: 1 power level

Duration: 1 month/power level

Effect: The demon and the invested mortal share a telepathic link that can cross the planar barriers. Neither the demon nor the mortal can perceive what the other perceives, but they can hold telepathic conversations. The demon can interrupt the communication at will and the mortal has no way to resume it without his master's approval.

Dissipation: If the effect ends and is not renewed, the mortal suffers a series of strong headaches for one day per invested power point. He cannot concentrate properly and suffers a -4 penalty to Concentration checks and a -2 penalty to Wisdom- and Charisma-based checks.

Wealth

Cost: 1 power level per 5,000gp.

Duration: 1 week.

Effect: The mortal asks for money, and the demon gives it, no questions asked. This money is tainted, however and not truly real. It registers to *detect evil* and *detect magic* as having a dim evil and magic aura. This money cannot be used to pay for the process of magic item creation; only in the purchase of goods and payment of services.

Dissipation: The money and riches disappear within a week of their appearance. The mortal is well advised to use the money quickly and bail out in order to avoid the ire of the people he swindled with demonic gold.

ROLEPLAYING WITH DEMONS

There is one good thing about demons from the perspective of running them in any given campaign: there is no shade of grey to them. Demons are evil incarnate, darkness given form. Take the most extreme act of cruelty and the sickest violent crime and that is what a demon would do as part of its daily routine. The horror that comes from a demon is not its terrible appearance or the amount of damage it can deal in a single attack, but what it imagines itself doing to an opponent.

Demons are the ultimate enemies of all creation; there to tear down everything and everyone. Like devils, they believe in the rule of the strong but, unlike devils, they have no respect for any code or structure and have little use for conventional logic and values. Demons are, in short, everything that should not be.

Introducing demons into a campaign should hint at a terrible threat just looming over the horizon, even if it is just the quasit familiar of an evil wizard. The fact that the wizard was willing to accept one of the most corrupt and degenerate races to sit on his shoulder and give him advice should raise serious questions about his sanity, let alone his morals.

When demons enter the scene, the battle between good and evil takes on a very real and tangible aspect. Demons are undoubtedly evil and must be opposed because none of their plans and actions could ever be beneficial for the inhabitants of the Material Plane. This chapter presents several ways to expand the role of demons in any campaign with prestige classes, templates, feats and additional rules for both the demons and those who oppose them.

DEMONIC PRESTIGE CLASSES

Due to dogged determination and blind ambition, demons (and a few mortals) learn new skills and fill out special roles in the battle between good and evil. The following prestige classes present a few options both for deluded mortals and ambitious fiends to focus their talents towards a specific purpose.

CULT LEADER

Duping mortals is one of the favourite pastimes of a demon and when he can do it through others, multiplying the effect like that of a virus, it is so much better. Cult leaders act like the carriers of the demonic disease, spreading its ideas to whomever catches his fancy. Demonic cults are cults of personality at the same time that they are devoted to a demon's cause, funnelling worship into the cult leader's ego and the demon's influence. The leaders and members of arcane cults are usually too smart to fall for the demon's tricks, but misguided rulers and others with certain influence over their peers could easily fall into the trap of doing a demon's work, taking in the gifts without looking the horse in the mouth.

The path of the cult leader seems to offer great advantages to those who follow it, but it is ultimately a road to certain perdition. The demon will do all it can to push the cult leader into darkness along with his followers, spreading evil among mortals while alive and its exclusive property upon their death.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

Alignment: Any evil.
Abilities: Wis 15+, Cha 15+
Feats: Leadership.
Special: Must gain the patronage of a demon of CR 7 or greater. Must have at least 20 followers and a cohort from the Leadership feat.

Class Skills

The cult leader's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex) and Spellcraft (Int). See *Core Rulebook I* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Armour and Weapon Proficiency: Cult leaders are proficient with all simple weapons. They are



proficient with light armour but not with shields. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of the Hand and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armour, equipment, or loot carried.

Demon Patron: The cult leader gains a demon patron he is in contact with. The demon patron provides him with influence, advice and power. Once per month, he can use *commune* to communicate with the demon patron for mere consultation purposes, although he may ask the demon to appear during a ritual calling. The demon can contact the cult leader telepathically at any time, appearing before him as a phantasm that no one else can see. The demon can see and hear all that the cult leader perceives without him noticing, but this is a clause that the demon never reveals to the cult leader. The cult leader in no way controls the demon patron, but the demon plays the part of the compliant partner, giving the cult leader most of what he asks for; namely more rope to hang himself with.



Cult: The cult leader, aided by his demon patron, gathers a cult around him. He gains a bonus to his Leadership score equal to one fifth the demon patron's CR (rounding down) and gains the full number of followers this increase yields, who are now converts to the demon patron's worship. He must murder his cohort in the demon patron's name. In any case, the cult leader gains a new demonic cohort of the demon patron's choosing. The new cohort can be anything, including the demon itself of the appropriate level equivalence. The new cohort comes complete with a base of operations, courtesy of the demon patron. This base can be any structure no larger than a small house with a cellar, but can have any form and location, from an abandoned crypt to a nondescript warehouse on the seediest port city. This gives the cult leader a corruption point, as per the rules for demonic investitures.

Bonus Investiture: At 2nd and 4th levels, the cult leader can ask his demon patron for a demonic investiture. The cult leader will not get a corruption point from this investiture, but he must supply all the power levels himself, usually through soul sacrifice, but summoning and siphoning the essence from the masters' enemies to his patron is also an option.

Demonic Spellcaster: The cult leader becomes an arcane spellcaster with lessons from his demon patron. He can spontaneously cast spells as a sorcerer of his cult leader level. If he already has sorcerer levels, add his cult leader level to his caster level for purposes of gaining access to higher level spells, spells per day and known spells. The cult leader cannot cast spells with the lawful or good descriptors and chooses two magic schools (such as Illusion, Necromancy and Evocation for example); he is barred from ever casting spells of those schools, just as if he was a specialist wizard, except that he does not get the benefits of a normal specialisation; instead, he casts all evil spells as one caster level higher. All of the spells learned through this demonic instruction have an evil taint that can be detected as such by a *detect evil* spell. This gives the cult leader a corruption point.

Corrupt Mind (Su): The cult leader wields powerful rhetoric, twisting words of wisdom into a tool of corruption. He is always seeking to recruit more members into his unholy clique and can do so by putting pressure into a potential victim's needs and wants. The cultist must engage in at least an hour of conversation with a potential recruit, spinning a web of lies and false reaffirmation. At

The Cult Leader

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Demon Patron, Cult
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Bonus Investiture
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	Demonic Spellcaster
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Bonus Investiture, Corrupt Mind
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Lasting Investiture

the end of the hour, the victim makes a Will save (DC 10 + cult leader's Charisma modifier); success means that the target of this ability does not give a second thought to the conversation. The cult leader can try again the next day, talking to his target for a full hour and eliciting another saving throw, but the DC increases by +1 for every past successful save. The cult leader can repeat this process until the target fails the save or he grows tired of trying. Failing the save means that the target is affected by the cult leader's words as if by a *charm monster* spell, trusting his opinion implicitly. When this happens, the cult leader spends another week interacting with his target until he offers to join the cult. This acts as the Temptation use of the *atonement* spell, giving the target a chance to change his alignment to any evil. The target can make one last Will save with a DC of 20 plus the cult leader's Charisma modifier or the DC of the last Will save he failed, whichever is higher. Success means that the target refuses the offer and the charm effect breaks; this normally spells the death of the target so that he does not talk about the cult. Failure means that he accepts the offer and becomes evil, joining the cult.

During the corruption process, the cult leader must maintain daily contact. If he ever skips a day without talking to his target before the charm effect takes hold, the DC resets to 10 plus the cult leader's Charisma modifier. If, at any point, the target succeeds his save by five to nine points, he suspects that there is something suspicious about the cult leader's behaviour and the save's DC resets to 10 plus Charisma modifier. If, at any point, the target succeeds his save by 10 or more points, he is instantly aware of the cult leader's true nature. The reaction is up to the Games Master.

Lasting Investiture: The cult leader chooses one of his active, non-permanent investitures. By the

demon's will and favour, that investiture becomes permanent. The cult leader gains a corruption point when has an investiture made permanent.

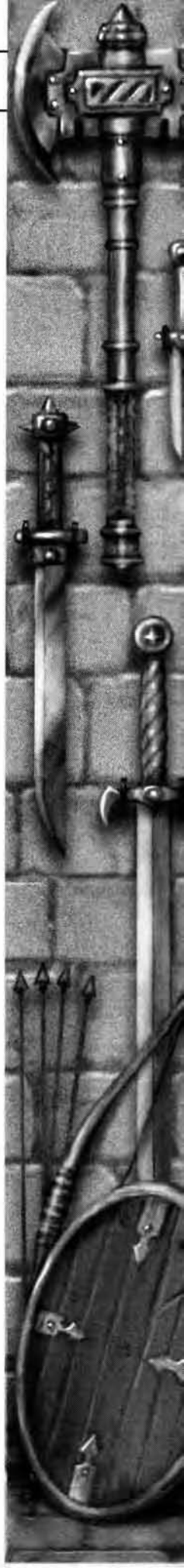
DEMONOLOGIST

The demonologist is the quintessential practitioner of the dark arts, toiling for hours surrounded by occult texts to harness the powers of the Abyss. The vast majority of demonologists start off as wizards and most still practice their regular arcane magic, but the mainstay of their studies is firmly rooted within the realms of demons.

Most demonologists are solitary individuals, for there are few willing to grant them the freedom to practice the summoning rituals necessary to call forth the greatest powers without comment. The very nature of the demonologist's arts requires knowledge and components that any of the civilised races would find distasteful in the extreme. In addition, the penalties for any error the demonologist himself makes during his rituals can cause a great deal of harm to any around him as demons. Freed from their shackles and at liberty to terrorise the Material Plane for an hour or more, they slaughter all living creatures in the surroundings.

Demonologists are regarded as strange people who rarely see the world as others do. After having faced the denizens of the Abyss in battles of sheer strength of will, few can remain completely unscathed. It is a tragic tale that many demonologists go into the practice with the purest of intentions, only to have their morals and standards constantly chipped and battered away until they become, quite literally, completely different people.

Hit Die: d4.



Requirements

Feats: Spell Mastery, Iron Will.

Special: Must understand the Draconic and Abyssal languages.

Class Skills

The demonologist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (alchemy) (Int), Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis) and Spellcraft (Int). See *Core Rulebook I* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Armour and Weapon Proficiency: Demonologists are proficient with daggers, short swords and the staff. They are not proficient with any types of armour or with shields. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of the Hand and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armour, equipment, or loot carried.

Spells per Day: The demonologist continues to gain ability as an arcane spellcaster. For each level gained as a demonologist, the character gains new arcane spells as if he had also gained a level in whatever arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before becoming a demonologist. The demonologist does not, however, gain any other benefits of his former arcane class, such as bonus feats. In other words, to determine the number of spells that a demonologist can cast per day, simply add his level of demonologist to the level of his previous arcane spellcasting class. Characters with more than one arcane spellcasting class must decide which class to assign each level of demonologist to for purposes of determining spells per day.

Basic Demonology: The character learns the basic skills and lore of demonology, which form the base of all his knowledge and will serve him to call demons to his service. Demonology centres on the summoning ritual, which calls a demon from the Abyss into a specially prepared circle. By virtue of his unholy knowledge, the demonologist does not need any of the normal spells used in conjuring

extraplanar creatures, but simply uses the lore he has learned. Each ritual is different for each demon or demonic species to be called and is based on the demon's Challenge Rating. A summoning ritual takes one hour per CR of the demon being called and if the ritual extends over an hour per demonologist's Constitution modifier, he must make a Concentration check every hour (DC 5 + demon's CR). Failure in the Concentration check means that the ritual failed with no other effects.

In order to try to call and control a demon, the character must research the abyssal names he needs for that particular species or an individual demon. The research is a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15 + the demon's CR) that takes 1d3 days + demon's CR. The Games Master can assign a bonus from +1 to +10 depending on the quality of the source of research that the character is using. The character's research must be conducted in an appropriate source; he will not find information on demons and their summoning in a library filled with common folk songs, for example. A summoning ritual also requires costly components, worth 100gp per CR of the demon. Half of this amount represents a summoning focus, an object keyed to the demon to be summoned and which can be reused when summoning that same demon or demon species in the case of a fiend of CR 6 or less.

Basic demonology comprises the following abilities and opportunities:

Summon: Summoning a demon is deceptively easy and infinitely dangerous. Instead of the random calling of a *summon monster* spell, the demonologist calls a specific species of demon or even a specific demon. Once he has researched the abyssal name (at least) of the fiends he wants to attract, he proceeds to trace the symbols and prepare for the ritual. Rituals that call demons with a CR of 6 or lower use general abyssal names and call upon a random member of the desired race, but demons of CR 7 and higher all have definite names and personalities of their own. A ritual that calls a CR 7 demon will call that specific demon all the time; if the demonologist wants to summon another demon of the same species, he must research the ritual to call it. Once everything is ready, the demonologist makes a summoning check, which is a roll of d20 + summoning modifiers (see sidebar) against a DC equal to 10 + demon's CR. Failure means that the demon does not heed the call and the ritual fails. The summoning check is roughly

equivalent to the *planar binding* spell, except that it has no HD limit and only draws the demon to the Material Plane, not into a magical trap (although one can be prepared as a precaution).

Control: If the summoning check succeeds, the demonologist must try to control the demon immediately by making a control check, which is a roll of $d20 + \text{control modifiers}$ (see sidebar) against a DC equal to $10 + \text{twice the demon's CR}$. Failure means that the demon escapes the demonologist's control and can act as it wishes. It can use all the abilities at its disposal, with some crafty fiends feigning to be under control, only to spring a trap on the demonologist later. Success in the control check means that the demonologist's will binds the demon and he can then give it instructions. Regardless of the result, a demon summoned by these means can remain in the Material Plane only for one hour. The demonologist can make another control check to extend this duration for another hour. The art of demonology opens a mystical conduit between the demon and the demonologist's will so that, if the character fails a control check, the demon is considered to have the Possessor feat (detailed later in this chapter) until it returns to the Abyss, although it can only try to possess the demonologist.

Short Instruction: At the basic level, the demonologist can only exert enough control to give the summoned demon an instruction up to eight words long. If the control check was successful, the demon *must* obey this instruction to the best of its ability.

Banish: The demonologist can attempt to dismiss a summoned demon before its time is up. If the original control check was successful, the demonologist can send the demon back to the Abyss with a second control check, enjoying a +10 competence bonus to the check. If the demon is out of control, the banishment attempt suffers a -5 circumstance penalty instead. The spells *banishment* and *dismissal* work normally and may sometimes be a better option than try to reverse the summoning ritual. Slaying the demon in the Material Plane is also possible; if very difficult, but the demon will remember this insolence and all attempts to summoning it again will suffer a -2 circumstance penalty.

Siphon Demonic Essence: At 2nd level, the demonologist can harvest demonic essence at will



from a summoned and controlled demon without the need of a spell. See the Methods of Warfare chapter for detailed rules on the harvesting and uses of demonic essence.

Bonus Name: As part of its studies and consultations, the demonologist discovers powerful names to aid in his summonings. At 4th and 8th levels, he learns either two Greater Names or one True Name. If he chooses two Greater Names, he chooses two demons whose combined Challenge Ratings do not surpass his Intelligence score plus his demonologist level; he can distribute the CRs for two individual and very specific demons. If the sum of their CRs is less than his Intelligence score plus his level, the excess is lost.

If the demonologist chooses to learn one True Name, he chooses a demon whose CR does not surpass half his Intelligence score plus his demonologist level. Demonic Greater and True Names apply both to the control and summoning checks as described on the sidebar as well.

Summoning and Control Modifiers

Circumstance	Modifier	Applies to
Additional instruction	-2	Control
Binding to place	-3	Control
Binding to item	-6	Control
Distraction	-1 per extra creature present (familiar does not count)	Both
Expertise	+demonologist levels	Both
Force of Will	+Cha modifier	Control
High Quality components (double cost)	+1 to +3	Summoning
Hurried ritual (half demon's CR in hours)	-4	Both
Name, Greater	+5	Control
Name, True	+10	Control
Previously failed summoning	-1 per failed ritual within 30 days	
Previously summoned/controlled demons	+1	Both
Sacrifice, blood	+1	Control
Sacrifice, soul	+creature's HD or level	Control
Sacrifice, soul (paladin or good cleric)	+double character level	Control
Slow ritual (demon's CR x2 hours)	+2	Both
Study and Preparation	+Int modifier	Summoning

If the demonologist wishes to uncover more Greater and True Names, he must undergo deeper research, unearthing obscure texts and undertaking special quests.

Advanced Demonology: The demonologist hones his skill at the summoning and controlling of demons, gaining the following abilities or advantages:

Multiple Summoning: The demonologist can try to summon more than one demon with the same ritual. Simply add the CRs of all demons involved to the DC of summoning and control checks (remember that for the control check, all the CRs involved are doubled). The demons may be of different races and even demonic families, but they all receive the same instruction.

Extended Control: Summoned demons now remain in the Material Plane for up to two hours, regardless

of the result of the control check. The demonologist can make another control check to extend this duration for another two hours.

Detailed instruction: The demonologist's instructions are now 12 words of length for all summoned demons.

Holding: The demonologist can try to paralyse any demon he encounters by making a control check. If he succeeds, the demon is affected as if by a *hold monster* spell for a number of rounds equal to the demonologist's Charisma modifier. The demon need not be one the character summoned himself and this ability does not affect a demon the character summoned, but lost control of.

Bar: By chanting the words of summoning and control he uses in a normal ritual, the demonologist can erect an invisible wall that keeps a demon from advancing.

This wall has all the physical properties of a *wall of force* as if cast by a sorcerer of the demonologist's caster level that works only against the specific demon the demonologist is warding against. It also has the properties of a *magic circle against evil*, except that it manifests as a wall.

Bind to Place: By imposing a -3 penalty to the control check, a demonologist can bind a demon to a location for one day per caster level. The demon can be given an instruction that is no longer than six words, which includes simply 'stay there.' The demonologist cannot keep more demons bound to a location than his Charisma modifier.

Breach Demonic Protection: The demonologist's intimate knowledge of the abyssal fiends grants him a greater chance to affect them with his magic. All spells he casts targeting demons are cast at +1 caster level for purposes of effect, duration and other level-

The Demonologist

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Basic Demonology	+1 level existing class
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Siphon Demonic Essence	+1 level existing class
3	+1	+1	+1	+3		+1 level existing class
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus Name	+1 level existing class
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Advanced Demonology	+1 level existing class
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Breach Demonic Protection	+1 level existing class
7	+3	+2	+2	+5		+1 level existing class
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Bonus Name	+1 level existing class
9	+4	+3	+3	+6		+1 level existing class
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Demonology Mastery	+1 level existing class

dependent characteristics, as well as for defeating the demon's Spell Resistance.

Demonology Mastery: The demonologist has reached the peak of his art, gaining the following abilities:

Greater Control: Summoned demons now remain in the Material Plane for up to three hours, regardless of the result of the control check. The demonologist can make another control check to extend this duration for another three hours.

Full Instruction: The demonologist's instructions are now 20 words of length for all summoned demons.

Bind to Item: The demonologist can create magical items out of trapped demons. He imposes a -6 penalty to the control check before binding the demon. (See the Bound Demons section later in this chapter for details).

HERALD OF THE ABYSS

Demonic diplomacy usually takes the form of an entire horde slamming down the doors, but there are times where demons realise the importance of talking and making allies or otherwise having someone they

can depend on living away from the Abyss. 'Depend on' means, of course, someone to be bullied, brainwashed or blackmailed to carry out the demon's orders. Heralds of the Abyss are not precisely a diplomacy corps for demonkind, but rather a loose group of demons, mortals and their hybrid offspring who have learned how to deal with the denizens of other planes and present a less violent face for the Abyss.

Heralds gain their power by their association with a powerful demon and by pledging their servitude to a demonic patron for whom they will speak. They are free to wander the planes and gain some measure of immunity from demons who would be afraid of the Herald's master, but they must answer the telepathic call of their patron as soon as possible and comply with its wishes. A Herald will often be a contact between a lowly cult leader and the demon patron, or even an instigator. Both demons and mortals can become a Herald of the Abyss, keeping the archdemons and Demon Lords in contact with each other and with their interests outside their layers.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Ability: Charisma 15+

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks.

Special: Pledge of allegiance to a demon of Challenge Rating 15 or higher.

Class Skills

The Herald of the Abyss's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Forgery (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis) and Spellcraft (Int). See *Core Rulebook I* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Armour and Weapon Proficiency: Heralds of the Abyss are proficient with all simple and martial weapons. They are not proficient with any type of armour or shields. Note that armour check penalties for armour heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of the Hand and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armour, equipment, or loot carried.

Spells: A Herald of the Abyss casts arcane spells. He may prepare and cast any spell from his own spell list provided he can cast spells of that level. He casts spells the way a sorcerer does, using the Spell's Known table of a sorcerer of the same level. To learn or cast a spell, a Herald of the Abyss must have a Charisma score of at least 10 + the spell's level. The DC for a saving throw against a Herald of the Abyss's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the his Charisma modifier. Bonus spells are based on Charisma.

Diplomatic Immunity (Su): Traversing the planes is dangerous not only because of the natural hazards of the different planes and their environments, but also because their denizens may not be too friendly. The Herald's first steps include learning the universal laws of hospitality in order to act as the messenger he is and not be overly affected by his destinations' dangers. At first level, the Herald of the Abyss is immune to the adverse conditions of any plane

he visits for one hour per prestige class level. In addition, by taking a standard action to identify himself as an extraplanar envoy upon entering a new plane, the Herald is protected as if by a *magic circle against evil* spell, except that it affects all natives of the plane he is visiting as if they were outsiders, preventing physical contact and some abilities for as long as the Herald remains on their plane or until cancelled. Both effects are immediately cancelled if the Herald attacks a native creature.

Tongues (Su): A Herald of the Abyss has a permanent *tongues* ability as the spell cast by a sorcerer of his total character level.

Silver Tongue (Sp): The envoy of the Abyss gains a truly demonic charm. Once per day per prestige class level he can cause a single creature to become fascinated with him. The Herald and his target must be able to see and hear each other and must be within 90 feet. The distraction of a nearby combat or other dangers prevents the ability from working. The Herald makes a Diplomacy check, which becomes the target's DC for an opposed Will saving throw. If the saving throw succeeds, the Herald cannot attempt to fascinate that creature again for 24 hours. If the saving throw fails, the creature sits quietly and listens to the Herald speak for as long as 1 round per the Herald's full character level. The ability otherwise functions as the bard's *fascinate* ability. The Herald may also plant a *suggestion* as per the spell (DC 13 + Herald's Charisma modifier) to a creature he successfully engages in mind-affecting conversation.

Contact Abyssal Master (Sp): Once per week per prestige class level, the Herald of the Abyss may contact his demonic master telepathically as if with a *contact other plane* spell cast by a sorcerer of his prestige class level. Use the 'Outer Planes, demideity' row on the contact table for the possible results. The Herald makes a Charisma check instead of an Intelligence check to avoid suffering a Wisdom decrease (Instead of Intelligence/Charisma) and does not lose the ability to cast arcane spells, but does lose the ability to cast divine spells if he has levels in a divine spellcasting class.

Breach the Planes (Sp): The Herald of the Abyss no longer depends on external means of travel to reach another plane. Once per week per prestige class level, the Herald chooses a plane of destination and then can *plane shift* to the nearest transitive plane (Astral, Ethereal or Plane of Shadows). From there,

the Herald knows the direction and time of travel to his destination's nearest entrance, even if he has to get there by his own means. This ability only affects himself; the Herald of the Abyss cannot take anyone else with him.

Forceful Diplomacy (Sp): There are times when the diplomats from the Abyss get tired of words and bring in the muscle to press their point. At 5th level, the Herald of the Abyss gains a special use of a demon's summon ability. Once per day per Charisma modifier, the Herald can attempt to summon a group of demons depending on his total

Character Level/ Total HD	Number and type of demons
10-15	1d4 demons of CR5 or less (35% chance)
16-18	1d4 demons of CR 6-10 (35% chance) or 2d6 demons of CR5 or less (35% chance)
19-20	1d2 demons of CR 11-15 (35% chance), 1d6 demons of CR 6-10 (35% chance) or 2d10 demons of CR5 or less (50% chance)
20+	1 demon of CR 16+ (35% chance), 1d2 demons of CR 11-15 (35% chance), 1d6 demons of CR 6-10 (35% chance) or 2d10 demons of CR5 or less (50% chance)

character level:

Each group is composed of the same race of demons; for example, if the Herald rolls 3 demons of CR 5 or less on a 1d4 and they accept to come, all three

must be of the same race; the Herald cannot choose to summon different types of demons even if all of their Challenge Ratings are 5 or less. Also, the demons *must* belong to the same demonic family as the Herald's demon master; if his allegiance is to a Demon Lord, then the master chooses which of the families that serve it will listen to the Herald's call. The summoned demons remain for one hour and they cannot use their own *summon demon* ability. The Herald is assumed to call for reinforcements only for missions of importance to the demon master; otherwise, the summoned demons realise immediately and the Herald owes them a favour. The Herald of the Abyss may choose feats or use knowledge that apply to the demonic summon ability.

Herald of the Abyss Spell List

1st Level – *cause fear, charm person, command, comprehend languages, endure elements, expeditious retreat, mount, protection from good/law, shield, summon monster I.*

2nd Level – *detect thoughts, invisibility, misdirection, resist energy, sanctuary, scare, summon monster II, whispering wind.*

3rd Level – *Clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic, fly, gaseous form, haste, illusory script, magic circle against good/law, nondetection, phantom steed, protection from energy, secret page, suggestion, summon monster III, water breathing.*

4th Level – *Chaos hammer, charm monster, detect scrying, dimensional anchor, dimension door, discern lies, fear, freedom of movement, lesser geas, minor globe of invulnerability, scrying, sending, summon monster IV, unholy blight.*

Class Level	BAB	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Diplomatic Immunity, Tongues	2	–	–	–
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Silver Tongue	3	2	–	–
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	Contact Abyssal Master	3	2	2	–
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Breach the Planes	3	3	3	2
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Forceful Diplomacy	4	3	3	3



'I am almost afraid to ask...' My brother looks at me with awe and a little fear too. 'Where... how did you learn all of this? I... I appreciate with all my heart what you are doing but I cannot help to fear for your soul.'

'And well you should, little brother.' I pat his shoulder and smile reassuringly. 'I abandoned my vows as a knight and my right to the crown when I discovered a certain tome... which I still possess. I understood that to fight the encroaching evil of these foul things required tactics not taught by the order, nor accepted by them. Trust me when I tell you that I am well aware of the dangers of the dark road, but sometimes the darkness can be used against itself when wielded by the light.'

'Brother...' He puts his hand over mine. 'Please, give me my daughter back...'

DEMONIC FEATS

Demons, those who serve them and those who oppose them are in a constant struggle to develop new tricks and techniques to gain the upper hand. Any creature or character that meets the prerequisites may learn a general feat from this section, but only demons may take feats labelled as 'demonic.' With a few adaptations demonic feats can be applied to devils, changing their type to 'diabolic.' Prerequisites marked with a '*' refer to feats, abilities or other characteristics described in this book.

Bypass Host (Metamagic)

You can attack a possessing entity without harm to its host.

Benefit: When the character targets a spell to a creature that is currently possessed or victim of a parasite creature, the spell ignores the host and deals its full damage to the possessing, inhabiting or parasitic creature. A bypassing spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

Channel Power (General)

You can deflect and return an enemy's energy attacks.

Prerequisite: Active immunity or resistance to at least one energy type, ability to use arcane spells or spell-like abilities; governing spellcasting ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma) 17+.

Benefit: Choose an energy type against which the character or creature has immunity or energy resistance. Whenever he is struck by an attack with that energy type, he has a chance to repel and turn back part of the damage against the attacker. The character must make a Reflex save in addition to any

saving throw the effect asks for against the same DC of the original attack. If this second saving throw succeeds, one of two things can happen: if the character is immune to the attack's energy type, he can shoot a ray of the same energy type that deals the full damage of the attack had it damaged the character. If, on the other hand, the character has energy resistance against the attack's energy type, he can shoot a ray of the same energy type that deals the full damage of the attack had it damaged the character, up to the character's energy resistance rating. The ray homes in to the originator of the attack, regardless of range or any other protection. The original attacker can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + half the character's level or HD + character's spellcasting governing ability modifier) to halve the incoming damage.

Special: This feat can be taken several times. Each time, select a new energy type against which the character or creature has immunity or energy resistance.

Energy Regeneration (General)

You can use the energy from an energy attack to heal your wounds.

Prerequisite: Toughness or Great Fortitude; active immunity to at least one energy type.

Benefit: Choose an energy type against which the character or creature is immune. Whenever he is struck by an attack with that energy type, he recovers an amount of hit points equal to one-fifth (20%) of the damage the attack would have dealt.

Special: This feat can be taken several times. Each time, select a new energy type against which the character or creature is immune.

Extended Damage Reduction (General)

You resist damage from stronger weapons.

Prerequisite: Improved Damage Reduction.

Benefit: The character's or creature's Damage Reduction protects it from weapons of +1 enhancement bonus higher than normal.

Special: This feat may be taken only twice.

Extended Summoning (Demonic)

A demon's allies can remain in the ethereal plane for an extended period.

Prerequisite: *Summon demon* ability, Improved Summoning*, Favour*.

Benefit: Other demons that the creature summons with his ability can remain for an extra hour.

Special: Characters with the summon ability investiture or the *forceful diplomacy* class feature from the Herald of the Abyss prestige class may take this feat. This feat also applies to a demonologist's powers. Demons that arrive through the call of a demon with this feat may use their own summon ability after one hour has passed.

Extra Summons (Demonic)

The demon may call for more reinforcements.

Prerequisite: *Summon demon* ability, Favour*.

Benefit: The demon can use its summon ability an extra time per day.

Favour (Demonic)

The demon has previously answered other demons' summoning ability and therefore has many favours to cash in.

Prerequisite: Must appear in a demon's *summon demon* ability description.

Benefit: The demon can summon the double number of creatures he rolls.

Special: This feat does not increase the chance of the demons arriving, only their numbers, which must all belong to the same species as was called.

Improved Damage Reduction (General)

You are tougher than other creatures of your kind.

Prerequisite: A natural and permanent Damage Reduction rating.

Benefit: The character's or creature's Damage Reduction negates an extra 5 hit points of damage to its normal score.

Special: This feat may be taken up to three times.

Improved Summoning (Demonic)

The demon's calls are stronger in other demons' ears.

Prerequisite: *Summon demon* ability.

Benefit: The demon's chance of success for his summon ability increases by +15%. This works for all groups of demons it can summon.

Special: Characters with the summon ability investiture or the *forceful diplomacy* class feature from the Herald of the Abyss prestige class may take this feat.

Infectious Essence (Demonic)

The demon can inflict demonic diseases.

Benefit: The demon can use demonic essence to infect others with demonic diseases, see the Methods of Warfare chapter under the Essence Manipulation section.

Long-Range Telepathy (General)

Your telepathic powers can reach greater distances.

Prerequisite: Telepathy ability granted by spells, psionic powers, spell-like or supernatural abilities.

Benefit: The range of the creature's telepathic powers is doubled.

Special: Characters with a mind link to a familiar, special mount or animal companion benefit from this feat by having their link with their companion tripled, but it only works between the character and his companion.

Obscure Name (Demonic)

The demon has taken extra care to hide his Greater and True Names.

Benefit: Any attempt to summon the individual demon suffer a -2 circumstance penalty (applied to a demonologist's summoning check) or grants the demons a +2 bonus to its saving throw to resist spells like *planar binding*.

Planar Telepathy (General)

Your telepathic powers extend beyond the planar barriers.

Prerequisite: Charisma 18+, Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks; telepathy ability granted by spells, psionic powers, spell-like or supernatural abilities.



Benefit: The creature's telepathic powers can reach targets on another plane in the case of adjacent planes. The creature can key its telepathic ability on one target per Intelligence or Charisma modifier (whichever is higher) previous the targets' departure from the plane where they all are. The creature can then maintain telepathic contact with those targets regardless of which plane they travel to. Any effect that dispels, disrupts or blocks magic will sever the bond, which cannot be reforged unless the character and the target are again in the same plane.

Special: Characters with a mind link to a familiar, special mount or animal companion benefit from this feat by having their link remain even if they are separated in different planes, but it only works between the character and his companion.

Possessor (Demonic)

The demon has the ability to possess people.

Prerequisite: Challenge Rating 7 or higher, demon.

Benefit: The demon may become ethereal for a number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier. Once per round, an ethereal demon can merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (or the demon's HD, whichever is higher), except that it does not require a receptacle and it lasts one day per level or HD or until exorcised. If the attack succeeds, the demon vanishes into the opponent's body. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 15 + demon's positive Charisma modifier). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that demon's possession for one day.

Special: Nuyul'ka demons have a similar ability called *skinride*; a Nuyul'ka demon with the Possessor feat may attempt to possess a creature it already is skinriding and the victim's DC to resist increases by +4. See the Role-playing Possession section at the end of this chapter. If a demon was summoned and escaped, it is not forced to return to the Abyss after the summoning effect ends, but until its possession power allows. It can 'reset' the clock by possessing another victim and therefore stay in the Material Plane for as long as it can, until it is discovered and exorcised or banished.

Soul Eater (Demonic)

The demon gains greater power from consumed souls.

Prerequisite: Challenge Rating 7 or higher, demon.

Benefit: Whenever the demon strips a soul or another demon of its essence, it can coax an extra amount of power levels of demonic essence. For every two power levels drained, the demon harvests one additional power level.

Trespasser (Demonic)

The demon scoffs at magical protections.

Prerequisite: Charisma 19+

Benefit: The demon gains an extra Will saving throw against spells or effects that keep it from moving inside or outside an area or interacting with a protected creature. Even if the demon is not allowed a saving throw against the effect, it can make one by means of this feat against the DC the spell would have if it allowed the demon to save. Such effects include, but are not limited to *protection from evil* and *magic circle against evil*.

Unholy Link (Demonic)

The demon can link its mind to a target for a long time.

Prerequisite: Telepathy ability, Challenge Rating 10 or higher, demon.

Benefit: The demon creates a mind link between itself and a willing target. This link is similar to that between a sorcerer and his familiar, except that it works regardless of distance and the demon can turn it on or off at will. The demon can perceive everything around the target as if it stood at the target's location, but only through the target's limited mortal senses. Other characters can detect the demon's link with a *detect evil* spell (aura is always faint) **Special:** Characters or creatures can get this feat without any prerequisites except for the actual summoning of the demon and pledge of allegiance to it. This is similar to the telepathic link investiture described in the previous chapter, except that the demon need not spend any power points to establish the link and it lasts for as long as the demon wants.

Expert Summoner (Demonic)

The demon knows how to call other demons apart from those he normally calls.

Prerequisite: *Summon demon* ability, Favour*.

Benefit: The demon chooses another race of demons whose CR does not exceed its own. The demon can now summon 1d4 members of that new race with a

35% chance of success.

Special: The demon may choose fiends from other demonic families, but never, ever devils.

DEMONIC MAGIC

Exorcism

Abjuration

Level: Brd 5, Clr 4, Protection 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Target: One creature of up to 16 HD

As *lesser exorcism*, but it affects possessing creatures of up to 16HD.

Exorcist Weapon

Transmutation

Level: Clr 2, Pal 2, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Weapon touched

Duration: 1 minute / level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (object, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object, harmless)

Exorcist weapon gives an affected weapon the ability to strike a possessing life force inside a host, without damaging the host. The weapon acts as a brilliant energy weapon, passing through the host's body harmlessly, dealing the weapon's damage directly to the life force's hit points, wherever its original body is if it has one. While under the effects of this spell a weapon cannot damage any creature or object except possessing life forces, although it can damage multiple possessors in the same encounter. If the weapon reduces a possessing life force to 0 hit points it is destroyed and the original life force returns to the body, escaping any means of imprisonment that was used to remove it from its body. This spell cannot be cast on a natural weapon, such as an unarmed strike.

Materials: A pinch of myrrh.

Greater Exorcism

Abjuration

Level: Clr 6, Protection 6, Sor/Wiz 6

Target: One creature of up to 24 HD or several creatures up to 16HD

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

As *lesser exorcism*, but it affects a single possessing creature of up to 24HD. As an alternative, the caster may try to use *greater exorcism* on several possessed hosts at the same time, none of which may be further than 30 feet from each other and up to the spell's range. It only affects possessing creatures of up to 16HD.

Greater Seal

Abjuration

Level: Clr 8, Sor/Wiz 9

Target: 1 creature of 24HD

As *lesser seal*, but it can affect a creature of up to 24HD. In addition, *greater seal* can be used to bind an outsider to an item or place and exploit its powers, giving the outsider a +2 morale bonus to its saving throw if the caster will bind it to a location and a +4 of being bound to an item.

Lesser Exorcism

Abjuration

Level: Brd 4, Clr 3, Protection 3, Pal 4, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, F, DF

Casting Time: Varies

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

Target: One creature of up to 8 HD

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell expels a possessing creature from the host's body whose original HD does not exceed 8HD. Add the creature's HD to its saving throw and subtract the character's level as well. The spell has a duration of 10 minutes per the possessing creature's CR. If the spell is successful, the creature is instantly expelled from the host's body, ending the possessing effect as if the possessor had ended it voluntarily; for example, a possessor using *magic jar* would return to his own body while the victim's was freed from the receptacle, or a ghost using *malevolence* and a demon using the Possessor feat would appear next to the victim in an ethereal state. After the possessor exits the host's body, it cannot try to possess the victim again for 24 hours.

Arcane Focus: Any item that is distasteful to the subject.



Lesser Seal

Abjuration

Level: Clr 6, Sor/Wiz 7

Components: V, S, F, DF

Casting Time: Full-round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

Target: 1 creature of up to 8HD.

Duration: Permanent (see text)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell imprisons an outsider inside a nearby terrain feature, which may be a rock, a tree, a pond or even a patch of land. The creature may not have more than 8 Hit Dice and the caster sets a condition for the creature's release, which can be a command word, an astrological condition, a prophecy's outcome or similar circumstance. The Games Master may award the target creature a circumstance bonus to its saving throw if the release condition is too infrequent, but this bonus should not exceed +5. Once sealed, the creature is aware of everything that happens within 60-feet of its prison; its awareness is intact, but the rest of its functions are in stasis; it does not need to eat or sleep, its wounds do not heal and it cannot perform any sort of movement, although it can see and hear after a fashion. The sealed creature can try to cast spells without material or somatic components or use supernatural and spell-like abilities that require no movement or materials by succeeding at a caster check (1d20 + creature's HD or caster level, DC 11 + spellcaster's level). The caster may enter within 60-feet of the seal and converse with the sealed creature as if either of them had telepathy or a similar power. At the end of every month, the creature is entitled to a Will save which, if successful, liberates it but, if it fails, it raises the save's DC for the next month. Creatures that fail the saving throw by 10 or more fall into a deep slumber and cannot awaken except by a *miracle* or *wish*. A *detect thoughts* spell detects the sealed creature and may even be used to establish a conversation, if the creature lacks telepathic abilities. The creature knows the condition of its release.

If the outsider breaks free, it appears at the location of its sealing and has one hour until it is sent back to its home plane. If the outsider is released by the terms of the spell's condition, it can remain in the Material Plane for one minute per HD until it is sent back to its home plane.

Arcane Focus: An item worth 500gp per HD of the intended.

Magical Erosion

Transmutation

Level: Brd 3, Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

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

Area: Cone 80 ft.

Duration: 1 round / level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

By shooting a cone of highly charged magical energy, the caster may whisk away the magical protection that protect some creatures can provide. Creatures in the area of effect that fail their saving throw have their Spell Resistance score lowered by 1d4 + half the caster's level. Creatures whose Spell Resistance is decreased to 0 do not regain their protection when the spell's duration ends, but after the following day.

Material Component: A bunch of sawdust.

Seal

Abjuration

Level: Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 8

Target: 1 creature of 16HD

As *lesser seal*, but it can affect a creature of up to 16HD. In addition, *seal* can be used to bind an outsider to an item or place and exploit its powers, giving the outsider a +3 morale bonus to its saving throw if the caster will bind it to a location and a +6 of being bound to an item.

Steal Essence

Necromancy [Evil]

Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Steal essence siphons one power level of demonic essence per caster level. The target creature must be a demon or be possessed by a demon or the spell will not work. The caster may store the demonic essence inside his body or in a previously prepared receptacle

as described on the Methods of Warfare chapter in this book.

BOUND DEMONS

As an alternative to having a demon carry out an order or engage in negotiation for favours, lore or sponsorship, a demonologist or other spellcasters with the means and courage necessary may try to bind a demon to a location or an item in order to exploit its natural powers.

Binding the Demon

The lore of demonology is the best way to bind a demon. The demonologist simply summons the fiend with the intent to bind it, suffering a penalty to his control check as it tries to order it inside a location or an item. The consequences of success and failure are pretty clear once all modifiers are taken into account. Casters depending on their spell knowledge must tread very carefully and trust in their luck, as demons have more chances to resist and escape their summoning. The spell sequence to bind a demon is:

1. *Lesser planar binding*, *planar binding* or *greater planar binding* call the demon to appear. The *planar ally* family of divine spells is an alternative, but imprisoning an envoy is almost certain to offend the cleric's deity. *Gate* is also adequate, but *summon monster* lacks the power and durability to achieve this.

2. *Magic circle against evil* will trap the demon when it arrives with the normal provisions. The caster should take the time to trace a summoning circle to empower the spell, as well as preparing *dimensional anchor* beforehand.

3. Only when the demon is trapped and secured can the caster use *seal* or *greater seal* to bind the demon to a location or an object. *Trap the soul* has similar effects but does not allow any of the demon's power to trickle out in order to be exploited.

Location Bindings

When a demon is bound to a location, it is there to fulfil a purpose, almost always the guarding of a treasure, entrance or secret. The demon has very specific orders and will be freed upon their completion or when the binding effect ends. In the case of the *seal* spells, the condition for liberation must be part of the service of the bound demon,

which is sent back to the Abyss once the condition is met, rather than freeing it at the location.

The *seal* spells allow the caster to give the demon an instruction of up to 12 words, not including the condition of liberation, which may be as long as the caster wishes but may grant the demon a bonus to its saving throws if the condition is too specific or highly unlikely.

Demons bound to a place are compelled to fulfil their duty, but are free to do anything else, so the caster is advised to specify restrictions as well as duties. The demon may make any bargain with those who stumble upon it as long as it does not go against its duty or does not reveal the condition of liberation.

Item Bindings

Demonologists bind demons to objects as a cheap way to create magical items; even cheaper than using demonic essence. The dangers are much greater, though, as a demonic item is simply the demon in a new form and some restrictions on its behaviour, but its intentions are no less perverse.

Binding a demon to an object has special characteristics whether it is achieved by a demonologist's summoning and control checks or a general spellcaster's judicious use of the binding spell sequence. In both cases, the item to which the demon will be bound must rest at the centre of the summoning circle so the fiend is sucked inside it when it fails to resist the spellcaster's will.

A demon-bound item is considered a magic item for all purposes including equivalent market price, vulnerability to attacks, effects, as targets of spells like *detect magic*. *Dispel* and anti-magic effects do not free a bound demon, but merely prevent it from manifesting its power through the item.

Unlike binding to a location, there are strict material requirements for an item that will receive a demon. For starters, it must be a masterwork item, whether it is a weapon, a suit or armour or a simple set of thieves' tools. The item must also be prepared to receive the demon in a special ritual, with materials that cost 2,500gp per CR of the demon and lasts one day per 1,000gp of the combined cost of the ritual components and the masterwork item. The item must not be previously enchanted, as the magic leaves no 'room' inside the item for the demon to be trapped. The preparation ritual requires that



the caster knows the adequate item creation feat: Craft Magic Arms and Armour, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, and so on.

After the control check is successful or the demon fails its saving throw against a *seal* spell, it is bound inside the item. The caster may then choose which of its abilities will be expressed as part of the item's enchantment. A demonologist may select a number of properties equal to half its prestige class level, while a regular caster using *seal* can select as many as half his Intelligence modifier, maximum of three. The demon can do nothing to prevent the abuse of its power and may only express its infinite anger through the slightly disturbing aura that surround all demon-bound items, although it has no other effect than to make non-evil wielders a little uncomfortable.

Each year thereafter, the demon may try to break free depending on the method of its binding; a demonologist must make a control check using his demonologist level at the time of the binding (not his current level), or the demon can try another saving throw against the *seal* effect, with its normal +6 bonus and using the original DC of the spell used to imprison it, even if the caster increased his key ability modifier. Fortunately for such a caster, the DC bonus from the Heighten Spell feat applies in the yearly saving throws' DC as well. Should the demon break free, it will wreak havoc and destruction to everything and everyone around the item, which is destroyed in the process.

Demonic Armour: A demon can only be bound in metal armour, as any other material is simply too weak to contain it. The first property to be applied to the armour must always be its enhancement bonus, which is equal to the demon's CR divided by three (rounding down) with a minimum of +1 and a maximum of +5. Other properties come from the demon's feats, immunities, resistances and defensive special qualities and spell-like abilities. Damage Reduction taken from the demon counts as one property for each 10 points and it must be purchased in full (DR 20 would require two properties or none at all). The Games Master is the final arbiter on what constitutes a defensive quality or feat and how it expresses in the demonic item.

Demonic Weapons: Only weapons made mostly of metal will be able to contain the demon. Like armour, the first property must be its enhancement



bonus, calculated in the same way (CR / 3, round down). Also similar to demonic armour, weapons may express offensive properties the demon has, with the maximum number depending on demonologist level or Intelligence modifier as explained above and all of them subject to the Games Master's approval. At the caster's option, the weapon can be made to glow as a normal magic weapon. The weapon may also be intelligent at the cost of one property, allowing the demon to express its full personality, communicating with the weapon's wielder through the demon's telepathy. Contests of will are common for intelligent demonic weapons, which is a reason not many demon binders opt for this.

Demonic Rings: The only way a demon can be used in a ring is as a summoning focus. The demon resides inside the ring until it is summoned by the wielder, who must then make a control check so that the demon does not break free every time it springs forth from the ring. The bound demon must obey an instruction of up to nine words and remains outside

‘Traitor knight! Traitor light!’ The princess screams at me. We were left alone by my request. She is shackled to the bed posts, the chains blessed with holy water and the bed surrounded by a magical containment circle. I can exorcise the demon inside my niece without a problem, but I want to find out how it found its way inside her.

‘You will have to be more ingenious than that, demon.’ I say, sitting well away from the bed and inside a circle of protection of my own. ‘Dull insults will do you no good. Not that you stand a chance against me.’

‘Cocky, are you not?’ Her smile almost breaks the muscles of her face with its tautness. I have to be careful; I do want my niece back as well...

the ring for an hour. A demonic ring’s owner can call upon the demon once per day per demonologist level or regular caster level if using *seal*. The control check for ring bearers who are not the demon’s binders are made as normal, taking the bearer’s Charisma modifier and caster level (if any) into account.

Demonic Rods: Rods contain the essence of the demon’s physical self so that a wielder can ‘borrow’ them for a while. The properties of a demonic rod can be each of the bound demon’s ability scores, its hit point total or its Armour Class. As a standard action, a demonic rod’s wielder may replace one of his attributes with the corresponding one from the rod. The substitution lasts for ten rounds and the normal scores return to the wielder once the effect ends. Damage incurred from the demonic hit points is not carried to the wielder’s own, but the demon must be given time to regenerate them at the normal rate. The danger of using a demonic rod is that, each time the demon’s attributes are called upon, the caster must make a Will save as if he were the target of a *magic jar* spell cast by the demon as a caster of its HD or at the same caster level that it uses for its spell-like abilities. If the demon succeeds in possessing the wielder, his soul is now trapped in the rod, although he is entitled to a new saving throw every 24 hours to regain control of the body, whether the demon (riding the wielder’s body, of course) is in possession of the rod or not. Any *exorcism* spell targeting the rod will free the soul instantly and expel the demon from the host, although the demon will be free.

Demonic Staves and Wands: These items work basically in the same way. The caster can use any of the demon’s spell-like abilities as properties for the staff or wand, with the maximum allowed by a demonologist’s level or a regular caster’s Intelligence modifier. Staves can accommodate as many properties as the caster can muster to include, but wands can only fit one, regardless of how many

properties the caster can introduce in a demon-bound item. Staves and wands have 50 charges upon the demon’s binding and may be recharged normally. If a staff or wand reaches 0 charges, the demon is instantly sent back to the Abyss, making them the safest items to bind a demon to.

Demonic Wondrous Items: Because of the total flexibility of wondrous items, it is inherently more costly to make them and they yield fewer results. The cost for the ritual components to prepare a wondrous item are double normal (5,000gp per demon’s CR) and they only fit half the number of properties the caster can handle (one quarter a demonologist’s level or half a regular caster’s Intelligence modifier, maximum of 3). As demonic properties, the caster can use the demon’s spell-like abilities, special qualities, feats or skill bonuses, which can be called upon as a standard action, lasting one round. The Games Master is the final arbiter on what constitutes an adequate property and how it expresses in the demonic item.

Constructs: Golems use an imprisoned earth elemental, while other constructs use their builder’s raw life energy to power their artificial life. A demon may be used to replace for any of these requisites. The demon replaces a golem’s magic immunity with its own energy immunities and resistances, but its Intelligence replaces the golem’s non-ability and the demon’s bonus hit points from Constitution are added to the golem body’s hit points, although it does not gain a Constitution score. The caster may introduce up to two demonic properties in addition to the golem’s normal properties or eschew one of the golem’s qualities to make space for another demonic property. The caster is still limited by the maximum number of properties he can coax from the demon as normal. For other constructs such as shield guardians, the caster can enchant it just like any other wondrous item, using the demon’s spell-like abilities to grant the construct its powers. The construct’s ability scores correspond to the construct type except



for Intelligence, as described above. The demonic construct is aware of what happens and can fight accordingly, but it must obey its builder's orders as any normal construct would. Should the construct be destroyed, the demon is sent immediately back to the Abyss and so it will look for opponents to destroy it at every possible chance. Also at the expense of two properties, the caster may use the fiend's demonic essence as a substitute for material component costs as explained in the Methods of Warfare chapter, but it must leave the demon with at least one power level.

ROLEPLAYING POSSESSION

One of the most frightening powers of demonkind is their ability to invade other creature's bodies and take over. Fortunately, this ability is not too common amongst the fiends, but those who know it are the ones powerful enough to pose a major threat because of its use. Whether having the Possessor feat, access to the *magic jar* spell or because they were invited by the foolish actions of an invoker, possessing demons find themselves with a wonderful new toy in the form of their host's body and waste no time in indulging their destructive natures.

The goals of a possessing demons are as varied as the fiend's temperament. The violent ones will want to cause immediate harm to their surroundings, possibly bringing death to their host by attracting the attention of the authorities to stop its rampage. Other demons will see possession as an invaluable chance to further their goals of widespread corruption. They know that their time in the Material Plane is not a given and squeeze as many activities as they can in a single day.

While wearing the host's skin, demons can partake in the worst of conduct so that, when they are forced out or willingly return control, the host will find himself in situations that go from the embarrassing for demons without much imagination, to the increasingly lethal. Demons who possess a host through spells or summoning mistakes are simply disguised as the victim and must be careful if they encounter the host's friends and family, unless they like disturbing and tipping others off about its presence. Demons who invade others through the Possessor feat can make a Will save, opposed by the host's own Will save and, if successful can access the host's memories for names, speech patterns, mannerisms and birthday dates, gaining a +10 to Disguise, Bluff and other checks to fool people into believing that there is nothing wrong.

The demon can use all of its abilities while possessing a host but it cannot use the host's supernatural and spell-like abilities, although it can know which abilities they were and mimic them if it can. The demon and the host's personality are in contact with each other while the demon is in control, although the host's voice cannot be heard by a *detect thoughts* spell; only the resident demon's. The Games Master may allow a character eavesdropping telepathically inside the possessed mind to make Sense Motive check, opposed by the demon's Bluff check to realise that the mental voice is not the host's. Success by five points or more should confirm any suspicion that the possessed character is not himself, although it may not reveal why; success by 10 points of more reveals that it is a demon holding the reins.

A demon who wishes to spend more time in the body without external interference will adhere to what it knows of the host's personality, even going to the extreme of performing random acts of kindness if that is what others would expect the host to do. In the meanwhile, it will try to further its plans. Small-minded demons will limit themselves to causing strife among the host's friends, but those who like to think big will examine the host's network of contacts and acquaintances and try to pull strings to its advantage. Possessing demons will take this chance to start a cult, using their own power to summon another demon or contact a mortal agent to take care of things when it has to go back to the Abyss through its own will or through exorcism.

Most demons will devote some time during possession to experiencing all sort of carnal pleasures, leaving the host's body with a collection of interesting scars. One of the most insidious tortures a possessing demon can inflict on a host is to leave parting gifts such as addictions and diseases, not to mention trouble with the law for crimes committed while under the demon's control. Even if it is quite possible, the 'devil made me do it' defence still holds little water with local authorities.

The demons from the Brood of Nuyul have a special ability called 'skinriding' which allows them to possess a host without him actually realising that he has a demonic tenant in his body. Were the nuyul'ka more numerous and actually lucid, this ability would make them infinitely dangerous, but at the moment there are very few such demons in the entire Material Plane and they have no co-ordination in their machinations, merely riding hosts for the pure selfish pleasure of ruining lives.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

A party only encounters demons when they are well into their adventuring careers, as even the most wretched demon has a few powers in store that could spell real trouble for inexperienced adventurers, not to mention their magical protection. However, demonic influence can be encountered at any character level as the fiends' mortal agents and hybrid offspring can meet head to head with the party, until the heroes grow into sufficient power to challenge their abyssal masters head on. The following are ideas for stories and adventures that a Games Master may employ in his games, using several aspects of demons' characteristics and society to make for memorable encounters, showing characters the face of the evil they oppose.

The Merchant's Daughter

An up-and-coming merchant has allowed his daughter to work with him, although he would prefer she stayed home and wait for an engagement. The girl is cunning and a shrewd businesswoman in her own right, excelling in all areas of her father's trade. The characters meet her as they are buying supplies and equipment in one of a small city's general stores and she shows a charming demeanour and a ruthless business sense as she haggles with them and tries to sell to them things they do not even need.

If they buy anything from her, the characters are soon approached by a beggar telling them that they have just been swindled, that the merchandise is stolen and that the girl is quite evil. The beggar's assertions seem validated as they hear rumours in the market, the inn and somewhere else that the merchant's business is doing unusually well and that his daughter is not to be trusted. The characters find nothing suspicious if they decide to investigate but things escalate as a series of accidents befall other merchants, and a mob suddenly gets the idea that the girl is a witch in league with demons. The

characters must dig deeper and discover that a demon is actually involved, but it is a possessor demon that is jumping from commoner to commoner, instigating chaos and distrust and bolstering the envy other merchants harbour for the girl's success, who is not so evil as she is pragmatic and aggressive in her dealings. The characters must try to defuse the situation to avoid anyone getting hurt, uncover the demon and, if they can, expel it.

Planar Shipwreck

The characters should either procure a means of travelling the planes or be fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to find passage with a planes-traversing caravan. In the middle of the trip, they are beset by Astral bandits and summarily dropped into an unknown gate as the magic carrying them fails. They find themselves in unfamiliar territory and must find a way to discover where they are. They soon find out that they have been stranded in the Wasteland of Gates, topmost layer of the Abyss, and must tread with utmost care if they want to find their way back home.



The way is open for them to try any avenue of escape. Demons can recognise their predicament and either try to enslave them or sell them information about a gate that leads to the Material Plane that accepts only Material beings, about rumours of an artefact that allows planar travel or even directions to the nearest port where demonships sail the planes.

The Forgotten Gate

The characters arrive at a town after an adventure so they can rest and restock their supplies, only to find the town in an uproar. It is no secret that some local boys discovered a new section in the abandoned mines near the town. If they ask, characters receive all sorts of conflicting information, but one thing remains constant: several people began having recurrent nightmares the same day that the boys returned to town, bragging about their discovery.

Anyone who has entered the new section has come out of the mine shivering, unable to go further inside than a couple of metres. The local cleric, a relatively inexperienced man, is urging the townsfolk to close the mine for good, but several others are for expanding the entrance so that it is easier to go in. Many people hope that there will be a new vein in the dried-up mine to bring some wealth to the town, and the clashing opinions threaten to escalate. If they do not offer it themselves, the characters are approached by the town's major and asks for their help in exploring the mine.

The characters make their way without a problem and soon find themselves in tunnels of hewn stone and attacked by strangely ferocious creatures. If they have the means, they identify all the rats and insects as evil in nature. What lies at the bottom of the new section is a forgotten planar gate, inactive at the moment but still seeping its evil power so that fiendish vermin can slip through from time to time. The characters must decide what to do with the gate and how to defend the town from the hordes of demonic rats and spiders that the new section has freed into the countryside.

Labour Law

As the characters travel near or through a wealthy land, they see a small winged figure flying like mad towards them. When it reaches them, the quasit begins speaking and screaming incoherently but not acting hostile against them. Even when it is speaking Common, the little demon is mostly incoherent,

babbling something about 'the factory.' Before the quasit can elaborate, a group of knights arrive and attack the demon. They urge the characters to move on and forget what they saw. The characters may comply or they may follow the knights; either way, they arrive at a small city that is totally under control of a council of guilds. The entire place gives off an uneasy feeling and that is because the guilds are employing bound demons to work in their workshop, their leaders learning the secrets of soulforging and demonic essence manipulation.

The goods available at stores around the city are all 75% off their standard prices, but they reek of evil so much that even untrained characters can sense its traces. The goods are even cheaper to produce and the guild government is filling its coffers, driving other artisans out of business. The characters will soon discover there is a 'factory' underneath the largest mansion in the city, where demonic artisans are summoned and bound, forced to work. Such a large collection of fiends is dangerous, bound or not, especially when their archdemon master in the Abyss allowed this to happen and is biding its time until the guilds become so corrupted as to provide it with a steady stream of souls.

Wizard's Challenge

Tales abound of a wizard bandit has been terrorising the countryside. All who tried to oppose him met untimely ends. Even mercenary wizards have been unable to stop him and so the heroes are tasked to find and stop him once and for all.

The bandit is a novice demonologist who botched a summoning ritual, but the demon was crafty enough to feign it had been successfully controlled and devised a spell that allows it to remain in the Material Plane for an indefinite time, as long as the wizard gives the 'order'. The wizard's powers are bolstered by the demon, who may even enter the fray to defend the wizard, but only because he is its anchor to the Material Plane. When the characters realise the true source of the bandit's power, they can act accordingly.

Raising an Army

The forces of two kingdoms are very evenly matched and a war between them has gone on for years, lands and fortifications exchanging hands several times throughout the conflict. Rumour spreads about an ancient army sleeping dormant at the centre of a

forbidding marsh, ready to awaken and obey the person who freed them. The race starts, with both kingdoms and a few third parties dispatching their most trusted servants to raise this army and gain victory for their side.

What the rumour did not say is that the army is actually a demonic horde complete with its archdemon general, sealed away by an ancient hero to protect the land. The demons will spill out from the marshland and kill everything in their path. Both kingdoms must co-operate to defend their people against the fiends while heroes find a way to seal the army again.

The Piece of the Puzzle

A nobleman hires the characters as additional security, as he has endured a series of burglary attempts that keep getting more desperate each night. The nobleman is a renowned collection of arcane lore, and offers the party's wizard access to his library as part of the payment. The party's scholarly characters (a wizard, bard, cleric or anyone else with decent ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or (the planes) qualifies) can appreciate that the nobleman has indeed many rare tomes that would be worth stealing several times over. This, however, does not explain the stubbornness and increasing power of the burglars that each night try to break into the manor.

The real treasure in the nobleman's collection is an ancient scroll tucked away amongst text of questionable value. The scroll is the last part of a summoning incantation that contains an archdemon's True Name, as well as a few Greater Names of its demonic lieutenants. There is no single burglar but many, from the archdemon's cultists to a demonologist and an overzealous paladin order. The characters can go to the heart of the matter and ask the nobleman about his recent acquisitions and examine them or try to capture one of the burglars for interrogation. After figuring out the truth, they must decide what to do with the scroll.

War by Proxy

There is a war going on throughout the streets of several cities, town and villages in a kingdom. The thieves' and assassins' guilds have been enemies for as long as they can remember, but they have kept their mutual dislike in check. A series of unexplained murders and robberies have pitted the two guilds against each other, with hostilities

escalating so that they extend to every settlement where the two have chapter houses.

The characters can get involved in the guild war by having a Non-Player Character of their acquaintance killed or either guild contacting them to hire their services. The war is the work of a Demon Lord and its Devil Prince nemesis, each of them controlling one of the guilds and fighting by proxy. The murders and robberies have removed key influences for each side and the attacks are getting bolder and causing more collateral damage. The kingdom is virtually hostage to the warring factions until they are purged. Possibly, the characters can be in a position to help.

Repentance

A beautiful woman approaches the characters and begs them to help her. In private, she reveals her true nature as a succubus but tells the characters that she wishes to atone for her sins, that she is repentant of all the suffering she has caused and wants to help the characters along in their current task as part of a quest to gain redemption. At all times she displays regret and keeps talking about how completing her quest will turn her into a Celestial and does her best to help the characters in their adventures.

Any character who knows about demons should know that they are irredeemable and this is true for the succubus as well. She merely uses a tactic different than seduction to corrupt her targets, offering them her help to get them to 'cut corners' and making exceptions in their morality. As an immortal fiend, the succubus is patient and can tag along for quite a while, nudging the adventurers towards crossing their own moral boundaries until they become corrupted without knowing how they got there.

The Gentlemen's Cult

As they make their names as adventurers, the characters are invited to join a semi-secret society of aristocrats, adventurers and scholars who gather to exchange tales and advice and to spend a good time in the company of peers. This club offers great advantages to members, one of which is to act as a sort of adventurer's guild, gathering tales of conflict and interesting mysteries that its members are free to follow up to sate their thirst for excitement.

In reality, the society is but the lowest echelon of a powerful arcane cult. The cult uses the resources





of its members to fund its unholy activities, and the adventurers are nothing more than cannon fodder, the tales of adventures that they hear being only the assignments that the cult wants to get others to do in a complex web of intersecting goals and objectives that will increase the cult's influence. A suspect mission the characters undertake reveals the truth behind the society, and they must convince fellow members about the truth, but make sure they are revealing their discovery to the right persons, not to an overseer from the real cult or a member who actually enjoys serving evil.

Infestation

The court wizard recently botched a summoning in his laboratory and now the castle is overrun with fiendish creatures of all rankings. The characters arrive just in time to help the guard evacuate. The court wizard says that it should be safe to return to the castle after an hour, when all the demons will return to the Abyss and none can get out from

the wards he placed around the castle. The problem is that there are people still trapped inside, and that a couple of stronger demons have their own ideas about the duration of their stay.

Lost Souls

In a classic Orphic quest; the characters must descend into the Abyss to find the soul of someone who died recently, with the circumstances of death being somewhat suspect. If the characters try to resurrect the deceased through normal magical means, they find that the souls cannot return as it is a prisoner in a certain abyssal layer. The characters must find a way to travel to the Abyss and make their way to the location where the souls is imprisoned. Upon its liberation, the soul is whisked away by the resurrection magic, but the characters must find their way back on their own and preferably find out why the person was killed, how it ended up in the Abyss if the person was not evil and why it was captured so soon, rather than suffering the fate of the rest of damned souls.

The Rise of Shadows

The ruler of a small realm dies and his heir ascends to the throne. The characters are in the land for the coronation and some of their adventures happen there, so that they start noticing the increasing atmosphere of dread pervading the land.

The new king is a half-demon that the king conceived with a Jar'taska'ka mistress and now the shadow demons are taking the land for themselves. In time, the entire kingdom will come a gate into the Plane of Shadows, its inhabitants sacrificed of the altar of the Demon Lady Iyaviht and returned as all sorts of Jar'taska'ka. In the meanwhile, all sort of strange occurrences are plaguing the subjects of the new king: people's shadows are disappearing only to return the next night with their owners claiming they are alive (and going insane soon after), shadows appear on the wrong side of the light, rooms get darker regardless of how many lamps and candles are lit and animals made of pure shadow are sighted.

The characters must discover the origin of this scourge and prevent the new king's goals of making the kingdom a second home to the Jar'taska'ka.

TWILIGHT'S HAVEN

Caljorn is a small city that grew from a mining town to a small commerce centre, balancing accessibility and resources with its relative isolation to create a haven for travellers who wish to escape attention from the world at large. Authorities have collaborated with the criminal guilds to keep the city in reasonable order, discouraging the settling of major bandit strongholds or smuggler outposts to avoid the capital's eye and remain as a relatively neutral place where all sorts of people can do business.

Mining is still one of the main activities of the common populace, who have been lucky to discover a new rich mine when the one that gave rise to the original village dried up. The city authorities kept the old mine closed and resisted several attempts from merchant and criminal guilds to buy it, keeping with its policy of avoiding attention. A few years ago, the authorities buckled under the offer of Hearn Allasis, a retired adventurer who brought with him the savings from a life of battling foul monsters and the promise that he was only interested in the small fort surrounding the mine, which he would make into a centre for the arts and for the entertainment of the citizens of Caljorn, and that the tunnels themselves would be used for storing the rare wines, liquors and foodstuff he intended to import from the contacts he had made in life.

And so was born Twilight's Haven, a mix of tavern, art house, bardic school and inn that became a great success with the entire population of the city, as well as with weary travellers and traders. Hearn sponsors the top artists in the land and offers the best in food and drink, and everyone comes out of his holding feeling like he had dreamed a wonderful dream.

The problem lies in that Hearn is the head priest of a demonic cult devoted to Iyaviht the Dark Whisper, the Demon Lady of the Jar'taska Brood, (see the Creatures of the Abyss chapter). Twilight's Haven is the cult's headquarters, the inn and lounge serving as their front and main source of sacrifices and new recruits, and the tunnels are their profane laboratories, prisons and, at the bottom, their temple.

UNLIKELY ALLY

Upon their arrival to Caljorn, the characters receive a warning from a traveller arriving roughly at the same time as they. He cautions them to avoid Twilight's Haven and stay at one of the more modest inns near Caljorn's marketplace.

If the characters strike a conversation, the stranger introduces himself as Illar Volg, an itinerant wizard. Paranoid characters with access to *detect evil* or similar effects discover the stench of evil coming from the wizard, for he is really a teradrozu, a Tanar'ka demon that tempts mortals with knowledge instead of pleasure. The demon's objective is to pique the characters' curiosity regarding Twilight's Haven, for it knows that it is a stronghold of the jar'taska'ka and wants to demolish it to score points with its own masters.

'Illar' speaks of rumours about Twilight's Haven he has heard in his travels, about how shadows look like they are watching the patrons, or how some performances have a sinister undercurrent. If his words do not attract the character's attention, they hear about a series of disappearances, which is nothing too strange given the activity of the underground element of society in Caljorn, but several rumours also point out Twilight's Haven.

TWILIGHT'S HAVEN

The place is an old fort from the time that the mine was quite a way from the houses. It provided miners with protection and a place to eat and sleep, aside from serving as the home of the minor noble in charge of the land. The structure remains largely intact so it still looks like a fortification with gaudy banners and loud music. Several buildings were fitted as guest rooms and the central keep serves as the tavern and has the more expensive rooms. The old entrances to the mines were closed and a new one built to make the entire complex akin to a cellar for the kitchen. It is beyond the dark corridors that the shadow cult conduct their real business.

1. Courtyard

The courtyard is the first thing anyone sees from Twilight's Haven. The walls are stone and maintain the original battlements, generally giving the impression that the inn could repel a siege if the staff



and patrons took arms to defend it. The exterior doors are sturdy oak, reinforced with iron bars. The courtyard is a nicely maintained garden with a dirt road angling east towards the stables and north towards the main keep.

Two stone staircases on each side of the main doors climb towards the wall's battlements. No guards make rounds during the day, but during the night, two jar'ugr demons accompanied by two dark lanterns make hide in the darkest corners of the battlements (see *Creatures of the Abyss* for stats).

1A. Outdoors Stage

This simple wooden structures hosts a variety of outdoor spectacles that can go from puppet plays to acrobatics. There are eight rows of wooden benches and chairs facing the stage.

1B. Fountain

A small plaza with a simple fountain at its centre and flower beds all around. There are four benches around the plaza, one on each direction.

2. Stables

Patrons' horses are kept in here, cared for by **Tosanth** (male human Com3, N) the stablemaster and two stable boys, Menan (male human Com1, N) and Corin (male human Com1, N). Neither of them know about the truth of Twilight's Haven, but they find it odd that they are advised to carry a special charm around their necks. This charm is but a simple polished stone hanging from a cord, but anyone casting *detect magic*, *see invisibility* or *true seeing* will notice that there is a mark similar to that of an *arcane mark* spell. This mark tells any guardian jar'ugr demon to leave the wearer alone, although this is not apparent unless the characters have the time to cast *identify* on one of the charms.

3. Shed

This small shack is were stablemaster and stable boys live and keep the tools of their trade. There is nothing special about it.

4. Staff Quarters

The inn's staff sleep here. It is a simple house with a small kitchen, several bunk beds and a table. The lower level is were the male staffers live, while the upper level is reserved for females. **Karin** (female human Rog2, CE) is the chief of staff and makes

sure that the employees keep to their place. She is in part of the shadow cult and informs Hearam of everything that transpires amongst the employees so that proper resignations can be staged once a staffer begins to suspect of anything or causes trouble. Karin's secondary objective is to slowly corrupt employees for possible recruitment into the cult. As many aspirant performers arrive to Twilight's Haven to try their luck only to end up as waitresses and stage hands, these quarters are ripe with frustration and despairing dreams and Karin has been quite successful in her endeavours. About half of the staff is either a member of the cult or well on his or her way into becoming one.

5. Town House

This small manor is built as a suite for wealthy patrons, it has a large living room, a study and two rooms. It also comes with a private bath. There are two servants assigned to this house at all times, one male and one female (Com1/Rog1, NE) and both of them cultists. They are both tasked to spy on the guests and, if possible, seduce them to coax secrets out of them or suggest that the inn has more to offer than what can be found on the price list.

6. Backstage

Half storage and half dressing room, this structure is adjacent to the stage in Area 7. Different acting troupes store their props and wardrobe in this room, which has two folding screens to separate the males from the female performers as they change. **Merinia** (female half-elf, Brd5, CE) oversees the workings of the actors and musicians that perform in Twilight's Haven. She, however, is not herself all the time, but plays the host to **Kass'arje** (heratru jar'taska'ka, see *Creatures of the Abyss*), the demon who really runs the show, literally. Kass'arje assigns order of performance to the different artists in a way to cause the most aggravation to their fragile or overblown egos. Because of this, backstage is heavy with plotting and petty intrigue, with performers wishing to gain Merinia's favour so that they get more stage time. A hole on the northeast corner leads to the 'secret' passage that leads below the stage in Area 7.

7. Stage Room

This is where the best performances take place. The room has several tables where patrons sit and enjoy the show while they are served the best wines and food in Twilight's Haven's storerooms. The stage

area is separated by two curtains of fine linen, and the room was adjusted by Heamas himself in order to have good acoustics. A trapdoor at the centre of the stage opens to a corridor below that leads to Area 6, used for cheap magic tricks or as a tool in a dramatic play. The stage room can be accessed both from the courtyard and from the central keep. Heamas tore down part of the keep's wall to join the two structures together.

8. Main Keep/Tavern

The central structure saw the most reconditioning in its transformation from keep to inn. The bottom floor is a large hall full of tables and chairs, and the walls are lined with booths that offer greater privacy. The centre of the hall is cleared for musical performances and impromptu dances. Part of the west wall was torn down to connect with the stage room in Area 7. The patrons come from all walks of life and all social classes from Caljorn, mingling together in a false spirit of comradeship. Heamas sometimes performs in this area, mixing talent with magic to provide memorable performances, which always carry a slight suggestion of corruption.

Patrons can order any kind of food and drink but, regardless of its quality it is tainted with shadow-stuff. The flavour is imperceptible, having more a metaphysical than a sensory effect. Anyone drinking from Twilight's Haven's supplies must make a Fortitude save (DC 16) once per night of consumption. Characters who fail this save are more susceptible to shadow magic, suffering a -2 circumstance penalty to saving throws against spells with the shadow descriptor and from the shadow subschool of Illusion. This effect lasts for two days, and is cumulative with failed saves for subsequent nights.

There are six shadelings (see *Creatures of the Abyss*) hiding invisibly in this area at all times, spying on the patrons. There is a 25% chance per night that a shadeling grows impatient and uses its baneful phase attack with a patron, only to disappear into the shadows. If violence erupts, the shadelings will attack the troublemakers unless ordered not to by **Gillan** (male human Exp2/Sor3, CE), a lieutenant of the shadow cult who can control the shadelings in this area.

There are 1d6+3 waitresses at all times in the room, all of them pretty. Half of them are prostitutes for

the knowing patron who knows what to ask for when ordering.

A door at the north wall leads to the kitchen and storage areas, with a second door leading back to the area behind the bar. Two stairways lead to the central keep's upper levels.

9. Kitchen

The only part of the original keep that retains its original function, the kitchen is large enough to cook for a full hall, with a temporary storage area for immediate ingredients and a winding staircase leading down to the part of the mines that serve as a storage area. Although this is one of the accesses that cultists use to reach their temple, they have to travel further.

10. Heamas' Office

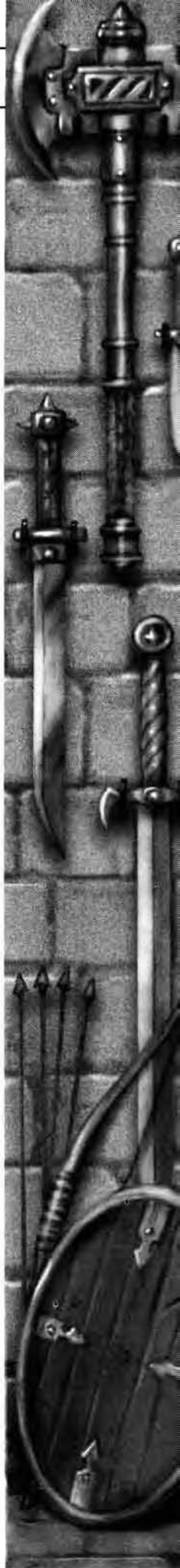
Hemas keeps his administrative office in this side building. People believe that he hides his treasure behind a secret door in the office and thus it has been the target of many burglary attempts, none of them successful. The secret door does exist (Search DC 20), but it leads to a trap and, if this mechanical defence does not stop a trespasser, the guarding jar'ugr certainly will. This is the true entrance to the temple and thus Hemas guards it carefully.

11. Second Floor

The second level of the keep was transformed to hold eight rooms of varying sizes and quality, guest stay here for several nights and Hemas has been forced to turn people away at some point, so he is thinking to expand. It is easy to find other guests coming in or out of their rooms at any point in the day as well as staff members taking food or cleaning the rooms. During the night two guardsmen make rounds, both of them part of the cult. They wear the same charm to prevent attacks from the guardian demons that come out at night. Each guard is accompanied by a dark lantern that alerts Hemas at the first sign of trouble.

12. Third Floor

This is an almost exact copy of the second floor, also with two guards stationed on each staircase and making rounds followed around by a dark lantern demon.



13. Terrace

The stairs climb up to open air, with the only structure being the bathhouses, one for males and the other for females. The rest of the roof has several tables and chairs scattered in random pattern, from which patrons can enjoy the view while they eat, waited upon by three employees who take turns in taking orders and running down to the kitchen. Access to the terrace is closed at night after certain hours, as there have been a couple of unfortunate incidents, with spurned lovers jumping down to the courtyard or drowning in the baths. Regardless of this warning the innkeeper gives all new arrivals, the doors are never actually locked unless Heamas and his closest followers are conducting a ritual that requires stars or another such unfortunate 'accident.'

THE UNDERGROUND LEVEL

Although connected to each other, the two parts that make up the underground level of Twilight's Haven are very different. The storage areas with easy access from the inn's kitchen are well-illuminated and hold little danger up to some point, while those that run from Heamas' office are pitch-black, trapped and patrolled by demons and shadow creatures. There are still leftovers from the time when these tunnels were a mine in the form of tracks and lamp holders, but most of it has been already removed.

1-5. Storage Rooms

Rooms 1 through 5 are innocent storage areas with nothing more sinister than maybe some overripe fruit. The staircase from the kitchen climbs down to Area 1, where there is also a well that takes water from the underground streams that flow from the lake in Area 14. Area 2 contains bottles of all sorts of wine in racks mounted on the walls. A discerning character could take some time to find rare and valuable vintages by making a Search check and multiplying the result by 5gp to determine the value of any one bottle he finds.

The corridors connecting these areas are relatively safe, although at night there is a 15% chance every 10 minutes to stumble upon a member of the cult. Roll 1d10 to determine the encounter:

d10	Encounter
1-4	1d6 human cultists
5-6	1d4 dark lantern or shadelings demons
7-8	1d2 jar'ugr demons
9	1d4 jar'ugr, 1d6 dark lanterns and 1d2 high-level human cultists
10	1d6 jar'ugr, 1d8 dark lanterns and 1d4 high-level human cultists, 1 heratru demon.

6. Storage and Dump

There is a door blocking passage. The lock is good (Open Lock DC 20) and the door thick. This room connects to the underground stream that runs from Area 14 and across several other points. The door is locked for good reason, as this is a dumping site for the dead bodies of sacrificial victims and makeshift dungeon. Prisoners are shackled to the wall with a good view of the pile or rotting flesh and limbs in a corner. The piecemeal corpses are kept as source material for bone powder and for necromantic uses. Remains deemed useless are dumped into the stream.

7. Flooded Passage

The tunnel's floor slopes down until it is submerged under waist-height water. A dark lantern demon casts its dark light over this passage to give the jar'ugr hiding at the bottom a better chance to escape notice.

8. Secret Entrance

This chamber connects to the staircase climbing down from Area 10 in the Twilight's Haven map. Four guards are permanently posted here as well as a dark lantern that allows them to see in the perpetual darkness that engulfs rooms from 8 through 15. Darkvision can penetrate magical darkness projected by the dark lantern as per the creature's description, but it will cast a *darkness* spell and allow only the guards to see in the magical darkness in the case of intruders.

9. Preparation Room

Cult members prepare for cult activities in this chamber. It has a number of robes and aprons hanging from pegs on the wall. A high-level cultist oversees the preparations and hands cult members the charm they need to avoid attack by the shadow guardians of the complex. Note that initiating

hostilities breaks the charm's effect. The priest in this room has a shadow mastiff (see *Core Rulebook III*) at his side.

10. Armoury

The cult's weapons are stored here in racks hanging from the ceiling and walls. There are mainly short swords and crossbows, but there are also eight longswords, and a soulsteel scythe. Along with the weapons, several instruments of torture are also part of the room's collection.

11. Sanctum

This is Heamas' personal sanctum and where he keeps the treasures he has accumulated through nefarious means. There is an elegant desk with a few sheets of paper and a dried up inkwell and 4 coffer. All of them are trapped.

Poison Needle Trap: CR 3; +8 ranged (1 plus wyvern poison: DC 17, 2d6 Con/2d6 Con); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20).

There is a second subtler trap that activates if all coffer are opened. This trap must be found and deactivated before the last coffer is opened.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 8; Gas save DC 18, 2d6 Con / unconsciousness; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25).

Treasure: Old masterpiece painting (2,000 gp); silver-plated steel longsword with jet jewel in hilt (900 gp); large well-done wool tapestry (400 gp); jewelled anklet (4,000 gp); solid gold idol (10 lb.) (900 gp); silver-plated steel longsword with jet jewel in hilt (300 gp); brass mug with jade inlays (200 gp); fire opal pendant on a fine gold chain (2,100 gp); Silver-plated steel longsword with jet jewel in hilt (100 gp); Finely wrought small gold bracelet (90 gp); 7,000 gp.

12. Docks

There are a couple of ferries latched to a post on the edge of the underground stream. Pulling a rope allows characters reach Area 13. There is a chill wind that seems to blow towards the south of the stream, where only utter darkness exists and not even magical light can penetrate. The ferry's rope extends towards that darkness, which is in reality a gate to the Plane of Shadows. The gate only opens

on the Material Plane side; crossing from the Plane of Shadows requires either magic or the stone charm that also keeps guardians from attacking the wearer.

13. Laboratory

This place reeks of death. Four mid-level and two high-level cultists are always about the premises, torturing victims for both information and entertainment. There is a 50% chance that a vengadi demon will be present, enjoying the show. There is also a 50% chance that there will be 1d4 'test subjects'; mid- or high-level cultists with the imbued or the jar'taska'ka half-demon templates.

14. Underground Lake

This cave is the largest and least worked area in the mines. The water coming from a hole high in the wall is pure, but it becomes fouled midway into the lake. Characters can see the remains of past victims at the bottom of the lake. If they peek too closely, they are attacked by two jar'ugr demons.

There is a small pier with another ferry to cross the lake. Even if the ferry is on the other side, it can easily be pulled.

15. Summoning Room

The cult put the most work in this room, adding columns and sculpting a dais from rough stone. As with all the restricted parts of the mine, there is absolutely no source of illumination, and there are 2d4 dark lanterns shedding darkness to booth. The cult gathers here to offer sacrifices to their demon patron, a heratru demon in high standing at the Shadow Fortress. A chipped piece of obsidian the size of a grown man's hands rest vertically atop a black rod embedded at the centre of a summoning circle. This crystal is magically charged and allows all the summoned demons to remain past the hour that Heamas' domain of the demonologist arts allows. Crushing this crystal will set the clock ticking for all the demons in Twilight's Haven: they will all return to the Abyss in one hour after the crystal breaks.

Hearam Allasis is here during a ceremony (the perfect moment for a party of adventurers to come in), surrounded by 6 high-, 8 mid- and 12 low-level cultists, as well as the aforementioned dark lanterns, 1d6+2 shadelings, 1d2 jar'ugr and either 1 vengadi or 1 heratru.



TWILIGHT'S HAVEN REFERENCE

For the demons in the service of the cult, see the appropriate entries in the *Creatures of the Abyss* chapter, under the Jar'taska heading. The following are the human cultists that the characters will find in their way to the temple.

Fearan Allasis

Male Human Brd9/Wiz1/Demonologist 4, CR 14; HD 9d6+9 (Bard), 1d4+1 (Wizard), 4d4+4 (Demonologist); hp 59; Init +2; Spd 30; AC 20; Atk -8 base melee, +10 base ranged; +12 (1d2+2+1d6, -2 Whip); -8 (1d4, Dagger, silvered); SA Basic Demonology, Siphon Demonic Essence, Bonus Name, Demonic Investiture (summon jar'ugr), bardic music; SQ bardic knowledge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16, Concentration +12, Disguise +13, Gather Information +12, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +10, Perform +17, Spellcraft +15, Spot +12; Combat Casting, Great Fortitude,

Heighten Spell, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjunction), Spell Mastery.

Possessions: +2 Whip: *Flaming Burst*; Dagger, silvered (2); +2 Chain shirt; ring of protection +2; ring of counterspells; amulet of the planes.

Spells Known (Brd 3/4/4/3): 0-level - *dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, resistance*; 1st-level - *mage armour, message, protection from evil, unseen servant*; 2nd-level - *detect thoughts, enthral, see invisibility, undetectable alignment*; 3rd-level - *bestow curse, magic circle against evil, phantom steed*.

Spells Known (Wiz 4/4/3/2): 0-level - *arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*; 1st-level - *alarm, chill touch, comprehend languages, expeditious retreat, identify, undetectable aura, ray of enfeeblement, true strike*; 2nd-level - *alter self, locate object, resist elements, hideous laughter*; 3rd-level - *blink, clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

Spells Prepared (Wiz 4/4/3/2): 0-level - *arcane mark, disrupt undead, prestidigitation, resistance*; 1st-level - *expeditious retreat, identify, undetectable aura, true strike*; 2nd-level - *alter self, resist elements, hideous laughter*; 3rd-level - *blink, clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

Dark Lantern familiar (see description in *Creatures of the Abyss*)

Low-Level Cultist
Human Commoner 1; CR 0; Medium Humanoid; HD (1d4)+3; hp 7; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30'; AC 9 (flatfooted 9, touch 9), Dagger +0 (1d4 19-20/x2) or Dagger (Thrown) -1 (1d4 19-20/x2); AL CE; Saves: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10



Skills and Feats: Bluff +1, Craft (any) +3, Listen +1, Profession (any) +4, Speak Language +1; Simple Weapon Proficiency, Toughness (1x)

Possessions: 1 Dagger,

Mid-Level Cultist

Human Rogue3; CR 3; Medium Humanoid; HD (3d6)+3; hp 17; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30'; AC 14 (flatfooted 12, touch 12), Dagger +2 (1d4 19-20/x2) or Dagger (Thrown) +4 (1d4 19-20/x2); SA: Evasion (Ex), Sneak Attack +2d6, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CE; Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Hide +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (The Planes) +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Spot +8; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Possessions: 1 Dagger, leather armour

High-Level Cultist

Male Human Wizard5; CR 5; Medium Humanoid; HD (5d4)+5; hp 17; Init +0 (+0 Dex); Spd Walk 30'; AC 10 (flatfooted 10, touch 10), Crossbow, Light +2 (1d8 19-20/x2) or Quarterstaff +2 (1d6 20/x2); SA: Demonic Investiture (demonic protection, DR 6/+1, SR 6); AL CE; Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 13

Skills and Feats: Bluff +3, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (Arcana) +9, Knowledge (The Planes) +9, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +7; Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Empower Spell, Spell Focus (Conjuration)

Possessions: 1 Light Crossbow, 1 Quarterstaff,

Spells Known (Wiz 4/4/3/2): 0-level - *arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison,*

disrupt undead, flare, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, resistance; 1st-level - *animate rope, charm person, colour spray, feather fall, hold portal, mage armour, magic missile, summon monster I;* 2nd-level - *blur, cat's grace, flaming sphere, invisibility;* 3rd-level - *fireball, flame arrow.*

Spells Prepared (Wiz 4/4/3/2): 0-level - *dancing lights, daze, detect magic, light;* 1st-level - *charm person, mage armour, magic missile, summon monster I;* 2nd-level - *blur, cat's grace, invisibility;* 3rd-level - *fireball, flame arrow.*

Guard

Human Warrior1; CR 1; Medium Humanoid; HD (1d8)+1; hp 9; Init +1 (+1 Dex); AC 15 (+1 Dex, chain shirt), Atk 1 halberd +2 melee (1d10+1) or 1 short sword +3 melee (1d6+1) or 1 lt. crossbow +2 ranged (1d8); AL: N; Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills and Feats: Balance +1, Bluff +1, Climb +1, Jump +1, Listen +2, Spot +3; Alertness, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: Chain shirt, light crossbow, halberd, short sword.



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

The brood of Tanar are not the only demons to inhabit the Abyss, adding to the seemingly endless number of demonic species to plague the universe. This chapter presents additional demons of all levels of powers, from the seemingly harmless jar'taska'ka shadelings, the cunning van'g'ka vengadi and the insane nuyul'ka diazhit to the rulers of each kind. Additional demonic templates help Games Master fill out their demonic encounters by diversifying the half-demons of the different demonic families, fleshing out the damned souls that arrive to the Abyss and creating the powerful archdemons, just below the Demon Lords.

THE TANAR

By far the most brutal and powerful brood in the Abyss, the members of the Tanar brood espouse closely the tenets of chaos and darkness, with a staggering variety of shapes and functions that allowed it to easily overpower the rest of the demon families with its ability to reproduce quickly. Of the Tanar, the balor reign supreme while the dretch stand at the lowest rung of the ladder of the demonic food chain.

Brood of Tanar Qualities

Immunities (Ex): Member's of Tanar's brood are immune to poison and electricity.

Resistances (Ex): Member's of Tanar's brood have cold, fire and acid resistance 20.

Telepathy (Su): Member's of Tanar's brood can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Chitterling (Tanar'ka) Small Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 2d8 (9 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft, climb 40 ft

AC: 17 (+1 Size, +2 Dex, +4 Misc.)

Attacks: 2 Claws (19-20/x3) +4 melee; 1 Bite -2 melee

Damage: Claws (19-20/x3) 1d8; Bite 1d4

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, chitter (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/cold iron or good, SR 10, Tanar'ka Qualities, Telepathy (Su)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 11

Skills: Climb +10, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Spot +4, Survival +4

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claws)

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organisation: Brood (2-5), pack (6-20)

CR: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Lawful Evil (Always)

Advancement: 3-4 HD (Small), 5-6 HD (Medium-size)

Greater demons use chitterlings as a hunting animal, unleashing them on their lands in the Abyss or across planar barriers to seek out their prey. The chitterlings, however, are not appropriate tools for an efficient hunt like the retrievers. Demons see it as using a dull spoon to dig out a victim's heart; it is hunting as a sport, making the pursued target suffer before the real attacking power comes in.

Chitterlings are disgusting little creatures that resemble a squatting barrel with spindly but powerful legs and arm-like forelimbs ending in long and barbed claws. Their front end is a wide mouth with razor-sharp teeth that they click together constantly, making the noise that gives them their name. They have two eyes on each side of its wide and neckless head with horizontal pupils. When a pack of chitterlings catches its prey, their masters must come and tear them away if they want the target in more or less one piece, as the little demons will start ripping a fallen target apart at the first opportunity.

Chitterlings understand but do not speak Abyssal and Common.

Combat

Chitterlings approach targets with some of them using their chittering ability while the rest advances, using their illusion abilities to seem a lot more than they really are and making their target miscalculate. They often lay in wait in cavern ceilings, dropping

in the middle of a group attacking with their wicked claws.

Spell-like abilities: At will – *darkness*, *jump*, *scare*; 1/day – *displacement*, *mirror image*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 2nd-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Chitter (Su): A group of chitterlings may gather to emit a disturbing chittering noise from which they are named. The noise causes strange and disorienting echoes that distort sound as more creatures join the chorus. For every chitterling above the first using the chitter ability, all creatures within 60 feet of any of the participating chitterlings suffer a -1 penalty on all Listen checks and, a 5% chance of failure to spellcasting that stacks with the chance of arcane spell failure from armour. In addition, creatures must make a Will save (DC 9 + number of chitterlings) if inside the area or immediately upon entering the area if the chitterlings continue their song. Failing the saving throw makes a character believe he is flanked and acts accordingly, granting one attacker he is fighting in melee (chosen by the character's player) the +2 bonus to attack and the opportunity for sneak attacks.

Telepathy (Su): Chitterlings can communicate telepathically with other chitterlings within 100 feet.

Skills: Chitterlings have a +8 racial bonus to Climb checks and +4 racial bonus to Jump checks.

Teradrozu (Tanar'ka) Large Outsider (Chaos, Evil)

HD: 8d8+8 (44 hp)

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

AC: 22 (-1 Size, +1 Dex, +8 *natural armour*, +4 *mage armour*)

Attacks: 2 Claws +7 melee

Damage: Claws 1d4 + 1d6 electricity

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, spells, shocking claws (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/cold iron or good, SR 20, Tanar'ka qualities, secret lore (Su), telepathy (Su)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +8

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +10, Bluff +11, Concentration +14,

Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +8, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +17, Spot +7

Feats: Combat Casting, Skill Focus (spellcraft), Still Spell

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary

CR: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-16 HD (Large), 17-24 HD (Huge)

Even when demonic rulers have little inclination to heed advice, a breed of demons is especially adequate for the task. Teradrozu are the viziers of demonic courts, inclined to magic beyond the natural prowess of demonkind. Their services as councillors and magical support are on par with their role as the tempters of mortals who seek knowledge for its own sake, tempting them with little snippets of wisdom and unknown facts, asking for higher and more grotesque prices that will slowly drive their victims mad, or as corrupt as they are.

These humanoid demons are extremely tall, measuring around nine feet but having the same build as a human, making them rather thin and emaciated under the rich robes they use to cover themselves. Their fingers are unnaturally long and spindly, and always have little arcs of electricity coursing between them. Their faces have taut skin pulled hard into an angular skull with a long cranium extending backwards. Their eyes are as shards of obsidian sunken deep as if they had spent entire nights in study. Their lipless mouths seldom open, as their preferred mode of communication is telepathy.

Teradrozu speak Abyssal, Infernal, Celestial, Common, Sylvan, Draconic and Undercommon.

Combat

Teradrozu are wizards by vocation, so they let loose with spells before they ever let anyone get close to them. They are keen to use Conjuraton spells to summon lesser allies to delay opponents. Only when they have no options left do they attack with their claws which naturally crackle with arcane energy.

Secret Lore (Su): In addition to their normal stores of knowledge, the teradrozu may enter a brief trance lasting five minutes to obtain the answer to almost



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

any question. This ability works like *legend lore* as if the question's subject was at hand, and like *analyse dweomer* without the fatigue. Both versions of this ability work as the spells with the same name as cast by a 12th level wizard.

Shocking Claws (Su): In addition to normal damage, a teradrozu's claws deal 1d6 points of electrical damage. If the teradrozu scores a critical hit, its claws release a ferocious burst of electricity for +1d10 of damage in addition to the double damage from the claws and the normal electrical effect.

Spells: A teradrozu prepares and casts spells as a 6th level wizard. Spells commonly prepared (Wiz 4/5/4/3): 0 – *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *ray of frost* x2; 1st – *mage armour*, *protection from good*, *protection from law*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *see invisibility*; 2nd – *blur*, *misdirection*, *invisibility*; 3rd – *fireball* x2, *summon monster III*. Once per week, the teradrozu may use *plane shift* on itself only.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *alter self*, *darkness*, *cause fear*, *gaseous form*, *invisibility* (self only); 3/day – *dispel magic*; 1/day – *ethereal jaunt*, *commune*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 8th-level wizard (save DC 15 + spell level).

Telepathy (Su): Teradrozu can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Predaska (Tanar'ka) Large Outsider (Chaos, Evil)

HD: 6d8+18 (45 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft

AC: 24 (-1 Size, +3 Dex, +12 natural armour)

Attacks: 2 Claws +9 melee; 4 stings +7 melee

Damage: Claws 1d6+4; stings 1d4 + poison

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 10 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, poison (Ex), rend (Ex), paralyzing ray (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/cold iron or good, SR 15, Tanar'ka qualities, blindsight (Ex), scent (Ex), telepathy (Su)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +7

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 11

Skills: Balance +7, Climb +9, Hide +10, Jump +8,

Listen +11, Spot +11, Survival +12

Feats: Track, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair (2) or pack (5-20)

CR: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7-12 HD (Large), 13-18 HD (Huge)

When the greater demons hunt for sport, they use chitterlings, but when they hunt for real, they use the predaskas. These demons are cruel and brutal, driven by a relentless will and desire to crush and rend their prey into tiny bits. They prefer to hunt alone when no greater demon is pushing them into service, and they have been known to ambush bigger fiends just for the sheer fun of it. Many lords have been forced to make an example by dismembering a predaska that steps out of bounds, but often the rulers of demonkind are content to let these beasts run loose and keep their minions on their toes.

Predaskas resemble very large greyhounds with purplish skin with several darker scabs and pustules. Their heads are triangular and ending in a bird-like beak and ringed with three rows of teeth, with the top being completely smooth and eyeless. On their backs and above their forelegs, predaskas have four insect-like arms ending in barbed stings that drip poison. The hunting demons use these additional limbs for movement as well as for attack.

Predaskas understand Common and Abyssal, but seldom speak it.

Combat

Predaskas charge savagely into combat, they try to use their paralyzing ray to immobilise the toughest-looking target in a group and later savaging the others with a combination of bite and stings. They do not trust their poison to do their work for them.

Blindsight (Ex): Predaskas have the extraordinary ability to use combine an acute sense of touch that feels the vibrations in the air for 60 feet around with their detecting spell-like abilities, enabling them to 'see' effectively without vision. This ability makes invisibility and darkness (even magical darkness) irrelevant to the demon (though it still cannot see ethereal creatures). Blindsight never allows the predaska to distinguish colour or visual contrast. Predaskas can avoid gaze attacks and are immune to

blinding attacks.

Poison (Ex): Sting, Fortitude save (DC 15); initial damage 1d6 Dexterity, secondary damage paralysis for 1d4x10 minutes. A target that suffers the damage is immune to additional dosages for one day.

Rend (Ex): A predaska that hits with two sting attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional +1d6 points damage, plus another +1d6 for each extra sting that hit after the second.

Paralysing Ray (Su): If the predaska foregoes all sting attacks in one round, it can click them together and produce a ray with a range increment of 60 feet. It is considered a ranged touch attack. A target hit by the ray must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be paralysed as if under the effects of a *hold monster* spell.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a predaska can attempt to summon 2d4 chitterlings or 1d4 predaskas with a 35% chance of success.

Spell-like Abilities: At will – *locate person, darkness, detect magic, detect good, detect thoughts, detect law*; 3/day – *teleport without error* (self only); 1/day – *ethereal jaunt, commune*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Telepathy (Su): Predaskas can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Glodretch (Tanar'ka)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 10d8+50 (95 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft

AC: 23 (-2 Size, +15 natural armour)

Attacks: 4 Slams +15 melee

Damage: Slams 2d6+7 and splash damage

Space/Reach: 15 ft x 15 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, nauseating presence (Ex), splash damage (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/good, SR 10, Tanar'ka qualities, thick-headed (Ex)

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +9

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 9, Con 20, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +12, Intimidate +10, Jump +17, Listen +15, Spot +15, Survival +5

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or pair.

CR: 11

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 11-20 HD (Huge), 21-30 HD (Gargantuan)

These terribly dumb and slow demons are the brood of Tanar's heavy assault troop as they can deliver great damage to their enemies with their four massive arms and the innumerable oozing sores along its skin. A glodretch leads a very simple existence of grabbing anything scuttling around its feet and eating it promptly, except when such a meal defends itself, which is when the glodretch flattens it before resuming its meal.

Glodretch resemble the meagre dretch in that they are squat and fat-looking humanoids, but the resemblance ends there. Glodretch have four meaty arms and their entire pinkish skin is covered with boils and oozing sores and with several folds that overlap over each other for quite a disgusting spectacle.

Glodretch understand but do not speak Abyssal.

Combat

Glodretch's approach to combat is simple. Hit it hard until it stops moving.

Splash Damage (Ex): When a glodretch hits with either of its arms, it breaks some of the pustules on its skin and splashes the resulting ooze on any other creature standing within 10 feet of the original target. This splash damage causes 1d6 points of acid damage. The first target is only subject to the slam attack.

Nauseating Presence (Ex): Any non-demon creature approaching a glodretch from 30 feet must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds. Nauseated creatures are unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention. The only action such a character can take is a single move (or move-

equivalent action) per turn.

Thick Headed (Ex): Once engaged in combat, there is no stopping the glodretch. Until its current target is down and beginning with combat with any new enemy, a glodretch has a +2 morale bonus to Will saving throws and a -2 morale penalty to Ref. it completely ignores any other attacker flanking it. The opponent that the glodretch is *not* attacking gains a +3 bonus from flanking, and the opponent that the demon is concentrating on does not gain any bonus from flanking.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a glodretch can attempt to summon another glodretch with a 35% chance of success.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness, scare*; 1/day- *contagion, stinking cloud*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Telepathy (Su): Glodretch can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks Abyssal.

THE VAN'G

The first brood to be nearly annihilated by the Tanar were the insect-like warriors of the Brood of Van'g. The few remnants of this demonic family hire out their services as mercenaries not only to demon lords, but also to any other force that is prepared to pay their price. The vengadi and udvati species have made sure that their Abyssal names are disseminated in several magical text to make it easy for others to summon them. They are more than happy to take 'clients' in the Material Plane, lending their unnatural muscle to the might of any mortal rich, foolish and corrupt enough to hire them.

Van'g'ka Qualities

Immunities (Ex): Van'g'ka are immune to damage from bludgeoning weapons.

Resistances (Ex): Van'g'ka have cold, electricity, fire and acid resistance 10 and have a +5 racial bonus to saves against poison.

Telepathy (Su): Van'g'ka can communicate

telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Gestalt (Su): A group of van'g'ka forms a small hive mind amongst them. This joint consciousness is not connected to any greater whole but is merely a function of the van'g'ka warriors working together. They can only form a gestalt with members of their own species, using telepathy to communicate with other van'g'ka. Each particular species gains different bonuses when forming a gestalt.

Vyin (van'g'ka)

Small Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft

AC: 22 (+1 Size, +3 Dex, +8 natural armour)

Attacks: 3 Claws +7 melee

Damage: Claws 1d4+2

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, tear away (Ex), pounce (Ex), improved grab (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/good, SR 5, van'g'ka qualities

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +6, Jump +9, Listen +5, Spot +5, Tumble +7

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Gang (2-5), swarm (5-20), mob (20-40) or horde (40-60)

CR: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-8 HD (Small), 9-12 HD (Medium-size)

Vyin are the shock troops of the van'g'ka, the first wave in any attack. Despite their appearance, vyin demons are cunning and sneaky fighters, and are perhaps the demons that work best together, as a single gang co-ordinates its overall tactics to the changing situation of the battlefield. Vyin are obedient soldiers on the surface, but their true ambition is to someday take the place of their immediate superior and they are known for suddenly

ganging up on their master once the battle is over.

A vyin resembles a bloated mantis with one extra arm growing from its back, which is covered by a thick carapace of overlapping bands of chitinous material.

Vyin speak Abyssal and Common.

Combat

Vyin charge headlong into battle from afar, using their *jump* ability to pounce on their targets from incredible distances and tearing it apart before proceeding with the next. If they take hold onto a target, they will not let go even if attacked by other combatants until its target is dead or out of action.

Pounce (Ex): If a vyin leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the vyin must hit with two claws. If it gets a hold, it can tear away.

Tear Away (Ex): The vyin latches onto its target with its sharp claws and pulls back sharply, tearing away part of its victim's flesh, dealing 1d6 points of Constitution damage. After using this attack, the vyin is no longer grappling and ends up 5 feet away from its target.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *jump*, *magic fang*; 1/day- *bull's strength* (self only), *cat's grace* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 4th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a vyin can attempt to summon 1d4 vyins with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Vyin can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks Abyssal or Common.

Gestalt (Su): Vyin gain a +1 morale bonus to initiative equal to the number of vyin in the group. If one of them spends a full-time action refocusing and the rest spend a standard action, the whole vyin group refocuses.

Yavodai (van'g'ka)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 8d8+32 (68 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 24 (-1 Size, +15 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 Bite +12 melee; 2 Pincers +10 melee

Damage: Bite 2d4+5; Pincers 1d8+5 and crush

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-Like Abilities, crush (Ex), crushing roll (Ex), projecting maw (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/good, SR 10, fast healing 5, van'g'ka qualities

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +6

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +13, Concentration +9, Intimidate +12, Jump +13, Listen +8, Search +4, Spot +11, Survival +8

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair or gang (2-5)

CR: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-16 HD (Large), 17-24 HD (Huge)

The ground trembles when the yavodai enter combat. Although not as imposing in height compared to other demons, the yavodai make up with sheer bulk, being nearly as wide as they are tall. They are the heavy hitters in any group of van'g'ka and their only purpose is to walk boldly forward and crush anything that stands in their path.

Covered head-to-toe by a roundish carapace, the yavodai's four legs are short and thick, barely able to support the demon's weight. Its head is almost invisible when it hides just inches shy of being completely inside the carapace, but it can turn its head to take a measure of its surroundings. On each side of its great bulk, a large and heavy pincer lashes out with amazing speed.

Combat

If possible, yavodais enter battle by rolling in and crushing beneath them whatever remained on its way. They start generating their *obscuring mist* ability and pound away until nothing moves.



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Crush (Ex): When a pincer attack hits, the victim must roll a Reflex save (DC 17) to avoid being caught by the small barbs and being crushed for an additional 2d6+5 points of damage. The yavodai does not get a hold or initiate a grapple with this attack, and the victim is free once it was squeezed hard by the closing pincer.

Projecting Maw (Ex): The yavodai's small neck is part of a very long neck that can shoot out with incredible speed. The yavodai can make bite attacks with a reach of 15 feet and may also attack adjacent foes.

Crushing Roll (Ex): As a full-round action, the yavodai curls up so that only its carapace is visible and kicks off in a roll that can crush anyone in its path. Consider the yavodai to have the Trample feat when performing this attack. It moves four times its base speed and cannot reduce the distance travelled. Anyone caught in the yavodai's path must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or fail to jump aside, suffering 4d6 points of damage as they are crushed beneath the rolling demon.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *obscuring mist*, *magic fang*; 1/day- *haste* (self only), *endurance* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 4th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a yavodai can attempt to summon 1d4 vyins or another yavodai with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Yavodai can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks Abyssal or Common.

Gestalt (Su): Yavodai gain a +1 morale bonus to saving throws equal to the number of yavodai in the group.

Vengadi (van'g'ka)

Medium-size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 12d8+24 (78 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative, +2 insight)

Speed: 30 ft, fly 60 ft (good)

AC: 29 (+3 Dex, +16 natural armour)

Attacks: 2 Longswords +14 melee; 2 Claws +13 melee; 1 Tail slap +12 melee

Damage: Longswords 1d8+2; Claws 1d6+2; Tail slap 1d4+2 and stun

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft (see text)

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, combat trickery (Ex), stunning tail (Ex), reach (Ex), flicker (Sp), substitution (Sp), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/good, SR 15, van'g'ka qualities, evasion (Ex), camouflage (Su)

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +9

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 16

Skills: Balance +13, Bluff +11, Concentration +14, Escape Artist +11, Hide +9, Intimidate +12, Knowledge(arcana) +15, Listen +11, Spellcraft +14, Spot +11, Tumble +13, Survival +13

Feats: Expertise, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claw), Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair or gang (2-5)

CR: 14

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil ()

Advancement: 13-24 HD (Medium-size), 25-36 HD (Large)

Of the surviving species amongst the van'g'ka, the vengadi compete with the vyin as the most numerous, but where their smaller cousins survived because of their high spawning rate, the vengadi did because of their natural talents for trickery. If the Brood of Van'g are an army, the vengadi are its special forces, born with an innate cunning that escapes the swarming vyin and the brutal yavodai.

Even their appearance is deceiving. When not in their combat mode, the vengadi look like an oversized ant with a wide carapace. On first sight, it only has two arms ending with vicious spine claws. The carapace changes colour to provide the demon with superb camouflage, hiding it even from magical senses. The carapace opens when the vengadi flies with its tough translucent wings, but also when it is in full combat mode, revealing two extra sword-wielding arms and a long and flexible tai ending in a blunt ball of iron-hard material.

Combat

Vengadi fight cunningly and as if they had elite training, using any sort of trick or tactic they believe to be appropriate for a situation. Depending on the powers the display, spellcasters are placed in their

combat priority, but they will focus on any skilled fighter they encounter so they can prove their ability.

Combat Trickery (Ex): Vengadi are expert fighters; they gain a +2 insight bonus to initiative and enjoy the effects of the Improved Bull-Rush, Improved Disarm and Improved Trip feats.

Stunning Tail (Ex): The blunt end of a vengadi's tail can stun an opponent it successfully deals damage to. A target must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be stunned for one round.

Reach (Ex): The vengadi's arms have an extra hidden segment on each arm that the demon can extend. Its reach is 10 feet with all its arms and tail.

Flicker (Sp): Once per combat, the vengadi can disappear from its current position and re-appear at any point within 60 feet from its original position. This is a move-equivalent action and the vengadi may act upon arriving on its new destination.

Substitution (Sp): Once per combat, the vengadi can switch places with one of its opponents. Its target makes a Fortitude save (DC 18) and if he fails, both appear where the other used to be. This is a move-equivalent action and the vengadi may act upon arriving on its new destination.

Evasion (Ex): If a vengadi makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, it instead takes no damage.

Camouflage (Su): The vengadi's carapace shifts colour to adapt to its surrounding, giving it a +10 circumstance bonus to Hide checks. When the demon lies still, it produces a *nondetection* effect as if cast by a 12th level sorcerer that protects it from magical detection.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *flare*, *magic fang*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *magic weapon*; 1/day- *haste* (self only), *teleport without error* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a vengadi can attempt to summon 2d10 vyins with a 50% chance of success or 1d4 yavodai or another vengadi with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Vengadi can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks a language.

Gestalt (Su): Vengadi gain a +4 bonus if another vengadi is flanking an opponent or performs the aid another action instead of the normal +2 bonus for either manoeuvre.

Udvati (van'g'ka)

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 13d8+39 (97 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft, climb 20 ft, fly 50 ft (perfect)

AC: 31 (-2 Size, +3 Dex, +20 natural armour)

Attacks: 5 Tentacles +16 melee or 1 energy ray +17 ranged

Damage: Tentacles 2d8+5 +1d6 energy

Space/Reach: 10 ft x 20 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, energy burst (Su), bursting tentacles (Ex), dimensional control (Sp), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 15/good, SR 20, van'g'ka qualities, alternate form (Su), expert tactician (Su), hive mind (Su), see invisibility (Su)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +15

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 18

Skills: Balance +17, Climb +18, Concentration +17, Disguise +14, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Knowledge (military) +13, Listen +17, Search +13, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +25, Spot +17, Survival +17

Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (ray)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or troop (1 udvati, 2 vengadi, 1d4 yavodai and 2d4 vyin)

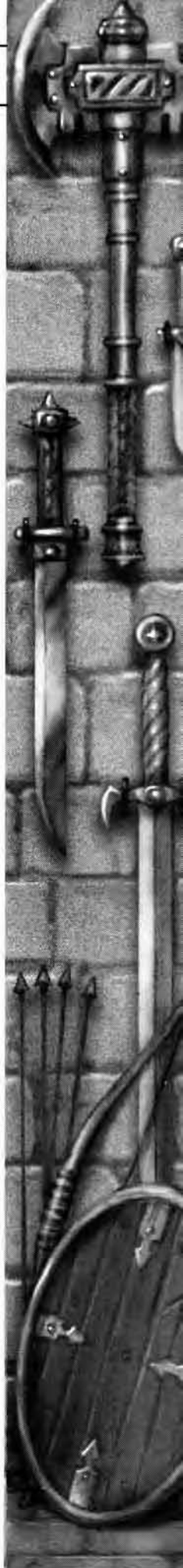
CR: 16

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 14-26 HD (Huge), 27-39 HD (Gargantuan)

The masters of the Van'g Brood as much as the balor rule over the Tanar, the surviving udvati count their blessings with bitterness at having escaped the fury of the Tanar scourge and escaped with enough of their brood to try and start to rebuild



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

their power base. They enjoy the thrill of battle from a commanding vantage point, not caring to sacrifice warriors to ensure victory. Their defeat by the reckless and savage hordes of the Tanar is a sore point for them, who like to enact strange and convoluted tactics.

Udvati are gigantic slugs covered with bands of near-impregnable chitin, with hundreds of little legs growing under their bodies and five long tentacles growing from their heads, which they use to manipulate objects as well as attack. They fly through a magical organ in their underbellies that shines a sickly blue as they cross the sky.

Udvati employ demons from other broods more acquainted with extraplanar travel, such as the jar'taska, but never with the Brood of Tanar. They approve in spreading their Abyssal name amongst the mortal world along with their fame of being mercenary masters. They do not shirk from any chance to enter battle and, when fighting in a force with mixed creatures, they demand to be in command, assuming a humanoid form if that is what is needed to keep other mercenaries from running in fear at their presence.

Udvati speak Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven and Infernal.

Combat

Udvati are the artillery of the van'g'ka and as such prefer to remain behind, blasting enemies away before they have to engage in battle. They do not prefer this out of fear, but out of pragmatism. With so few of them, the last thing they need is to lose their generals.

Alternate Form (Su): Udvati can assume any humanoid form of Small to Large size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only humanoid forms. While using this ability, an udvati gains a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks.

Bursting Tentacles (Sp): Each of the udvati's tentacles is charged with one type of energy and deals an extra 1d6 points of energy damage. In addition, it deals an additional 1d10 points of the appropriate energy damage on a critical hit. To determine the type of attack, roll 1d10 on the following table for each tentacle and roll again for repeated results in the same turn.

1d10	Tentacle energy type
1-2	Acid
3-4	Cold
5-6	Fire
7-8	Electricity
9-10	Sonic

Energy Burst (Su): The udvati can concentrate the energy of two or more tentacles to shoot an energy ray with a range of 300 feet. The udvati makes a ranged touch attack with a +17 bonus and deals 1d6 of damage per tentacle devoted to the attack. The udvati chooses the energy type for each attack depending on which tentacles it is devoting to the attack. Those tentacles are unavailable for melee combat.

Expert Tactician (Su): As a standard action, an udvati can grant an extra partial action to one other van'g'ka within 1,000 feet.

Hive Mind (Su): When an udvati is present, all van'g'ka demons enjoy the benefit of a shared consciousness. No van'g'ka can be flanked while standing within 300 feet of the udvati.

See Invisibility (Su): Udvati continuously *see invisibility* as the spell cast by a 18th-level sorcerer.

Dimensional Control (Su): The udvati can control the dimensional travel in an area. It generates continuously a *dimensional anchor* effect around itself as if cast by a 15th-level sorcerer. As a free action it can allow any attempt to use transport or planar magic like *dimension door*, *teleport*, *blink*, *etherealness* or *summon monster*. This includes other demons' summon ability. Creatures attempting to use such magic while inside the udvati's area of control must make a caster check (DC 26).

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *flare*, *magic fang*, *magic circle against good/law*, *wall of fire/ice*, *fear*, *hallucinatory terrain*, *forceful hand*; 1/day- *mass haste*, *mass teleport*, *summon swarm*, *teleport without error* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 16th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day an udvati automatically summons 4d10 vyins, 2d6 yavodai, 1d4 vengadi or another udvati.

Telepathy (Su): Udvati can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks a language.

Gestalt (Su): Udvati grants a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage rolls, saving throws and skill checks to all van'g'ka within 1,000 feet. This bonus stacks with the bonus from another udvati.

Skills: Udvati gain a +4 stability bonus to Balance checks.

it one-half concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

Immunities (Ex): Jar'taska'ka are immune to cold, disease, poison, paralysis and death effects and to sneak attacks, although they remain vulnerable to critical hits and death by massive damage.

Resistances (Ex): Jar'taska'ka have electricity, fire and acid resistance 15.

THE JAR'TASKA

There are few fiends as sinister and insidious as the jar'taska'ka; demons in their own right but often confused with undead or with denizens of the Plane of Shadows. They escaped the many purges that decimated the rest of the demon families because most of them can actually travel to the Plane of Shadows due to their innate nature and are the most nomadic of demons. They are notoriously hard to pin down as they move from layer to layer in the Abyss or across the Astral Plane. To grace themselves to the Tanar Brood, the heratru rulers of the Jar'taska offered their broodmates as spies, envoys and messengers as well as a vanguard on any campaign of corruption. They have less need of mortals to gain access to the Material Plane but find greater challenges in corrupting other extraplanar denizens.

Jar'taska'ka Qualities

Light Vulnerability (Ex): Exposure to bright light (such as *sunlight* or a *daylight* spell) reduces jar'taska'ka capabilities. While in such conditions, they suffer a -2 to AC, and a -1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and checks.

Shadow Mastery (Su): The jar'taska'ka gain several advantages when immersed in shadows:

- +1 attack and damage bonus if both it and its foe are covered in natural or magical darkness. Even starlight negates this effect.
- Darkvision works normally in any kind of magical darkness.
- During any conditions other than full daylight, a jar'taska'ka can disappear into the shadows, giving

Dark Lantern (jar'taska'ka)

Tiny Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Incorporeal)

HD: 1d8 (4 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: Fly 40 ft (perfect)

AC: 19 (+2 Size, +5 Dex, +2 deflection)

Attacks: 1 incorporeal touch +8 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d4 and black flame

Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft x 2 1/2 ft/0

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, black flame (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: SR 10, jar'taska'ka qualities, black light (Sp), incorporeal

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2

Abilities: Str -, Dex 20, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 15

Skills: Spot +6

Feats: Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or gang (2-5)

CR: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 2-4 HD (Tiny)

Dark lanterns are both an 'illumination' source as they are a logistical advantage for the jar'taska'ka. They can be ordered to hover in place or follow a target so that its unique abilities come to the fore to the advantage of the demons. Easily destroyed, they are the most numerous of the shadow demons, with many believing that they are created from pure shadow-stuff and infused with demonic essence.

Dark lanterns are small bluish balls surrounded by a trail of black flame, which gives them their few abilities and advantages. They are quick and,



while not very intelligent, they are obedient to their demonic superiors. They can grow in power by becoming the familiars of mortal spellcasters like the casteless quasit, but by virtue of there being many of its own brood still in existence, they can subvert the orders of mortal owners and report to their true masters.

Dark lanterns understand but do not speak Common and Abyssal.

Combat

Dark lanterns are not very combative but will charge a target if ordered to by another jar'taska'ka, trying to 'burn' it with their black flame. They prefer to call for reinforcements as exemplified by their increased summoning ability, but may also do so simply by contacting a higher demon with its *sending* ability.

Black Flame (Su): The fire around the dark lantern is extremely cold to the touch but otherwise behaves like fire. It deals +1d6 cold damage but can set combustible items aflame. If subject to a *quench* spell, the dark lantern must succeed at a Reflex save against the spell's normal DC or be destroyed.

Black Light (Sp): The dark lantern radiates a continual *darkness* effect out to a 60 feet radius as per the spell, except that darkvision is not affected. If the darkness is dispelled or cancelled, the dark lantern can create it again as a free action on its next turn. At the demon's choice or if ordered, it can grant any creature within the same radius the ability to see even in magical darkness such as that created by the *deeper darkness* spell. The range of this ability is limited to the dark lantern's own radius, so a creature standing 60 feet from the demon will not be able to see beyond its black light.

Incorporeal: Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *sending*. This ability is as the spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Twice per day a dark lantern can attempt to summon 1d4 dark lanterns, 1d4 shadelings or 1 jar'ugr with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Dark lanterns can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Shadeling (jar'taska'ka) Tiny Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 1d8+1 (5 hp)

Initiative: +4 (+4 Dex)

Speed: Fly 60 ft (perfect)

AC: 21 (+2 Size, +4 Dex, +5 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 slam +3 melee

Damage: Slam 1d4

Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft x 2 1/2 ft/0

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, baneful phasing (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/silver or good, SR 5, jar'taska'ka qualities, shadow blink (Su)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills: Hide +7*, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Spot +4

Feats: Dodge

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Brood (2-5), swarm (5-20) or drove (20-40)

CR: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 2 HD (Tiny), 3-4 HD (Small)

The shadowy jar'taska used to count a more efficient spying species in its brood, but they are forgotten now and only the shadelings remain to fill the slot. A task for which they are not too well-suited given their inborn impatience. Shadelings are more useful as the first wave of an attack by a jar'taska horde, intent on demoralising the enemy before the first real blow has landed. However, their minuscule size gives them an edge in hiding at spots where their leaders wish to gain more information about, as they can return to the Plane of Shadows quickly to report their findings... if they remember them.

Shadelings are a blob of dark gel that coalesces in a vaguely skull-like shape when it stays still, with a segmented appendage trailing behind it, totally useless. Their black skin is slightly translucent, letting anyone realise that they have no bones or anything resembling a normal anatomy.

Higher demons, even other jar'taska'ka find shadelings to be a unique snack as they squeeze them to let their gooey interior seep out from their tails into the demon's mouth. Rumour tells that it tastes like slightly bitter grape juice, but few mortals have tried to lick a shadeling's remains after it has been slain.

Combat

Shadelings are cruel and malicious in combat. They circle around their opponents shooting their *rays of frost* before activating their shadow blink ability and closing in to attack with their phasing slam attack. Often, a second wave of shadelings will remain in the sidelines, invisible until the first wave is near destruction or pulls a strategic retreat.

Baneful Phasing (Su): A shadeling that successfully hits with its slam attacks partially phases with its target as it does so. The target must make a Will save (DC 14) or be filled with a strange feeling of aversion, suffering a -1 morale penalty to their attack rolls and on saving throws against fear effects. A character cannot be affected more than once by the baneful phasing ability of a particular shadeling, but the effects of multiple shadelings stack to a maximum of -5 penalty. A target that saves against one shadeling's ability is immune to any other use of this ability—even the ones of other shadelings—for one day, although the penalties already accrued remain. The effect of this ability lasts for 6 rounds.

Shadow Blink (Su): Once per day and while in the Material or Astral Plane, the shadeling can begin to flicker into the Plane of Shadows, suddenly turning into a shadow imprinted on a wall, ceiling or ground, only to reappear again within seconds. This ability has the same effect as the *blink* spell as if cast by a 5th level sorcerer, although the phasing occurs with the Plane of Shadows instead of the Ethereal Plane.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *ray of frost*, *darkness*; 1/day- *invisibility* (self only), *confusion*. Once per week the demon may use *shadow walk*; it can begin or end the effect in the Astral Plane as well as the Material Plane, and may choose a gate to the Abyss in the Plane of Shadows as a destination or starting point with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 1st-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a shadeling can attempt to summon 1d4 shadelings with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Shadelings can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Shadelings gain a +8 circumstance bonus when hiding in shadows.

Jar'ugr (jar'taska'ka)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 6d8+12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 20 ft, swim 20 ft.

AC: 20 (-1 Size, +1 Dex, +10 natural armour)

Attacks: 2d4 tentacles +9 melee

Damage: Tentacles 1d8+3

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, shadow tentacles (Ex), shriek (Ex), improved grab (Ex), shadow mark (Sp), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/silver or good, SR 15, jar'taska'ka qualities, many eyes (Ex)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +7

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +4*, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Search +12, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +4, Spot +14, Swim +11

Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacles)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair or patrol (1-2 jar'ugr, 1d4 dark lanterns)

CR: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7-12 HD (Large), 13-18 HD (Huge)

The jar'ugr are the most disgusting thing that the jar'taska'ka could find as a sentinel. These formless masses of writhing shadow worms are continually shifting when they want to be noticed, but can remain deathly still when they are hiding in the shadows.

Jar'ugr are composed of thousands of slightly translucent tendrils that writhe around each other, giving the demon a very fluid anatomy. Each tendrill ends with a little but fully functional eye, making this abomination completely aware of its surroundings. Coupled with its spell-like abilities, the Brood of



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

Jar'taska could not have better sentries to post at the entrances of its shadowed realm.

Jar'ugr speak Common and Abyssal.

Combat

Jar'ugr prefer to concentrate all their attacks on a single opponent for the chance to capture and immobilise it if possible. They use their shriek only when they spot intruders while on guard duty, but will remain silent if they are the ones making the first move.

Shadow tentacles (Ex): Every round, the writhing tendrils that form the demon's body can twirl into a 2d4 tentacles, which are the number of attacks the jar'ugr has for that turn.

Shriek (Su): Once per day, a jar'ugr can emit a loud and piercing scream that can be heard for 10 miles around. Creatures within 30 feet of the demon are deafened for 1d6 rounds and take 2d6 points of sonic damage. A successful Fortitude save (DC 16) negates the deafness and reduces the damage by half. A deaf character, in addition to the obvious effects, suffers a -4 penalty on initiative, automatically fails listen checks, and has a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal (V) component that he tries to cast.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the jar'ugr must hit with at least two tentacles; each additional tentacle that successfully hits grants a +1 to all grapple checks. If it gets a hold, the jar'ugr can make successive grapple checks as free actions in order to pin the grappled creature. Regardless of how many creatures it is grappling, the number of tentacles that generate each round from its body remains unchanged (2d4).

Shadow Mark (Sp): As a touch attack, the jar'ugr can imprint one of two magical markings upon a target. The first marking allows any jar'taska'ka to see the recipient of the mark even if he goes invisible, ethereal or otherwise hidden, negating all chances to miss due to concealment and imposing a -4 circumstance penalty to Hide checks. The second mark is an identifier that tells all jar'taska'ka that the recipient is not to be bothered. All jar'taska'ka demons must succeed at a Will save (DC 15) if they want to initiate hostilities against the recipient of the mark. Both markings fade in 1d6+1 hours and are only visible to jar'taska'ka demons or characters using the *true seeing* spell.

Many Eyes (Ex): The thousand eyes of the jar'ugr make it an excellent guard and sentinel. It cannot be flanked as per the uncanny dodge ability and has a +4 racial bonus to both Spot and Search checks (already figuring in the statistics).

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness*, *sending*; 1/day- *invisibility* (self only), *dimension door*, *true seeing*. Once per week the demon may use *shadow walk*; it can begin or end the effect in the Astral Plane as well as the Material Plane, and may choose a gate to the Abyss in the Plane of Shadows as a destination or starting point with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 6th-level sorcerer (save DC 11 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a jar'ugr can attempt to summon another jar'ugr with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Jar'ugr can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Jar'ugr gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when hiding in shadows.

Jethulet (jar'taska'ka) Small Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 8d8+8 (44 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft, climb 30 ft

AC: 26 (+1 Size, +3 Dex, +12 natural armour)

Attacks: 3 tentacles +12melee; 1 bite +8 melee (19-20/x2); 1 sting +8 melee

Damage: Tentacles 1d6+1; bite 2d4+1; sting 1d4+1 and poison

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, poison (Ex), summon demon (Sp), energy drain (Su), dark whisper (Su)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/silver or good, SR 15, jar'taska'ka qualities, fear aura (Su)

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +7

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +14, Concentration +8, Gather Information +5, Hide +9*, Intimidate +16, Jump +5, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +13, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Search +8, Spellcraft +9, Spot +11



Feats: Improved Critical (bite), Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (tentacles)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or pair

CR: 10

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-16 HD (Small), 17-24 HD (Medium-size)

There are several kinds of monsters under the bed, and the jethulet is the most terrible of all. It is one of the most well-travelled of demons as it spends most of its time in the Plane of Shadows, emerging in dark corners of the Material Plane to practice its subtle manipulations on unsuspecting victims all around. The jethulet is the baseless fear, the paranoia and the whisper that is not really there. Nightmares and frayed nerves plague everyone in the vicinity of a jethulet, who takes delight in sending minds into madness little by little, provoking tempers to flare during the day with the accentuated aggravation of a restless sleep the previous night, until the soul is laid bare and *then* the demon can deal its masterful stroke and cause a mortal to go into a killing spree.

Jethulets are small creatures resembling a multi-segmented larva with hundreds of tiny feet on each side, three claw-tipped tentacles on its front and a sting on its tail like that of a centipede. At the centre of the tentacles is a round mouth with three rows of teeth curved inwards, emanating a dark vapour whenever it is open. The creature is jet black and, like al jar'taska'ka, slightly translucent.

Jethulet speak Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven and Infernal.

Combat

It would seem that jethulet are prey to their own fear abilities and are quite the cowards when it comes to combat. They prefer to skulk in shadows, preferably invisible, and wear their target's mental defences down. It prefers not to kill, either driving a target insane or letting him rest and recover before feeding again. It will sow sentiments of discord and animosity in a group and try to make its members kill each other. When forced to fight, the demon tries to grab and sting its victims to dumb them down enough for its other abilities to take an easier hold. It uses its energy draining bite only against spellcasters and strong combatants.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the jethulet must hit with at least two tentacles. If it gets a hold, it can bite or sting.

Poison (Ex): The jethulet's sting carries a poison that targets a victim's ability to think straight. Sting, Fortitude save DC 16; initial damage 1d4 temporary Wisdom, secondary damage *confusion* as the spell cast by an 8th level sorcerer.

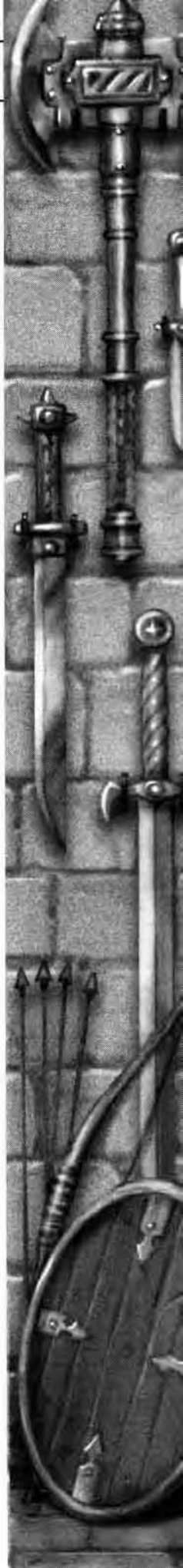
Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a jethulet's bite attack receive two negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 17.

Dark Whisper (Su): As a standard action, the demon can send subtle telepathic whispers to the mind of any living creature within 180 feet to feed of its fear. The victim must make a Will save (DC 17) or suffer one point of temporary Wisdom damage as his mind is wracked by visions of its worst fears caused by the demon. For each Wisdom point dealt, the jethulet gains 1d8 temporary hit points that fade in 6 hours. The demon can maintain the whispers with a Concentration check (DC 10 + target's level or HD) as a full round action. Each round, the victim makes a new Will save, losing one point of Wisdom for each failure. If a victim reaches 0 Wisdom, it falls unconscious and the telepathic contact breaks. This is a mind-affecting fear effect and creatures immune to either are unaffected.

Fear Aura (Su): Jethulet are shrouded in a dreadful aura of paranoia and evil. Creatures of less than 5 HD in a 60-foot radius that look at the jethulet must succeed at a Will save or be affected as though by *fear* as cast by an 8th-level sorcerer.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness, fear, emotion, nightmare, suggestion*; 1/day- *improved invisibility* (self only), *power word stun, phantasmal killer, insanity*. Once per week the demon may use *shadow walk*; it can begin or end the effect in the Astral Plane as well as the Material Plane, and may choose a gate to the Abyss in the Plane of Shadows as a destination or starting point with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20). These abilities are as the spells cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a jethulet can attempt to summon 1d4 shadelings, 1d4 dark



lanterns, 1d2 jar'ugr or another jethulet with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Jethulet can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Jethulet gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when hiding in shadows.

Hamedu (jar'taska'ka)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 10d8+20 (65 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+5 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft

AC: 28 (-1 Size, +5 Dex, +14 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 masterwork longsword +12/+7 melee; 1 masterwork longsword +12 melee; 2 masterwork short swords +12 melee

Damage: Longsword 1d8+4; short swords 1d6+4

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, rend (Ex), sneak attack (Ex), death attack (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/silver or good, SR 18, jar'taska'ka qualities, shadow jump (Su), alternate form

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +9

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 14

Skills: Appraise +8, Balance +9, Bluff +9, Climb +8, Concentration +8, Disguise +10, Hide +18*, Knowledge, Arcana +9, Knowledge, Nature +13, Listen +12, Move Silently +18, Spot +12, Tumble +13, Survival +8

Feats: Expertise, Multidexterity, Multiweapon Fighting

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or pair

CR: 13

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 11-20 HD (Large), 21-30 HD (Huge)

Creatures of treachery through and through, the jar'taska'ka engage in combat from the shadows only, using the dark to hide themselves and strike with precision and deadly accuracy. Amongst the fighting shadows the hamedu stand above the surviving races of the shadow brood, perfect assassins that

leave no mark of their presence except the bloody remains of their victims. These demons are the most greedy amongst the jar'taska'ka, travelling across the planes and pandering their services as killers-for-hire. The hamedu are also the most unruly of their brood, selfish even for a demon, they care little for the survival of their demon family as long as they have their riches and their sport. Only the heratru's magical potency, and the fact that the Demon Lady Iyaviht knows all of their True Names keeps them returning to the Shadow Fortress in the Abyss.

Hamedu demons, like the rest of their brood, resemble living shadows and are often confused with undead. They have tall and long bodies made of ink-black shadow-stuff. They walk in a stoop that hides their true stature until they unfold their four arms and stand almost at 12 feet when in battle. They appear to wear clothing but, no matter what angle they are looked at from, they are a solid black silhouette. From the waist down, their legs are either fused together or under a shadow tunic that eventually blurs out and trails wispy strands of black matter that evaporates like an odourless smoke that seems to keep the demon inches above the ground.

Combat

Hamedu are natural assassins and prefer to stalk their prey until they judge it is the right time to strike with the least risk for their safety. They use their spell-like abilities to enhance themselves, with *blink* being their favourite tactic, as it allows them to deal horrendous amounts of damage with their sneak attack ability. They will try to flee if the battle turns against them by leaping into the nearest shadow, either jumping to another spot to reconsider their strategy or into the Plane of Shadows to escape its destruction and banishment back into the Abyss.

Rend (Ex): If a hamedu hits with at least two sword attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals additional damage equal to the individual damage of each weapon that struck in that round. So, if the hamedu strikes with all weapons, its rend ability would deal 2d8+2d6+16.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Any time the hamedu's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), its attacks deals +2d6 points of damage. This works exactly like the rogue's class feature and stacks if the

hamedu gains levels in a class with this or a similar ability.

Death Attack (Ex): If the hamedu studies its victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly killing the target. While studying the victim, the demon can undertake other actions so long as its attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the hamedu or recognises it as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails his Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) against the kill effect, he dies. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. The hamedu retains in its mind the results of its study and can launch the death attack at any time until the next sunrise; if the attack fails (the victim makes the save or the demon misses its attack roll against him), 3 new rounds of study are required before it can attempt another death attack.

Shadow Jump (Su): Five times per day, the hamedu can travel between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell. The limitation is that the magical transport must begin and end in an area with at least some shadow. The maximum distance of any jump is equal to 60 feet.

Alternate Form (Su): Hamedu can assume any humanoid form of Small to Large size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only humanoid forms, and they always have a sooty appearance or dark complexion. While using this ability, a hamedu gains a +5 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness*, *spider climb*, *knock*; 3/day- *greater magic weapon* (own weapons only), *haste* (self only), 1/day- *improved invisibility* (self only), *blink*, *phantasmal killer*. Twice per week the demon may use *shadow walk*; it can begin or end the effect in the Astral Plane as well as the Material Plane, and may choose a gate to the Abyss in the Plane of Shadows as a destination or starting point with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a hamedu can attempt to summon 2d4 shadelings, 2d6 dark lanterns, or 1d2 jar'ugr with a 50% chance of success, or 1d2 jethulet or another hamedu with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Hamedu can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Hamedu gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when hiding in shadows.

Heratru (jar'taska'ka) Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 12d8+36 (90 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft, fly 20 ft (good)

AC: 30 (-2 Size, +3 Dex, +12 natural armour, +7 deflection)

Attacks: 2 claws +13 melee; 1 shadow lance +11 ranged touch; 3 shadow chains +11 melee

Damage: Claws 2d4+3; shadow lance 2d6; shadow chains 2d4+3

Space/Reach: 10 ft x 10 ft/15 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, shadow chains (Su), improved grab (Ex), shadow sorcery (Sp), shadow bind (Su), mantle of darkness (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 15/silver and good, SR 23, jar'taska'ka qualities, enticement of shadows (Su)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +13

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 22, Wis 20, Cha 25

Skills: Bluff +19, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +22*, Hide +13*, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +15, Move Silently +16, Search +14, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +16, Spot +13

Feats: Expertise, Improved Trip, Spell Focus (illusion), Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, troupe (1 heratru, 1d4 jar'ugr, 2d6 dark lanterns) or retinue (1 heratru, 2 hamedu, 1d4 jar'ugr, 2d4 shadelings and 2d6 dark lanterns)

CR: 16

Treasure: Double

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 13-24 HD (Huge)

Just as the balor rule over the Brood of Tanar, the heratru are the masters of the jar'taska'ka, embodying all that defines their brood. They are political schemers that delight in tearing down well-laid plans while their own are incomprehensible



in their labyrinthine complexity. It could be that heratru plots reach fruition out of sheer coincidence and luck as they sound ludicrous on a first analysis. While the rest of the jar'taska'ka personify what makes darkness repulsive and fearful, the heratru are what makes it alluring, whispering secret knowledge with seductive voices to the ears of the curious and seducing away their own secrets for the demon's own use.

The heratru adopt a sinuous humanoid female form that, unlike all other jar'taska'ka, has pale ivory skin. Their milky flesh is cleverly hidden by garments of shadow that roll and shift around their bodies so they appear wreathed in black fire. Long, raven-black hair joins the shadows around them and cast their faces in darkness, so that only their black-tinted lips are visible from their faces.

Heratru speak Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal and Undercommon.

Combat

When not commanding minions and servants to fight for them, heratru enter battlefield well armed, casting their most dangerous spell-like abilities first and using their talent at manipulating their demonic essence to optimise their magic attack. When the opposition is suitably weakened, they start firing their shadow rays until forced to melee, which is when they whip out their shadow chains against anyone who dares attack them.

Shadow Lance (Ex): As one of its secondary attacks, the heratru concentrates part of the shadow-stuff that makes its body into an incorporeal lance that acts as a ranged touch weapon with a maximum range of 60 feet, dealing 2d6 points of damage.

Shadow Chains (Su): The three chains that a heratru uses as part of its secondary attacks are made from solid matter from the Plane of Shadows. The chains have a physical reach of 15 feet but if the heratru joins them all together for a single attack instead of its normal three attacks, it can generate it from the shadow of any creature within 60 feet. The chain has the normal reach from its point of manifestation and does not necessarily attack the shadow's owner, but moves with him or, better put, with his shadow. The chain can attack with its normal attack bonus as if the demon were using it from that spot. Any light spell that eliminates the

creature's shadow disintegrates the chain, but the demon can manifest all three normal chains normally after that. Because the chain can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, a trip attack can be made with it. If the heratru is tripped during its trip attempt, the chain disintegrates and reforms in its body to avoid being tripped.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the heratru must hit with at least two shadow chains. If it gets a hold, it pulls the victim into its mantle of darkness (see below).

Mantle of Darkness (Su): The black clothing and flowing hair of the heratru are actually made from pure shadow. Anyone pulled inside with a successful grab is sent into a small pocket of the Plane of Shadows inside the demon's body, remaining there for 1d4 rounds. The victim must make a successful Will save (DC 17) or emerge from the mantle blinded, his eyes covered in shadows. Jar'taska'ka that enter the heratru's mantle emerge in the Plane of Shadows as if by a *plane shift* spell or, if already in the Plane of Shadows, they emerge in the Shadow Fortress layer of the Abyss.

Shadow Sorcery (Sp): The heratru are adept users of shadow magic; at will, they can use *greater shadow conjuration* (DC 22) and *greater shadow evocation* (DC 23) as a standard action. Because of the jar'taska'ka's intimate connection with the Plane of Shadows, the illusory conjurations and evocations are three fifths (60%) as strong as the real thing, instead of two fifths as per the spells. These abilities are cast as if by a 12th level sorcerer.

Enticement of Shadows (Su): An aura of morbid attraction surrounds the heratru whatever its form. In its passive mode, anyone standing within 15 feet of the demon must make a Will save (DC 17) or be entranced by the demon's appearance and grace, acting as if he were dazed, unable to take any action but still capable of defending himself. This condition only lasts for one round, but he must roll subsequent Will saves to keep resisting the demon's allure. The heratru can turn this ability on or off at will as a free action. In its active mode, the heratru spends a full round talking with a target either verbally or telepathically. The target must succeed at a Will save (DC 21) or be under the effect of a *charm monster* spell as if cast by a 12th level sorcerer.

I had underestimated the fiend and now I was fighting for dear life. I did not know this species and only by a slight slip on its part I found out that it was not a Tanar'ka, but a member of the Brood of Nuyul, which I had never heard of before.

I had stumbled on a great and dangerous scheme, for my niece was not the only noble heir to be targeted thus, but there were others. Young men and women dissatisfied by their life of privilege and tempted into the infinite darkness of the Abyss by not one, but several families of demons. I had to survive, for the fate of the entire realm was at stake.

I was fending off a snake-like thing while casting light spells left and right to hinder the movements of the living shadow that had suddenly sprung from beneath the bed, not to mention the insect-like monstrosity that was right now going for my throat. I alone would be dead soon.

Shadow Bind (Su): The heratru can use its shadow lance or shadow chains to strike at a target's shadow as a special touch attack with a +2 circumstance bonus to the target's AC. If the attack is successful, it does not deal damage, but the shadow is stuck along with its owner. The target can move its arms and the rest of his body, but he cannot change his position nor can he fall prone. The target must make a Strength check (DC 17) to free himself, but suffers 1 point of Constitution or Charisma (character's choice) damage in the process as he literally rips his own shadow off. Artificial sources of light like torches and lamps have no effect on the bound shadow, nor does a *light* spell. Only sunlight, or light spells of 3rd level or higher can destroy the bound shadow along with its effect on the owner.

Alternate Form (Su): Heratru can assume any humanoid form of Medium size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only humanoid forms, its enticement of shadows ability works normally even when in humanoid form. While using this ability, a heratru gains a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *greater darkness*, *suggestion*, *obscure object*; 3/day- *black tentacles*, *slow*, 1/day- *improved invisibility* (self only), *false vision*, *finger of death*, *phantasmal killer*. Twice per day the demon may use *shadow walk*; it can begin or end the effect in the Astral Plane as well as the Material Plane, and may choose a gate to the Abyss in the Plane of Shadows as a destination or starting point with a Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 20). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Summon Demon (Sp): Twice per day a heratru can automatically summon 2d10 shadelings, 3d10 dark lanterns or 2d4 jar'ugr, or it can attempt to summon

1d2 jethulet, 1d2 hamedu or another heratru with a 50% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Heratru can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

Skills: Jethulet gain a +4 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when hiding in shadows.

THE NUYUL

The mind worms have been overlooked for as long as they have existed, largely ignored by the purge enforced by the Tanar Brood on the rest of the demonic families and carefully avoided to the present day. The purge did eliminate the more coherent races of the nuyul'ka, leaving the mostly mindless or thoroughly insane specimens to form the bulk of this family so that they are even more directionless than the average demonic brood. These fiends are not as purposeless as other demons would like to think, but at the present they are lying low, acting the part of the ravenous worms that they have played so well for centuries until they have fed on enough souls to challenge even the Tanar.

Nuyul'ka Qualities

Incorporeal: Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Skinride (Su): A nuyul'ka can merge its body with a material creature. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (or the nuyul'ka's HD, whichever is higher), except that



it does not displace the host's soul but the demon merely hides inside it. If the attack succeeds, the demon's body vanishes into the opponent's. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 15 + demon's Charisma modifier). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that demon's possession for one day, although the demon can try to skinride another target until it succeeds. Nuyul'ka can only successfully skinride once per day. Each species has different powers once inside a host. Hosts are allowed a saving throw against a skinriding nuyul'ka's psionic powers or spell-like abilities, but with a -4 morale penalty. Psionic characters and creatures may enter psionic combat with the nuyul'ka as normal if they know it is there and may force it out of a host by defeating it in such a way.

Psionics (Sp): Nuyul'ka are have psionic powers in addition to their spell-like ability, as well as psionic attack and defence modes. For games that do not use psionic rules, find an equivalent spell and add it to the creature's spell-like abilities. If no equivalent exists, ignore the power.

Immunities (Ex): Nuyul'ka are immune to disease, poison, and death effects.

Resistances (Ex): Nuyul'ka have cold, electricity, fire and acid resistance 15.

Telepathy (Su): Nuyul'ka can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

Skills: All nuyul'ka have a +2 racial bonus to Sense Motive checks. They feed from feelings and are therefore connoisseurs when it comes to them.

Diazhit (nuyul'ka)

Tiny Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Incorporeal)

HD: 2d8+4 (13 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: Fly 30 ft (perfect)

AC: 18 (+2 Size, +3 Dex, +3 deflection)

Attacks: 2 incorporeal touch +7 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d3

Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft x 2 1/2 ft/0

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, skinride (Su), psionics (Sp), confuse (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/cold iron or good, SR 15, nuyul'ka qualities, incorporeal

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4

Abilities: Str -, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +8, Intimidate +6, Listen +2, Sense Motive +6, Spot +2

Feats: Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary

CR: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 3-4 HD (Tiny), 5-6 HD (Small)

The diazhit are the most common of a rare family, so it is not exactly an everyday occurrence to find one, even in the Abyss. They are relatively harmless parasites that feed of confusion and uncertainty, and do everything in their power to provoke it.

These demons are 1-foot long from mouth to the tip of their tails, without taking into account their two feelers that can extend for a little longer. They are fat, like leeches, but their bodies are segmented like an earthworm's, with no apparent eyes, mouths or any sensory organ. They are transparent, their outlines glowing softly in a pale white light and many of their inner organs visible in a similar way. They float placidly until riled up, but hunt invisibly in order to burrow inside a target's souls before it is noticed.

Combat

Diazhit avoid combat by all means possible. They will try to skinride a target at the first opportunity and, if they fail, they will flee, using their spell-like abilities to hinder pursuit. Only if they notice that their pursuers have no means to damage its incorporeal form, will they return and try to skinride until they are successful or destroyed.

Confuse (Su): As a standard action, the diazhit can muddle a target's mind; this works like the *confusion* as cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer, except that it uses the following table to determine a victim's behaviour and condition:

1d10	Behaviour or Condition
1	Wander away for 1 minute (unless prevented)
2-3	Do nothing for 1 round
4	Stunned
5-6	Attack nearest creature for 1 round
7-8	Shaken
9	Blinded or Deafened (toss coin)
10	Act normally for 1 round

Skinride (Su): Once inside a host, the diazhit can impose a -1 morale penalty to any of the victims' skill checks, attack and damage rolls or saving throws at will as a free action, but only one penalty per its host's turn. It can also project its power to one of the host's allies as a standard action, who must then make a Will save (DC 14) to resist the effect.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness, detect thoughts, fear, telekinesis*; 1/day- *invisibility* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Psionics (Sp): At will- *brain lock, daze, sense psionics*. These abilities are as the powers manifested by a 3rd-level psion.
Attack/Defence Modes (Sp): At will- *id insinuation/mental barrier*.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a diazhit can attempt to summon 1d4 diazhits with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Diazhits can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

Skills: All nuyul'ka have a +2 racial bonus to Sense Motive checks. They feed from feelings and are therefore connoisseurs when it comes to them.

Pyarian (nuyul'ka)
Medium-size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Incorporeal)

HD: 4d8+12 (30 hp)
Initiative: +4 (+4 Dex)
Speed: Fly 40 ft (perfect)
AC: 18 (+4 Dex, +4 deflection)

Attacks: 1 incorporeal bite +8 melee; 3 ectoplasmic spines +6 ranged

Damage: Incorporeal bite 1d6; ectoplasmic spines 1d8

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, skinride (Su), psionics (Sp), fear your friend (Su), summon demon (Sp), improved grab

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/cold iron or good, SR 15, nuyul'ka qualities, incorporeal

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +4

Abilities: Str -, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +7, Hide +12, Intimidate +10, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +6, Spot +6

Feats: Multiattack, Point Blank Shot

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair or gang (3-5)

CR: 9

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-8 HD (Medium-size), 9-12 HD (Large)

Sowing distrust and paranoia, the pyarian demons delight in creating rifts between people, driving them in all directions like wolves in the midst of a herd and, like the predators they are, isolating them so they can safely feed.

Past the transparent appearance of all the incorporeal nuyul'ka, the pyarian resemble human-sized centipedes, with flat segmented bodies about one foot and a half wide, ridged with dozens of little spikes that resemble insect legs but are actually the demon's natural weapons. It has four large mandibles that snap together in unison that it uses to latch onto victims and possibly skinride them. Pyarian speak Abyssal and Common.

Combat

Pyarian do not like fighting although they are well-suited for combat. They will use their illusory abilities and powers to gain a better position for an ambush and strike from afar, closing in only after they become invisible before attacking with their spines or, if they are feeling audacious or hungry with their bites, trying to skinride the strongest creature in a group. They prefer to wait for the right opportunity to skinride a creature without being

noticed, so they can start working on making their host a paranoid wreck.

Ectoplasmic Spines: The natural weapons of the pyarian are incorporeal, ignoring armour bonuses to AC. They cause their damage by disintegrating completely inside the target.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the pyarian must hit with its incorporeal bite. If it gets a hold, it can try to skinride.

Fear Your Friend (Su): As a standard action, the pyarian can try to make a creature believe that one of his allies is possessed, magically compelled or is a shapechanged creature that is about to attack him and the rest of his companions. This mind-affecting ability can be resisted with a successful Will save (DC 15) and lasts for 1d6+1 rounds should the saving throw fail. Under the effect of this ability, a creature will treat an ally (at the demon's choosing) as an enemy for all purposes. Spells that target 'allies' that the victim cast will exclude the creature that the victim believes to be an enemy to the point that he will even interpret magical means of detecting danger and hostility as pointing at the target of this deception.

Skinride (Su): Once inside a host, the pyarian alters the host's memories of its intrusion as per a *modify memory* spell with no saving throw. It cannot erase any other memories except its own successful skinride. All of the demon's illusory spell-like abilities may exist only in the host's mind as if they were phantasms rather than figments. By winning an opposed Bluff check against the host's Sense Motive check, the pyarian will make the host believe that anything he just heard was a lie. Each week that a pyarian remains skinriding, the host makes a Will save (DC 15) or loses 1d2 points of Wisdom that he cannot recover while the demon is inside him. He is consumed by false fears until he goes insane. The pyarian may suspend its influence so that the host heals his mind, a period during which the demon abstains from using any of its abilities, only to resume the torture again once the host has replenished his mental reserves.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *bane*, *telekinesis*, *ghost sound*, *silent image*; 1/day- *invisibility* (self only), *teleport without error* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer (save DC 13 + spell level).

Psionics (Sp): At will- *aura alteration*, *disable*, *false sensory input*, *sense psionics*. These abilities are as the powers manifested by a 3rd-level psion. *Attack/Defence Modes (Sp):* At will- *mind thrust*/*thought shield*.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a pyarian can attempt to summon 1d4 pyarians with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Pyarians can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

Skills: All nuyul'ka have a +2 racial bonus to Sense Motive checks.

Mad Winds (nuyul'ka)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Air, Incorporeal)

HD: 6d8+6 (33 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+5 Dex)

Speed: Fly 80 ft (perfect)

AC: 16 (-1 Size, +5 Dex, +2 deflection)

Attacks: 1 slam +10 melee

Damage: Slam 1d8 and special

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 5 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, skinride (Su), psionics (Sp), erode soul (Su), whirlwind (Ex), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/cold iron or good+1, SR 15, nuyul'ka qualities, incorporeal, ephemeral

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +5

Abilities: Str -, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 14

Skills: Hide +17, Listen +4, Move Silently +13, Search +7, Spot +14, Survival +10

Feats: Weapon Finesse (slam), Flyby Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land or underground

Organisation: Solitary or gang (2-5)

CR: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 7-12 HD (Large), 13-18 HD (Huge)

Violent and reckless, the mad winds are thought to be corrupted elementals from the Elemental Waste of Air who joined the nuyul'ka until they became full-fledged demons. They are the warrior caste of the Brood of Nuyul because it is what they do best.

These fiends are nearly invisible as they fly at great speeds, inflicting misery and madness, but their howling can be recognised easily.

Resembling a shimmer in the air, the mad wind's only visible features are the eight glowing eyes on its front, and a circular row of sharp teeth which are never used for combat. Mad winds fly across the land, feeding from creatures' ability to think clearly and instilling their own brand of abuse. Mad winds speak Common and Abyssal.

Combat

Mad winds attack by passing through their targets and moving on. They swoop down and use their whirlwind ability to confuse a group of characters and then attack the weakest-looking one. They sometimes remember their spell-like abilities and psionic powers, specially when someone manages to hurt them, prompting the demon's retaliation. They are as insane as their name suggests, and will fight to the death.

Erode Soul (Su): A creature hit by a mad wind's slam attack hears the voices and screams of the wind's victims and the demon's own promises of pain. The creature must roll a Will save (DC 15) or suffer 1 point of temporary Intelligence damage and be confused for 1d4-1 rounds. A confused character's actions are determined by a 1d10 roll, re-rolled each round: 1: wander away (unless prevented) for 1 minute (and don't roll for another random action until the minute is up); 2-6: do nothing for 1 round; 7-9: attack the nearest creature for 1 round; 10: act normally for 1 round. Any confused creature who is attacked automatically attacks its attackers on her next turn.

Whirlwind (Ex): By spinning wildly, a mad wind can create a whirlwind up to 30 feet high, creating a swirling cloud of debris. This cloud is centred on the demon and has a diameter equal to half the whirlwind's height. The cloud obscures all vision, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. Creatures 5 feet away have one-half concealment, while those farther away have total concealment. Those caught in the cloud must succeed at a Concentration check to cast a spell (DC equal to the Reflex save DC).

Ephemeral (Su): The mad wind's transparent form makes it very hard to notice, enjoying at all times the equivalents of three-quarters concealment. Attacks directed at a mad wind have a 30% chance to miss.

Skinride (Su): Instead of dealing hit point damage and possibly ability damage with a successful slam attack, the mad wind can try to skinride. Once inside a host, the mad wind creates a mental haze that inhibits the host's reasoning and awareness, reducing the host's Intelligence and Wisdom scores by 2 each.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *detect thoughts, fear, shout, 1/day- gust of wind, teleport without error* (self only). These abilities are as the spells cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Psionics (Sp): At will- *crisis of breath, fatal attraction, inflict pain, sense psionics*. These abilities are as the powers manifested by an 8th-level psion.

Attack/Defence Modes (Sp): At will- *id insinuation, psychic crush/empty mind, mental barrier*.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a mad wind can attempt to summon 1d4 mad winds with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Mad winds can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

Dereveshti (nuyul'ka)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Incorporeal)

HD: 9d8+27 (67 hp)

Initiative: +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: Fly 60 ft (perfect)

AC: 20 (-1 Size, +6 Dex, +5 deflection)

Attacks: 1 incorporeal tail slap +14 melee

Damage: Incorporeal tail slap 2d8

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 10 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, skinride (Su), psionics (Sp), encircle (Su), malevolence (Sp), incite bloodlust (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 15/cold iron or good, SR 20, nuyul'ka qualities, incorporeal, rage aura (Su)

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +12, Will +6

Abilities: Str -, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +17, Concentration +11, Escape Artist +14, Hide +21, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +8, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +8, Spot +12

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Flyby Attack



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary

CR: 13

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 10-18 HD (Large), 19-27 HD (Huge)

The spirits of rage and carnage are not really the rulers of the nuyul'ka, but they can elicit obedience from their brethren with their mere presence. They do not give orders, but other nuyul'ka follow their lead when there is a larger gathering of them, otherwise, the pereveshti travel alone. These demons hover near battlefields and shoot right into the midst of things, exacerbating the fury of the combatants and pushing them to greater excesses, until there is no one else to fight but their own allies... and then the real carnage begins.

The pereveshti never stop moving even when they remain in the same spot. They are red-blood translucent tapeworms the width of a grown man's arm and with a length that is hard to determine with all the turns and twists the demon performs around itself. On closer look, its whole body is studded with small, needle-like spines that rake targets painfully even in their incorporeal state. Pereveshti speak Abyssal, Common, Infernal and Draconic, although they seldom deign to speak.

Combat

The pereveshti are not shy about combat, although they will prepare the field beforehand, casting *mind fog* to reduce their opponents reasoning and make them more susceptible to its attacks. On the course of a single combat, it will use its encircle ability on several consecutive targets and do all it can to be an annoying opponent, so that its opponents are enraged to the point that they will be capable of anything just to get to it. When not in combat, pereveshti like to skinride warriors and reside inside them, granting them power and advantages and pushing them to greater excesses, until the host is a mindless, brutal murderer.

Encircle (Su): The pereveshti can start spinning around a target no larger than Medium-size. The target can make a Reflex save (DC 20) to try and escape from the encirclement on the round that it starts, but not later. While it spins, the pereveshti starts sending a psychic barrage of hate and violence to its target, who must make a Will save (DC 19)

every round or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. The demon does not really threaten its entrapped victim but the screams coming from inside its whirlwind can prompt the victim's allies to do something. All attacks directed against the pereveshti in this state have a 50% chance of hitting the victim instead. The demon can stop encircling a target as part of its move action.

Malevolence (Sp): Once per round, an ethereal pereveshti can try to merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, except that it does not require a receptacle. If the attack succeeds, the demon's body vanishes into the opponent's body but, unlike its skinride ability, this time the demon takes over. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 20). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that demon's malevolence for one day.

Incite Bloodlust (Su): As a standard action, the demon may impose on a creature an urge to kill so strong that it takes over every other impulse. The target must make a Will save (DC 19) or be under the effects of an insatiable bloodlust. The target temporarily gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and a +2 morale bonus on Will saves, although this does not apply against the pereveshti's abilities and powers. On the down side, the target suffers a -2 penalty to AC and is blinded by his rage, attacking the creature that is nearest to him at the beginning of each round, be it friend or foe. The rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the target's (newly improved) Constitution modifier, and he may not end it prematurely. At the end of the rage, the target creature is fatigued (-2 to Strength, -2 to Dexterity, can't charge or run) for the duration of that encounter. Otherwise this rage is the same as the barbarian's rage ability.

Rage Aura (Su): The demon radiates intense feelings of violence and wanton destruction. Any living creature within 30 feet of the pereveshti must make a Will save (DC 19) or suffer a -1 penalty to attack and damage rolls, saving throws and ability checks as they start shaking with unexplainable and directionless rage. Those who fail must make a new save each round until the penalty reaches -5, at which point they suffer 1d6 points of Wisdom damage, shake off all the penalties but fall under the effect of the incite bloodlust ability (see above). A creature that succeeds at any of the saving throws shakes off all the accumulated penalties (if any) and is immune

to the demon's ability for 1 day. The pereveshti's rage aura is suppressed while the demon is skinriding a host or replacing him with the *malevolence* ability.

Skinride (Su): Once inside a host, the pereveshti can talk to him and offer a literal devil's bargain: the pereveshti will use its own spell-like abilities and psionic powers to enhance the host if he allows it to stay and feed on him, causing one point of Wisdom damage each day that the host can heal normally, maintaining a balance. Unbeknownst to the host, the demon can use its *malevolence* ability at will with a +4 to the host's DC to resist. Success by the host only means that the demon skulks back to its hiding place inside his soul and cannot use any of its abilities on him for one day, although the host does not know why and also does not notice the attempt to wrest his body away from him. Failure means that the pereveshti is in full control of the host's body, an occasion it uses to commit great acts of cruelty. When it returns control to the host, he remembers nothing of what the demon did in his body, but the consequences may come back to haunt him. By winning an opposed Bluff check against the host's Will saving throw, the pereveshti can override one of the host's actions for that turn, be it a standard or move-equivalent action. Of course, the pereveshti is not forced to offer the bargain or even announce its presence, but may still use its abilities to enhance the host and give him a false sense of power.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will- *detect thoughts*, *see invisibility*, *emotion*; 1/day- *haste*, *mind fog*, *teleport without error* (self only). Once per month the pereveshti can *bestow curse*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Psionics (Sp): At will- *attraction*, *combat precognition*, *tailor memory*, *sense psionics*, *whitefire*, *etherealness* (self only). These abilities are as the powers manifested by a 9th-level psion.
Attack/Defence Modes (Sp): At will- all/all.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a pereveshti can attempt to summon 2d4 pyarian with a 50% chance of success, or another pereveshti with a 35% chance of success.

Telepathy (Su): Pereveshti can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet regardless of language.

THE CASTELESS

Whether native flora and fauna of the Abyss or the sole survivors of an ancient demon family, casteless demons litter the Abyssal landscape, defying description and classification but nonetheless posing the same danger as demons with their family intact.

Barbeast

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 7d8+21 (52 hp)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 50 ft

AC: 19 (-1 Size, +2 Dex, +8 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 bite +10 melee; 2 claws +8 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+4; claws 1d8+4

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 10 ft/5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, trip (Ex), Unwind (Ex), Envelop (Ex)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/cold iron or good, SR 8, Darkvision 60, immunities, true sight (Sp)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +7

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 11

Skills: Balance +6, Hide +7, Jump +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +7, Spot +11, Survival +14*

Feats: Power Attack, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary, pair or pack (3-6)

CR: 8

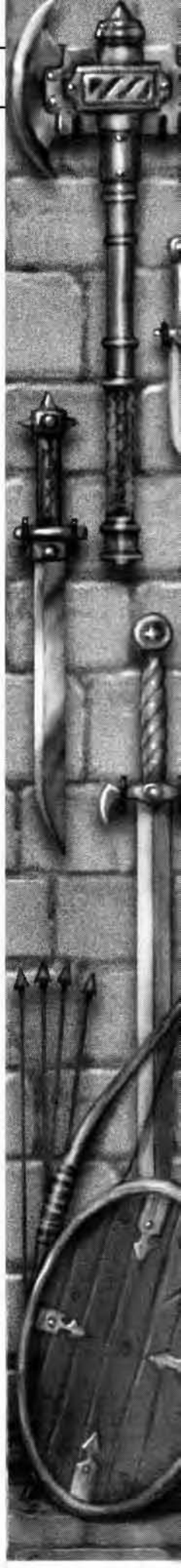
Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 8-14 HD (Large), 15-21 HD (Huge)

Scholars confuse the barbeast with a construct similar to retrievers, but it is a full-fledged demon, a predator of the Abyssal landscape. Used as guardians and pack hunters by stronger demons, barbeasts do not miss anything that happens around them, and sometimes not even what happens far away. They are relentless pursuers that refuse to be stopped or delayed by any obstacle, which they either bypass with ease or tear to shreds. Despite their limited intelligence, barbeasts show a sick glee when pursuing prey and tearing it apart.

Barbeasts resemble huge dogs with wide and squat heads. Their body is made of tightly wound barbed wire that coils around their frame as a moving spring,



making an unnerving screeching sound as the coils chafe against each other. Barbeasts understand, but do not speak Common and Abyssal.

Combat

Barbeasts hunt in packs but also thrive alone; they are vicious fighters and close in as soon as possible, running to the middle of a group or at least close to as many group members it can so it can attack with its unwind ability. It will then proceed to attack with its bite and claws until it is ready to unwind again. If they have orders to capture rather than to kill, they will use their *hold person* spell-like ability but, if it fails, they will simply shrug and savage the target.

Trip (Ex): A barbeast that hits with a claw or bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the barbeast.

Unwind (Ex): As a full-round action, the barbeast's coils of barbed wire unwind, slashing everything that stands within 30 feet of its position and dealing 6d6 points of damage. Creatures can make a Reflex save (DC 16) to halve the damage. The barbeast regains its form at the end of its turn and cannot unwind again for 1d4 rounds as it literally pulls itself together.

Envelop (Ex): As a free action, the barbeast can try to snare one creature who suffered the full damage of its unwind ability. The creature must be of the same size or smaller for the barbeast to wind its coils around the victim as a grapple check. If the demon is defeated in the check, it reforms on a square adjacent to its target but, if it succeeds, it occupies the same space as its victim. A victim enveloped in the barbeast's coils suffers 1d6+4 automatic damage. The barbeast can only take a partial action while it is wound around a victim and it may not use its unwind ability until it reforms and 1d4 rounds have passed. Attacks against the barbeast in this state have a 50% chance of hitting its victim instead. The victim can try to free itself with a Strength (DC 18) or Escape Artist (DC 20) check, but suffers an additional 2d6 points of damage in the process; the demon can break contact as part of normal movement.

True Sight (Sp): Barbeasts continuously see things as they are as the *true seeing* spell cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

Immunities: Barbeasts are immune to cold and poison effects. Also, they are not subject to critical hits.

Spell-like Abilities: At will- *detect magic*, *detect thoughts*, *locate creature*, *locate object*, *freedom of movement*; 3/day- *hold monster*, *phase door*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

Skills: Barbeasts receive a +4 insight bonus when tracking trails using Survival.

Demonship Colossal Construct

HD: 40d10 (220 hp)

Initiative: -1 (-1 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft, fly 20 ft (clumsy)

AC: 26 (-8 Size, -1 Dex, +25 natural armour)

Attacks: 4 chains +41 melee, 4 demonfire cannons +29 ranged

Damage: Chains 2d12+11, demonfire cannons 3d6 fire damage

Space/Reach: 40 ft x 80 ft/15 ft

Special Attacks: Attach (Ex), demonfire cannons (Su)

Special Qualities: Construct, Darkvision 60 ft., planar travel (Sp), planar orientation (Su), extradimensional cargo (Su), soul propulsion (Su), helm jewel (Su), fast healing 5

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +9

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 8, Con --, Int --, Wis 16, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or fleet (2-5 demonships, fully crewed)

CR: 17

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: None

There are few images more frightening than the approach of a demonship, fully laden with a small horde of screaming and hollering demons ready to burst forth. Demonships are incredible vessels that transport demons through the infinite layers of the Abyss and out to other planes, where they can wreak their chaos. They are not simple ships, of course, but intelligent and malicious constructs kept in check by the will of their captain, but otherwise unrestrained.

Their great size is dwarfed only by their power; they can move across any surface and can even lift into the sky, even if in a very clumsy way. Made from souls, bone powder and other foul materials, demonships run by feeding on souls, so their captains are sure to stock several damned souls from their slave pens in the Abyss or by capturing travellers along the way. As a last resource or as punishment, demon captains feed a subordinate to the ship.

The appearance of a demonship varies with the whim of its creators, although most of them look like oversized skiffs or war galleys full of obscene carvings and protrusions. Possessed of a will of its own, a demonship can move and travel by itself, and it is not as rare to find castaway demonships drifting through the Astral Plane, hunting for souls to feed long after their crew was exterminated in some extraplanar incursion.

Combat

Demonships open fire with their demonfire cannons before a target gets into melee range, and then they proceed to attack with the chains that otherwise serve as anchors. If they are hungry, they try to grab living beings and insert them into their feeding chamber, which can be reached from outside as a strange mouth with teeth made of jagged bones or from the inside.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the demonship must hit with two chains. If it gets a hold, it can use its attach ability with a creature of Gargantuan or Colossal size (see below) or put a Huge or smaller victim in its soul propulsion chamber (see below).

Attach (Ex): The demonship can grapple with Gargantuan or Colossal creatures and vehicles with its chains. If it wins the grapple check (an automatic success against vehicles) it automatically hits with its demonfire cannons and any crew it may carry can climb aboard the grappled target.

Demonfire Cannons (Su): A demonship has four demonfire cannons that it can fire on its own. Each cannon is part of its body and cannot be moved from its position. At any point, there are two cannons

available to fire to each side, the front and the back of the demonship. The cannons have a range increment of 100 feet and deal 3d6 points of fire damage. Targets hit by a demonfire cannon must make a Fortitude save (DC 21) or catch on fire, suffering 2d6 automatic points of unholy fire damage. The fire can only be put out by magic such as *quench*, a spell of 2nd level or great with the water descriptor acting as countermagic, *break enchantment*, *remove curse* and any healing magic that cures more than six dice of damage. Healing magic such as *cure light wounds* negates the damage by a number of rounds equal to the points of damage it would cure in a creature, but does not put the fire out.

Planar Travel (Sp): Twice per day, the demonship can pierce planar barriers as per the *plane shift* spell as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer, although it must be close to a planar border or a gate in order to do so. It carries within itself a small pocket of the Abyss and every creature on board is immune by the conditions of whatever plane the ship finds itself in, although the ship does suffer them.

Planar Orientation (Su): The demonship knows at all times on which plane it is and the direction and distance towards the nearest gate or planar border.

Extradimensional Cargo (Su): The demonship has a door that opens to an extradimensional pocket similar to a *magnificent mansion* spell as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer. The space holds crew quarters, slave pens and the soul propulsion chamber.

Soul Propulsion (Su): A chamber at the heart of the demonship can hold a creature up to Huge size and drain it of its life energy or its essence. The creature must save against Will (DC 20) or be paralysed as if by a *hold monster* spell. For each hour that the creature spends held in the chamber, it gains a negative level or loses one power level of demonic essence. When the creature gains as many negative levels as its HD or levels it dies and cannot be brought back to life, as its soul was drained by the ship. Demons whose essence is drained while the demonship is away from the Abyss return to their home plane. The demonship only has access to the stolen power levels until the creature is completely drained. Creatures can be freed from the chamber with a *dispel magic* or similar spells that negate or cancel magic. If freed before being completely drained, a creature can make a Fortitude save (DC 26) to remove each negative level after 24 hours



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

have passed and the levels can be removed normally. If the creature loses enough levels to die, it can be brought back to life. A demonship can operate for one month per level it has stolen.

Helm Jewel (Su): Every demonship is attuned to a fist-sized jewel. Any creature can attune itself to the jewel as well by spending an hour meditating on it. The demonship will then develop a telepathic link with the jewel owner so that they can communicate telepathically up to 7 miles away. The demonship obeys all the commands of the jewel owner. If the creature that attunes to the jewel is of any alignment except chaotic evil, it must roll a Will save (DC 18) each day it remains attuned to the jewel. Failure means that the creature is dominated by the demonship's will and walks right into the soul propulsion chamber unless stopped. The creature can break the attunement at will.

Telepathy (Su): A demonship can communicate telepathically with any creature on board of it and with a designated captain up to seven miles away, regardless of language.

Weeper

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 16d8+80 (152 hp)

Initiative: +3 (-3 Dex, +6 sensitive vines)

Speed: 5 ft

AC: 23 (-2 Size, -3 Dex, +18 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 bite +21 melee; 8 vines +20 (19-20/x2) melee

Damage: Bite 1d8+7; vines 2d6+7 and poison

Space/Reach: 10 ft x 10 ft/15 ft

Special Attacks: Lamentation (Su), poison (Ex), stranglehold (Ex)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/cold iron or good, SR 10, tremorsense (Ex), frightful presence (Su), sensitive vines (Ex), essence fruit (Su)

Saves: Fort +15, Ref +7, Will +10

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 3, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 16

Skills: Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +17, Search +8, Spellcraft +3, Spot +14, Use Rope +9, Survival +11

Feats: Alertness, Improved Critical (vines), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (vines), Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary or grove (2-5)

CR: 14

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 17-32 HD (Huge), 33-48 HD (Gargantuan)

The landscape of the Abyss is inconstant and many times even incongruous, so it is not such a strange spectacle to find a small grove of trees, gnarled as they may be, in the middle of a dry wasteland. Weepers take advantage of that kind of assumption. Mimicking the form of great weeping willows, weepers are in truth demons who feed on the unwary who tries to find shade and nourishment from its branches. They stalk the Abyssal landscape and appear on many of its layers, although they do much better in arid wastelands where they can tempt others with a false haven, than in lush forestlands where they can blend in with the surroundings but find competition from native plant monsters or creatures adept at dealing with trees that try to grab them.

For all the danger they pose, weepers are highly sought by many demons and planar travellers who hear of them, for they are in many ways similar to real trees in that what they feed, becomes something that others may feed on: fruit. Weepers bear fruit that is laden with demonic essence; it is the way that they store as if it was a receptacle but nobody knows what it does with it. Many minor demons have ended up as dry husks by trying to steal weepers' fruit in a bid to accumulate power, and demons like to impart the knowledge of the weepers' and their fruit's existence on mortals, omitting the little yet important detail about them being demons, not trees.

Weepers make a very good show on resembling trees; their thick and gnarled trunk is pitch black, as would befit Abyssal flora, with wide-ranging branches that eventually hang like that of a real weeping willow, except that the leaves are dark red and full of thorns, which are actually the weeper's claws. Its legs bury themselves in the ground to resemble roots and its skin even feels like bark, until it parts together to reveal a vertical mouth near ground level that shoots forward to attack. The laments that give a weeper its name come from the dozens of shrunken heads that hang right next to the essence fruits amongst the branches; the heads are the desiccated remains of previous victims, now acting like a musical instrument for the weeper's supernatural wailing.

Weepers migrate slowly and then root themselves in place to wait for prey. Weepers actually speak Common and Abyssal, but they are rather dull conversationalists and do not engage in talk too often.

Combat

Weepers pose as real trees and use their lamentation to attract victims. Either predators expecting to find easy prey or the rare but not impossible traveller with a kind soul. Once the first victim is in range, the weeper lashes out with its vines and tries to strangle. Any creature coming to the first victim's help will get attacked as well. The demon will try to cover all attackers with a maximum of eight, which is as far as it can concentrate. It will trust in its poison to incapacitate victims for later consumption.

Poison (Ex): Vine, Fortitude save (DC 15); initial damage 1d6 Dexterity and daze, secondary damage 1d4 Dexterity and daze. A target that suffers the damage is immune to additional dosages for one day.

Stranglehold (Ex): If the weeper scores a critical hit with a vine, it entangles tightly around a victim's neck in addition to its damage. The victim must beat the weeper in an opposed Strength check to break free, otherwise, he must make a Constitution check (DC 10) in order to hold his breath so suddenly. The save must be repeated each round, with the DC increasing by +1 for each previous success. When the victim fails one of these Constitution checks, he begins to suffocate. In the first round, he falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he suffocates. Once a victim falls unconscious, the weeper does not wait for it to die and raises him to a height of 10 feet. Other characters may attempt to break the victim free at any point by breaking the vine. The weeper's vines have only 10 hit points each, but do enjoy the creature's Damage Reduction. Regardless of how many vines are cut, the weeper always has its full 8-vines attack as it moves others to replace the cut ones.

Lamentation (Su): One or more of the suspended heads emits a weeping and sobbing noise. Every listener hears something that would attract them to the source: hunters will hear the baying of a wounded animal, caregivers would hear the quiet sobbing of a lost child, etc. All creatures within 100 feet of the weeper must make a Will save (DC 18) or be drawn to the demonic tree. The effect

stops working when a victim of the lamentation suffers damage from the weeper's attack. Creatures who save successfully or have the effect broken are immune to the weeper's lamentation for 24 hours. The weeper can suspend its frightful presence ability while it is attracting victims with this ability.

Tremorsense (Ex): A weeper can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Frightful Presence (Su): The weeper's appearance and the constant sobbing coming from it unsettles creatures nearby. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the weeper attacks. Creatures within a radius of 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 10HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a Will save (DC 21) remains immune to that weeper's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

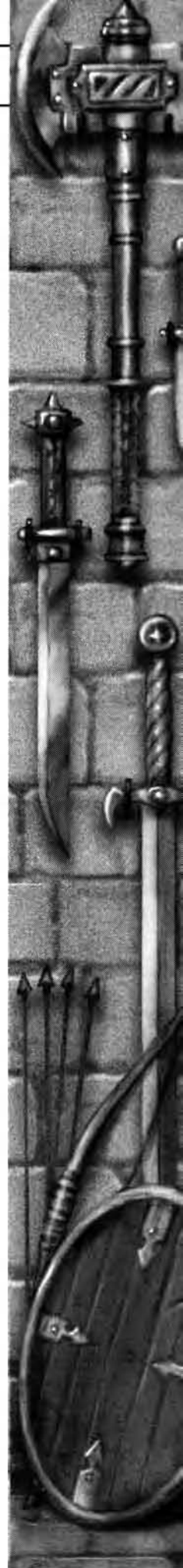
Essence Fruit (Su): The fruit from a weeper's branches can be harvested; each five fruits yield one power level of demonic essence (see the Methods of Warfare chapter for details on how to use demonic essence). Eating the fruit does provide sustenance despite its bitter taste, but for each fruit a character consumes he gains an evil aura of a level equal to the number of fruits he ate. While he has an evil aura, all the evil power levels from weeper fruits he eats stack together. The aura fades a week after the character eats the last fruit.

Sensitive Vines (Ex): The weeper's hanging branches and vines combine with its roots to give the demon an almost supernatural sense of its opponents movements, granting it a +6 insight bonus to initiative.

Telepathy (Su): Weepers can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that speaks Common or Abyssal.

Immunities: Weepers are immune to damage from bludgeoning weapons, even magical ones. They are also immune to poison and are not subject to critical hits.

Fire Vulnerability: Because they mimic plant life so well, weepers are also combustible, suffering double damage from fire effects.



Gaping Maw

Gargantuan Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 18d8+90 (171 hp)

Initiative: +2 (-2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft, burrow 10 ft

AC: 26 (-4 Size, -2 Dex, +22 natural armour)

Attacks: 1 bite +20 melee

Damage: Bite 2d10+5

Space/Reach: 20 ft x 20 ft/20 ft

Special Attacks: Snap attack (Ex), improved grab (Ex), swallow whole (Ex), Plane shift digestion (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 10/good, SR 20, tremorsense

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +11

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 6, Con 20, Int 5, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills: Hide +21*, Intimidate +7, Listen +15, Search +8, Spot +15, Survival +15

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Solitary

CR: 15

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 19-36 HD (Gargantuan)

One of the most dangerous methods of Abyssal travel, if not outright suicidal, is the gaping maw. These monstrous demons are nothing more than an appetite with legs, but their unique properties of their digestion makes them invaluable for many demons. Gaping maws rarely kill their victims, but simply defecate them into a different Abyssal layer after they bit a chunk out of them. It is an unorthodox method of travel, but demons make free use of it if they are strong enough and with a taste for pain, or as a nuisance disposal unit.

Gaping maws are big enough to swallow a balor but keep most of their great bulk underground, leaving only their gigantic mouths on the surface. These demons look like shapeless rock with six great legs supporting their weight. Their eyes rest at the end of small retractable antennae and can twist to face any direction. Their heads are big and round, almost indistinguishable from their neckless bodies, but they can turn and rotate almost in 360 degrees. They can open their mouth completely in a 180 degrees-angle and close them in a fraction of a second, usually snapping anything they are biting in two. Their mouths have at least a dozen rows of razor-sharp teeth curved inwards.

Gaping maws move slowly and rarely. Many stay in the same place for so long that they make it into maps, surprising everyone when they show that they can actually move. They can travel overland, but prefer to do so while underground.

Combat

There is a 50% chance that a gaping maw will be encountered burrowed and with its mouth wide open for all to see. The rest of the time they have their mouth closed and are very hard to notice (opposed Spot/Hide checks). Gaping maws snap their jaws at the first victim to come close and try to gobble every opponent down until there is no one else left.

Snap Attack (Ex): As a standard action, the gaping maw opens its jaws completely to their 180 degrees horror. Its next attack is delivered as a snap attack, gaining a +2 competence bonus to initiative and attack rolls. When performing a snap attack, the gaping maw's bite delivers a critical threat on a roll of 17-20 on the d20.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the gaping maw must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can attempt to swallow the foe.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A gaping maw can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+5 points of crushing damage. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 15). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

The demon's interior can hold one Huge, four Large, sixteen Medium-size, or sixty-four Small or smaller opponents.

Plane Shift Digestion (Sp): After a victim suffers 25 cumulative points of damage or remains swallowed for five rounds (whichever happens first), it makes a Fortitude check (DC 18) to avoid being transported to another layer of the Abyss. If the save succeeds, the victim must make new saving throws at the beginning of each round at the same DC until he escapes the demon's gizzard, dies crushed, the demon is killed or he fails and is transported away. A gaping maw's innards are attuned to a particular layer for an entire day, so every creature it swallows in that day ends up in the same layer, within 1d6x10

feet of the previous swallowed victim. When it goes to sleep, the gaping maw attunes to a different layer. There is a 5% chance that the gaping maw is attuned to the Astral Plane instead. The gaping maw's inner throat glows a certain colour corresponding to its destination, which can be ascertained by a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15).

Tremorsense (Ex): A gaping maw can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Skills: Gaping maws have a +8 racial bonus to Hide check, but they enjoy it only if they had a full-round movement to burrow.

DEMON LORDS

All Demon Lords are unique beings that differ wildly from one another and from all other demons. Many share the qualities of one demonic family or another, thus marking their origin or at least their preference in servants. The Demon Lords of the Tanar Brood are the most numerous and rule most of the layers in the Abyss, but there are still a few who pledge allegiance to no Tanar'ka, the most prominent of them being Iyaviht, Demon Lady of Jar'taska, and Gatekeeper, forsaken guardian of the Abyss.

Iyaviht, the Dark Whisper Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 30d8+150 (285 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+8 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft, fly 60 ft (perfect)

AC: 44 (-2 Size, +8 Dex, +28 natural armour)

Attacks: 2 claw +22 melee; 1 bite +20 melee; 4 hair strands +20 melee

Damage: Claw 2d4+4; bite 1d10+4; hair strand 2d6+4

Space/Reach: 5 ft x 30 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, spells, energy drain (Su), seduction (Su), summon demon (Sp)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 15/cold iron and good, SR 30, alternate form, incorporeal, jar'taska'ka qualities, whispers (Su)

Saves: Fort +17, Ref +20, Will +23

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 26, Con 20, Int 35, Wis 33, Cha 38

Skills: Appraise +24, Bluff +44, Concentration +35, Diplomacy +49, Disguise +39, Forgery +22,

Intimidate +34, Knowledge (arcana) +52, Knowledge (religion) +42, Knowledge (the planes) +50, Knowledge (history) +17, Listen +36, Move Silently +48, Perform +46, Search +32, Sense Motive +51, Spellcraft +47, Spot +39, Use Magic Device +49
Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Items, Expertise, Extend Spell, Quicken Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Still Spell, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Unique

CR: 27

Treasure: Double

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Iyaviht is the patroness of the jar'taska'ka, a subtle princess of deceit, treachery and dark knowledge. It remains a secret whether she used to be a jar'taska'ka demon or if she adopted her current form and powers out of sympathy of the shadow demons, but she presents herself as creature of utter darkness. Her preferred tactics always involve convoluted plots where even traitors are fulfilling part of her plans. She knows that the Tanar Demon Lords are much too powerful for her and her children and so she bides her time and hides in the Shadow Fortress, out of reach and notice of the rest of Abyssal society.

As she holds no claim to rule all of demonkind, Iyaviht is largely ignored by the other Demon Lords and their internecine wars, and she likes to keep them thinking that way. The only times that she associates with other Demon Lords is as a whore, selling her power to induce pleasure to the jaded lords of the Abyss; she has allowed a number of them to believe they have abused her, but she keeps them manoeuvring against each other while she learns their secrets and leaks them through various sources to the ears of other Demon Lords and even to mortals. Many archdemons have their True Names used by mortal demonologists because Iyaviht coaxed them from their Demon Lords and gave them to her jar'taska'ka, who in turn used them to lure mortals into serving the Demon Lady's aims.

She models herself as the heratru demons, but even more so. She appears as the most beautiful female specimen of whichever race she is mimicking, but her beauty is morbid, even by the strange standards of some of the planar races. Adorned by black pearls, polished obsidian and onyx, her garments are all black and fade with her flowing black hair. Her



eyes are dark pits that seem to absorb light and suck in everything they touch.

Combat

Iyaviht does not like to fight. She commands armies of creatures from the Plane of Shadows with the same ease that she commands the jar'taska'ka, but she finds herself in combat only when it befits her plans, preferring to flee if real danger approaches her. She becomes incorporeal when fighting starts, using her magic abilities to bolster her minions and trying to enchant the most powerful opponents to her side.

Seduction (Su): The Demon Lady of shadows can fill a target with every pleasure imaginable, condensed in a single moment or over a period of time. A target must make a Will save (DC 30) or be stunned for as long as Iyaviht maintains concentration and for one round after she stops. When the stun effect ends, the target must make a second Will save (DC 25) or become addicted to the sensation of the Demon Lady's attention; the target is magically charmed by Iyaviht and, every week he spends away from her, he suffers one point of Wisdom damage that he cannot recover until he is within a mile of her (and knowing that he is). A *break enchantment*, *remove curse*, and *dispel evil* effect can remove this perverse infatuation as can a *miracle* or *wish*. The other way to cure a target is to let his Wisdom drop to 0, after which he starts recovering the ability damage as normal. Iyaviht can use this ability over a range of 400 feet simply by looking at the target, but she can also deliver it through a touch attack with her claws with a +2 to the saving throw's DC, or through a scrying device with a -4 to the DC.

Whispers (Su): Iyaviht is not called the Dark Whisper for nothing. Everyone standing within 100 feet of Iyaviht hears a soft whispering inside their minds. They have no real effect except to impose a -4 penalty on all Listen and Concentration checks, but they seem to form words and phrases of great significance. Anyone who actually stops to listen will hear dark revelations that will expand their understanding of occult forces, but at the cost of their sanity. Anyone declaring to try to make out the words will automatically gain an Intelligence increase of +1, but suffer a Wisdom decrease of -2. This is not ability damage, so it cannot be healed. At the end of the day, anyone who suffered from the whispers can make a voluntary Will save (DC 25) to return his ability scores to what they were.

A creature is not affected by a second session of the whispers until 24 hours have passed.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by any of Iyaviht's normal attacks receive two negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 25). The Demon Lady can turn this ability on and off at will as a free action.

Incorporeal: Iyaviht can become incorporeal or solid at will as a move-equivalent action. She can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Spell-like Abilities: At will- *greater darkness*, *telekinesis*, *charm monster*, *lesser geas*, *nondetection*, *shadow walk*, *greater shadow conjuration*, *greater shadow evocation*; 3/day- *cone of cold*, *black tentacles*, *plane shift*, *mass invisibility*, *teleport without error* (self-only), *vanish*, *shades*; 1/day- *binding*, *mass charm*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 15th-level sorcerer (save DC 24 + spell level).

Spells: Iyaviht can cast arcane spells as a 15th level sorcerer (Sor15, 6/10/10/9/9/9/6): 0 level - *arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *light*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st level- *burning hands*, *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *reduce*; 2nd level - *acid arrow*, *cat's grace*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *summon swarm*; 3rd level - *dispel magic*, *haste*, *magic circle against good*, *sleet storm*; 4th level - *confusion*, *fear*, *ice storm*, *scrying*; 5th level - *hold monster*, *nightmare*, *telepathic bond*, *sending*; 6th level - *chain lightning*, *freezing sphere*, *true seeing*; 7th level - *finger of death*, *simulacrum*.

Alternate Form (Su): Iyaviht can assume any humanoid form of Small to Huge size as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *polymorph self* spell but allows only humanoid forms. While using this ability, Iyaviht gains a +10 circumstance bonus to Disguise checks.

Summon Demon (Sp): Three times per day, Iyaviht can automatically summon any two of the following groups: 4d10 shadelings, 4d10 dark lanterns, 2d8 jar'ugr, 1d4 jethulet, 1d4 hamedu or 1d2 heratru.

Telepathy (Su): Iyaviht can communicate telepathically with any creature within 400 feet regardless of language.

IYAVIHT'S CULT

The Demon Lady of Dark Whispers likes to keep educated cultists and therefore sponsors mostly arcane and heretic cults. She is amused by the half-blinded efforts of spellcasters, who think they are above everyone else but show they are just like any other mortal, casting their lot with demons despite knowing better.

Iyaviht's favourite cult is the Society of Obscured Thought, a small group of high-level wizards and sorcerers who became easy prey for her jar'taska'ka enticers. The ranking members of the cult make frequent travels to the Shadow Fortress in the Abyss, where they learn various forbidden secrets that increase their power, but slowly drive them mad. The lower ranks of the cult consist in students and novice spellcasters who do not deserve the Lady's attentions, but are a present for her shadow demon children. Only those who survive the mentoring of a heratru deserve to have Iyaviht's counsel and rise to the cult's top positions.

Gatekeeper

Huge Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

HD: 28d8+224 (350 hp)

Initiative: +10 (+10 Dex)

Speed: 80 ft

AC: 42 (-2 Size, +10 Dex, +24 natural armour)

Attacks: 3 bites +27 melee; 2 greataxes +22 melee

Damage: Bite 2d8+9; greataxe 1d12+9

Space/Reach: 10 ft x 20 ft/10 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, *anchor curse* (Sp), *dimension lock* (Sp), *trip* (Ex)

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 15/cold iron and good, SR 20; poison and electricity immunity; acid, cold, fire resistance 20; nameless (Su), geased, *locate gate* (Sp), *Master Key*.

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +22, Will +21

Abilities: Str 29, Dex 31, Con 26, Int 23, Wis 28, Cha 19

Skills: Climb +39, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +24, Handle Animal +19, Hide +42, Intimidate +33, Jump +50, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (the planes) +46, Listen +43, Move Silently +30, Sense Motive +21, Spellcraft +36,

Swim +24, Survival +44

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility, Power Attack, Run, Track

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organisation: Unique

CR: 27

Treasure: Standard

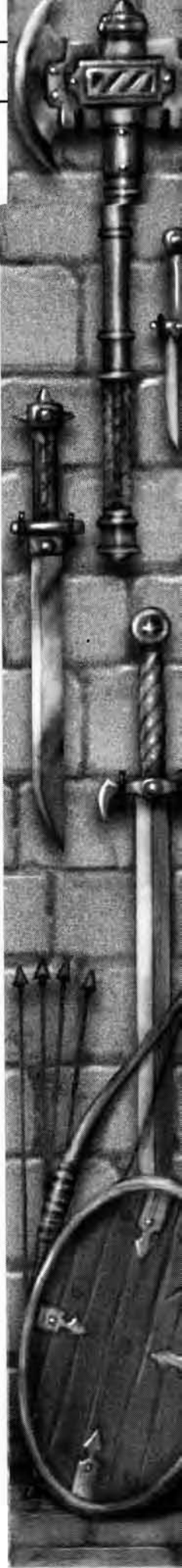
Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

The Wasteland of Gates often resounds with terrible howls of rage, signalling the approach of Gatekeeper, a powerless Demon Lord. While still a force to be reckoned with, Gatekeeper is but a mockery of itself, a true prisoner of the Abyss without a horde nor the means to ever regain it and with greatly diminished power. However, it still commands great respect from lesser demons as it is the chosen to keep open the byways between layers, and the entrances into the Abyss protected. Amongst all demons, Gatekeeper is the only one to have free rein in the visits it gives to any layer.

Once it was one of the greatest explorers amongst demonkind, the only one able to freely travel the planes without attracting attention. Legends tell that once it even intruded into Hell and was not discovered until years had passed. Jealous of its power, many Demon Lords banded together to ambush Gatekeeper as it returned from one of its many sojourns. They succeeded in dealing heavy damage and stripping it of its power but, just as they were about to consume it, the once-mighty Demon Lord gave up its name to the Abyss itself, namely one of Those Who Cannot Be Named. Without a True Name, the Demon Lord was impervious to its foes' powers and it was able to escape. Along with its Name the demon lost most of its power and, as a slave to the Abyss in general, it was tasked with the function that gave it its new denomination: Keeper of the Gates. The great demonic explorer was now cursed never to leave its home plane, and to help others do so. The Abyss granted it powers over travel and now it runs mainly across the Wasteland of Gates, fulfilling its duty as guardian of the Abyssal byways, plotting its revenge against those who acted against it and now profit from its abilities.

Gatekeeper has the lower torso of a large six-legged dog with mangy fur, the torso of a well-built human with jet-black skin and three long snake-like heads coming from its neck and ending in three canine



CREATURES OF THE ABYSS

heads covered in patched fur and scales. A great key made of souls hangs on its chest, which is rumoured to be the source of Gatekeeper's powers, as well as its imprisonment.

Combat

Gatekeeper is zealous and furious, but not a fool. It attacks by unleashing its spell-like abilities to incapacitate as many foes as it can so that it can cut them down as he runs through a group. It will then fight very smartly with its two greataxes and its three canine heads.

Anchor Curse (Sp): This is the same as the *dimensional anchor* spell as if cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, (DC 19) except that the duration of the effect is measured in days, not minutes.

Dimension Lock (Sp): Gatekeeper can counter any spell, effect or ability that has something to do with summonings, movement and travel, such as but not limited to *expeditious retreat*, *jump*, *summon monster*, *ethereal jaunt* and *gate*. As a free action and even outside its turn, Gatekeeper can make a caster check (18th-level) to dispel any such magic within range. Effects already in place are negated, while effects that are being activated in the same round fizzle.

Trip (Ex): When Gatekeeper that with a bite attack, he can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip Gatekeeper.

Nameless: Gatekeeper has no Greater nor True Name, so it is immune to all sort of summoning, binding and controlling. It is also immune to mind-affecting spells and gains a +5 inherent bonus against *magic circle against chaos/evil* and other restraining magic. It cannot use demonic essence in any way and cannot use any sort of summoning magic.

Geased: As part of its service to the Abyss, Gatekeeper is under a powerful *geas*. If an opponent greets it before combat starts and asks for directions, Gatekeeper is forced to give them. Asking Gatekeeper to act as a guide has a 50% chance of success. In any case, Gatekeeper will give correct answers although it tries to subvert the questions to hide as much information as it cans. When acting as a guide, it always takes the safest route to the requested destination. Gatekeeper is not forced to

answer the questions or requests of the same group more than once a day. In addition, a request for it to open a gate to any other destination (including off the Abyss) has a 25% chance of success, although Gatekeeper must refuse this request to other demons. Gatekeeper cannot attack potential foes that greet it properly and ask for its help until a day has passed or until anyone in the group attacks it first.

Master Key: The Master Key is a minor artefact that powers all of Gatekeeper's abilities. It hangs tightly from its chest and cannot be removed by any means except killing the demon and taking it from its cold body. The Key is intelligent and holds a portion of the Abyss in itself. Any non-demonic creature that holds the Master Key gains three negative levels that disappear the moment the creature lets go of the key. It can use Gatekeeper's spell-like abilities as listed below, but any user other than Gatekeeper must beat the key in a Charisma check (DC 25) for every order. Demons who hold it immediately become the next Gatekeeper, freeing the former holder of that title.

Locate Gate (Su): Gatekeeper is aware of the location of all the gates in the Wasteland of Gates, and is also aware of gates in other layers within 10 miles from itself. In addition, Gatekeeper can also sense the use of any travelling magic, particularly extraplanar magic with a successful Wisdom check (DC 10 + spell level). The demon can tell whether the magic is used to arrive or depart, and the kind of user of such magic. This detection ability extends for 100 miles around the demon in the Wasteland of Gates, and for 10 miles in any other layer.

Spell-like Abilities: At will- *dimension door*, *knock*, *arcane lock*, *dimensional anchor*, *magic circle against chaos/evil/good/law*; 3/day- *banishment*, *hold monster*, *teleport without error* (self-only), *forbiddance*, *plane shift* (Abyss layers only); 1/day- *maze*, *phase door*; 1/week- *imprisonment*, *freedom*, *gate* (planar travel affecting other creatures only). These abilities are as the spells cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Telepathy (Su): Gatekeeper can communicate telepathically with any creature within 400 feet regardless of language.

Gatekeeper's Cult

Previous to the loss of its Name, Gatekeeper built a large cult of planar travellers and explorers. The

cult survived Gatekeeper's disappearance until a courageous cultist travelled to the Abyss and learned of his master's fate. The cult changed accordingly and now smuggles essence into the lower plane, to try and give Gatekeeper sufficient power to shake off its enchantments and be free again.

The cult shed off its name in sympathy with their imprisoned master and has no central organisation, each cultist travelling great distances to help amass power for the master. Members of Gatekeeper's cult travel around a lot, acting as fraudulent guides and explorers who ultimately bring doom to their clients. The eldest cultists keep communication with Gatekeeper and travel regularly to the Abyss, where the demon hides their arrival and their presence from other demons, conducting exchanges and consultations that the cultists carry back to their followers.

THE NAMELESS ONES

In the deepest recesses of the Abyss lie what many have spoken as the First Demons, even if many do not consider them to be fiends at all, but another magnitude of evil being... one for which the 'evil' label may not even apply in its wickedness. The Nameless Ones are referred to by various titles and in fearful whispers, as even demons are afraid of what could happen should these primordial beings stir in their slumber. These beings are so vast and terrible that no statistics can describe them, and their inclusion in any campaign should be considered a plot point, or background information to give the Abyss and its demons a more alien aspect.

The Dancer in Darkness

As the different planes in the universe spin and dance around each other, so the infinite layers of the Abyss mock the music of the spheres in an obscene cacophony of corruption. Demons whisper that the movement of the Abyssal layers follows the rhythm set by the Dancer in Darkness, who put the first spin on the Abyss and thus created the way it is made up. Those who listen to the chorus of laments in every Abyssal layer could be able to make out the symphony of the Dancer's dreams, if they are willing to part with their own. Walking endlessly and aimlessly to the beat and pulse of each layer in the demonic realms can guide a supplicant to the presence of the Dancer, where the remnants of its

sanity are stripped away and it joins the circle of insane cavorting that is said to sustain the Abyss.

A few mad souls and demons claim to have come away of the Dancer's unholy revelry with great insights on the workings of the planes, but the empty fury reflected from the depths of such a creature's eyes can be enough to deter even the bravest demon.

He Who Dreams

Even demons can have nightmares, and when they do, they say that it is because He Who Dreams touched their minds. Mortals do not usually receive a sending from He Who Dreams, as the experience shatters their minds in an instant, but demons receive terrible insights when their already corrupted souls get in touch with an even greater scourge on creation. He Who Dreams sleeps so soundly that its dreams often become reality in the Abyss, spawning nightmarish creatures and some say creating the chaotic weather and environments of the plane. No one really knows where He Who Dreams could lay, but demons and the few mortals whose dreams overlapped the ancient terror's can be found wandering the Astral Plane in search of greater insights and deeper madness.

The Foundation

This demon is hunger personified and even evil deities fear its awakening. Of all of the Nameless, the Foundation is the only one whose location is widely known, proving the existence of its kind. The Foundation does not reside in a layer of the Abyss so much as it *is* a layer of the Abyss. Demonic scholars say that when the Dancer in Darkness stopped its mad cavorting, the Foundation arrived and ate the first and strongest layer but the feat was too much for it and sunk into a dreamless stupor, sinking to the bottom of the Abyss and leaving the Wasteland of Gates as the first layer of the plane.

If anything, the Foundation is the less malignant of the Nameless, as visitors to its inner caverns can subsist without enduring a constant assault on their sanity as long as they do not stop to contemplate the vastness of the being whose innards they walk in. The layer is a series of caves, conduits, chambers and other formations made from a soft, viscous material. No gate from outside the Abyss can reach the Foundation, but several entrances from the Wasteland of Gates exist as the primordial demon consumed them when it engulfed the layer. Reaching the



exterior 'skin' of the Foundation is impossible even by divine magic, and finding any sort of recognisable organ leaves many planar explorers frustrated or horrified at the implications this could have on the Foundation's true size.

The Demon Mother

Evidence of the existence of the Nameless is elusive, and it would be non-existent if it were not for the gates leading to the Foundation or the occasional whispers heard from He Who Dreams and the Dancer in Darkness, but the Demon Mother is a tantalising myth. If she exists at all, the Demon Mother would be the origin of all demonkind and a power beyond that of deities. There are cults to the Demon Mother amongst demons and mortals much to the chagrin of the Demon Lords, who seek out these cultists and destroy them for choosing to worship an improbable being instead of them. Intriguingly, high priests of the Demon Mother cult are true clerics capable of casting profane magic but it remains in doubt whether they get this power from their faith in the abstract force of evil, or they are really granted by such a being as the Demon Mother.

The Silence at the End of Eternity

As the Demon Mother is the beginning of demonkind, the Silence at the End of Eternity is its end, and the end of all things. The less brutal of the demons who devote some thought to abstract matters give certain worship to the Silence, although not at the visceral level as the cult of the Demon Mother. Rather than an actual being, the Silence at the End of Eternity functions more like a metaphor and a curse amongst demons, a legend of the end of time and an assurance of their final victory over all their enemies. The Silence at the End of Eternity is a very real being, however, but it exists outside of time even as demons count it. It observes everything with a dispassionate and alien glance, waiting for its chance to devour everything that is.

DEMONIC TEMPLATES

The Abyss has a maddening variety of fiends crawling and spawning from its depths, from the lowly souls of the damned to the powerful archdemons that lord over their underlings in their bid to become Demon Lords.

Damned Soul

Condemned for their evil during life or victims of great evil themselves, damned souls roam the Abyss in a mindless, tormented haze, barely aware of anything beyond their pain. Damned souls can arrive to the Abyss for many reasons, most of them having to do with the deeds the original creature committed in life, but others can become damned souls because they were sacrificed in an unholy ritual, they sold their souls for power to a demonic patron or wandered into the Abyss and died before finding their way out.

Damned souls are pale shades of their living selves; they conform to the appearance of the demonic family that claimed them as rather pathetic versions of the demons' own visage. Damned souls that go to the Tanar resemble their living forms, but all colour is drained from their features, which are now twisted in an endless and silent scream of agony. They appear haggard and covered with a film of dust, their eyes empty of all light and stripped bare except for rags that show the signs of torture. Van'g'ka damned souls take the form of larvae the size of a dog; jar'taska'ka damned are formless shadows roughly the same size as their living body, and nuyul'ka damned are five-foot long transparent worms with their once-living head on one end. There are no casteless damned souls as there are no demons left to claim them properly.

'Damned' is a template that can be added to any living creature with Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma scores of at least 3 each (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'outsider.' It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Change to 2d8; apply any bonus from Constitution to the hit points.

AC: Same as base creature. The creature may be wearing armour similar to that he wore in life, but it is useless. Damned souls used as cannon fodder in a horde may be equipped with simple demon-crafted armour.

Attacks: Base attack bonus changes to +2; apply any bonus from size and Strength.

Special Attacks: The damned soul loses all supernatural and spell-like attacks.

Special Qualities: The damned soul loses all supernatural and spell-like abilities but gains the following:

Immunities: The damned gains immunities depending on which demonic family gains control of it.

Resistances: The damned gains resistances depending on which demonic family gains control of it.

Demonic family	Immunities	Resistances
Tanar	Electricity, poison	Fire and acid 20
Van'g	Bludgeoning weapons	Fire and electricity 10
Jar'taska	Cold, disease, poison, paralysis and death effects	Fire and acid 15
Nuyul	Disease, poison, and death effects	Cold and electricity 15

Additional Special Qualities:

- Damage Reduction 5/silver
- Slow: The damned are limited to one partial action each round.
- Van'g'ka damned have a gestalt ability with other damned; they have two partial actions per round when around other van'g'ka damned.
- Jar'taska'ka damned have light vulnerability and have three-quarter concealment when in darkness.
- Nuyul'ka damned have all psionic attack and defence modes and manifest the following psionic powers at will: *detect psionics*, *sense psionics* and *glide*.
- Damned souls belonging to the Tanar are mindless, immune to mind-affecting magic or powers of any kind.

Base Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature.

Skills: None; the damned has no skills.

Feats: None; the damned has no feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any land in the Abyss.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5) or caravan (1 CR 5+ demon, 2d10 damned)

Challenge Rating: 1

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Treasure: None

Advancement: None; the damned soul gets 'promoted' to a minor demon type after a while.

Imbued

Whether hunting for it or receiving it as a gift, mortals and demonic essence do not mix well.

The surge of power from a demon's essence is an exhilarating rush for any spellcaster, giving him a false sense of power. Demonic essence is a drug, and overdosing has very unpleasant consequences. The imbued is a spellcaster who lives for the rush of demonic essence, going to greater extremes to obtain it and channelling so much through his body that his very soul becomes warped by the constant exposure to the primal evil of demonic essence.

'Imbued' is a template that can be added to any non-outsider, living creature that can cast arcane spells or use spell-like abilities (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type remains the same. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Add +IHD of the creature's dice type. If the creature has more than one dice type, use the one that provides the arcane spellcasting ability or the one with the most dice.

AC: Natural armour improves by +2.

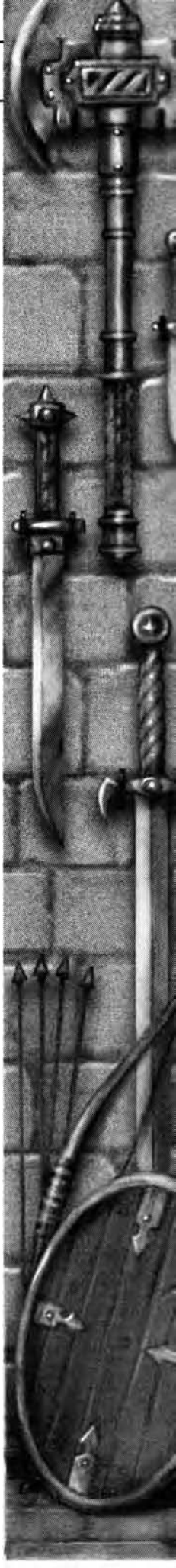
Special Attacks: The creature retains all its special attacks and gains the following:

Unholy Blast (Su): The imbued can fire a blast of unholy fire that deals 1d6 for every 4 levels or HD. The imbued suffers damage equal to the number of dice of its unholy blast.

Corrupt Magic (Su): The creature can make part of the damage from any of its spells or spell-like abilities that deal damage expressed in dice into unholy damage. The imbued replaces up to half of the number of damage dice from the spell or ability into unholy damage dice.

Evil Caster: The imbued casts all spells with an evil descriptor at +1 caster level. Spell-like abilities that mimic a spell with an evil descriptor are used at +1 caster level from the one indicated in the ability's description.

Special Qualities: An imbued has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus darkvision with a range of 60 feet. He also gains Spell Resistance 10 + Charisma modifier.



Evil Creature: The creature gains the evil descriptor if it did not have it already. The imbued suffers double damage from holy or blessed weapons.

Demonic Vessel: The creature's tolerance to demonic essence grows to such extent that it can act as a receptacle for it. The amount of time that he can retain demonic essence power levels (see *Methods of Warfare*) is measured in days, not hours.

Essence Addiction: The imbued must consume demonic essence. If a week passes in which the creature has no power levels of demonic essence in its body, it gains two negative levels. He cannot remove these levels by any means except by absorbing even one power level of demonic essence. The negative levels can also be removed by the means of a *wish* or *miracle*, but this cures the creature of its condition and he loses all the benefits of the imbued template.

Base Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Same as the base creature.

Organisation: Same as the base creature.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

Alignment: Change to evil.

Treasure: Same as the base creature.

Advancement: By character class.

Half-Demon

By a twist of fate or by virtue of their ultimate ability to corrupt, demons can sire offspring with living creatures. These unfortunate beings are conceived in acts of deceit or depravity as demons pay a visit to the Material Plane and, as part of the horror they unleash around them when running loose, they impregnate females of any species that tickle their fancy. The heritage of a half-demon is apparent from birth, with the child or pup being born with unnatural features depending on the demonic parent that sired it. The most common of the half-demons come from the brood of Tanar, who have more opportunities to visit other planes, but the van'g'ka, jar'taska'ka and even many casteless demons take whatever chance they get to place their little contribution to the degeneration of everything in creation.

Children born from a Tanar'ka parent retain most of the features of their mortal parents, with the addition of horns, strange glowing eyes, bat-like wings and razor-sharp talons; those born from the van'g'ka are abominations that cross the features of their mortal parent with those of a horrendous and alien insect. The most fortunate are perhaps the children of the jar'taska'ka, whose features grow shadowy and somewhat malleable, but are all disquietingly beautiful.

'Half-demon' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'outsider.' It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here. Note that this is the same as the half-fiend template found in *Core Rulebook III*, but tailored to fit the extended demonic families found in this book.

Speed: The half-demons from all demonic families have a 50% chance of having wings; the Tanar'ka and casteless half-demons have bat-wings, the van'g'ka offspring have insect-like wings covered by a protective carapace (included in the natural armour increase below) and those of the jar'taska'ka can take off with wings made of solid shadow, resembling raven wings. The creature can fly at the base creature's normal speed (average manoeuvrability).

AC: Offspring of a casteless demon or from Tanar's brood gain a +1 increase to natural armour; children of the van'g'ka gain a +2 increase and those of the jar'taska'ka gain a +1 insight bonus to AC when they are in shadows only.

Attacks: Offspring of the Tanar gain bite and claw attacks in addition to the base creature's attacks, if it did not have them already. Offspring of the jar'taska'ka can envelop their natural attacks in solid shadow-stuff, although this does not count as the Improved Unarmed Strike feat.

Damage: If the base creature does not have bite and claw attacks, use the damage values in the table below. Otherwise, use the values below or the base creature's damage, whichever is greater. Offspring of the jar'taska'ka can deal +1d4 cold damage to their unarmed attacks.

Size	Bite Damage	Claw Damage
Fine	1	-
Diminutive	1d2	1
Tiny	1d3	1d2
Small	1d4	1d3
Medium-size	1d6	1d4
Large	1d8	1d6
Huge	2d6	2d8
Gargantuan	2d8	2d6
Colossal	4d6	2d8

Special Attacks: A half-demon retains all the special attacks of the base creature. Half-demons with an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher possess the following spell-like abilities depending on their demonic family (nuyul'ka are incapable of siring corporeal children), using their level as the caster level, as specified in the table below. Unless otherwise indicated, the ability is usable once per day.

Special Qualities: A half-demon has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus darkvision with

Level	Casteless and Tanar Brood	Van'g'ka	Jar'taska'ka
1-2	Darkness 3/day	Magic fang	Darkness 3/day
3-4	Desecrate	Summon swarm	Scare
5-6	Unholy blight	Greater magic fang	Deeper darkness 3/day
7-8	Poison 3/day	Haste	Suggestion
9-10	Contagion	Insect plague	Greater shadow conjuration
11-12	Blasphemy	Circle of death	Greater shadow evocation
13-14	Unholy aura 3/day, unhallow	Blasphemy	Shadow walk 2/day
15-16	Horrid wilting	Antipathy	Etherealness
17-18	Summon monster IX (casteless or Tanar only)	Summon monster IX (van'g'ka only)	Summon monster IX (jar'taska'ka only)
19+	Destruction	Disintegrate	Plane shift

a range of 60 feet. Half-demons gain different immunities and resistances depending on their demonic family.

Demonic family	Immunities	Resistances
Tanar and Casteless	Electricity, poison	Fire and acid 20
Van'g	Bludgeoning weapons	Fire and electricity 10
Jar'taska	Cold, disease, poison, paralysis and death effects	Fire and acid 15

- *Jar'taska'ka Additional Special Qualities:* Light vulnerability and one half concealment when in darkness.

Base Saves: Same as the base creature

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as indicated below depending on the demonic family.

Skills: A half-demon has 8 skill points, plus its Intelligence modifier, per Hit Die. Treat skills from

the base creature's list as class skills and other skills as cross-class. If the creature has a class, it gains skills for class levels normally.

Feats: Half-demons have one feat for every four levels or the base creature's total of feats, whichever is greater.

Climate/Terrain: Same as either the base creature or the demon.

Organisation: Same as the base creature.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2

Alignment: Always evil (any)

Treasure: Same as the base creature

Advancement: Same as the base creature

Soulless

Tragic ballads and folk legendary speak of those who have lost their soul to the tricks of a demon, or bartered it away in return of short-lived power and riches. The people who enjoy such tales have



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Ability	Casteless and Tanar Brood	Van'g'ka	Jar'taska'ka
Str	+4	+4	+0
Dex	+4	+2	+4
Con	+2	+4	+2
Int	+4	+0	+4
Wis	+0	+0	+2
Cha	+2	+2	+4

no idea how close to the truth they are. Abuse of demonic favours or direct negotiation of the soul as currency soon leave that creature without its soul, the only possession it will carry beyond death. Soulless creatures exist undetected, their empty husks still moving by the will of a listless mind while the core of their true being screams in torment in an obscure corner of the Abyss. Souls are not lost just like that, a soulless basically gives it away voluntarily, and a demon claims it with glee. This demon is now the creature's owner, allowing the body to live without its soul so as to have an agent in the Material Plane. The soulless knows that he has no life anymore, that the demon can cut the link between body and soul and bring true death at its whim and completely unable to disobey the demon's commands... and not really caring anymore.

'Soulless' is a template that can be added to any living creature with a Charisma score of at least 3 (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type remains unchanged. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Special Attacks: The soulless is an empty husk that tries to fill itself. The base creature retains all special attacks and gains the following:

Energy Drain (Su): The soulless can wreath its hands or other natural attacks with a coruscating black aura and impose two negative levels on a successful touch attack. The soulless can activate or deactivate this attack form at will and a character's unarmed attack using it counts as an armed attack for purposes of attacks of opportunity. The difficulty for the Fortitude save to remove these levels is 10 plus half the creature's HD or levels.

Special Qualities: The damned soul loses all supernatural and spell-like abilities but gains the following:

Detect Souls (Su): The soulless is constantly aware of how creatures around him still have what he gave up. This ability works similarly to the *detect thoughts* spell except it detects creatures with a Charisma score of at least 1 on the first round on concentration, the number of souls and their relative strength (see below) on the second round, and their alignment on the third round (creatures are allowed a Will save to resist their alignment being read, DC equal to the half the soulless HD or level plus Wisdom modifier).

Immunities: The soulless is immune to spells and effects of the Enchantment school as well as all mind-affecting spells and abilities except those coming from the demon that owns his soul, in which case the soulless automatically fails every saving throw. The soulless also suffers a -5 morale penalty to all saving throws against Enchantment and mind-affecting effects from demons of CR 7 and higher.

Empty of Will: Without a soul, the creature is unable to power some of its abilities that depend on the strength of its personality and its connection to the larger world. Despite its score in Wisdom and Charisma, the soulless's Wis and Cha modifiers are always +0. This applies to all skill checks and saving throws as well as to calculating the DC of spells and all ability characteristics that depend on Wisdom and Charisma modifiers. Negative modifiers due to low ability scores still apply.

Planar Contact (Sp): Once per week, the soulless may contact telepathically the demon that owns his soul as if with a *contact other plane* spell cast by a sorcerer of his HD or character level. Use the 'Outer Planes, demideity' row on the contact table for the possible results. The soulless is immune to the Intelligence/Charisma decrease as he no longer has a soul that resents the contact. The demonic owner can block contact or even initiate it at will.

Base Saves: Same as the base creature, do not count the Wis modifier to Will saves.

Abilities: Same as the base creature; Wis and Cha modifiers become +0 if positive, but the score does not change.

Skills: Same as the base creature; do not apply positive Wis and Cha modifiers to pertinent skill.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Same as the base creature.
Organisation: Same as the base creature.
Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.
Alignment: Always neutral evil.
Treasure: Same as the base creature.
Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Archdemon

The generals of the demonic hordes, archdemons are the next step in a demon's growth from its hypothetical origins as a damned soul to one step removed from becoming a Demon Lord. They tower over others of the same species and their aspect is much more fearsome, accentuating all that makes a demon terrible. Archdemons are never content with their position, even if they have gained overlordship of their own Abyssal layer, they want more. They want the power of a Demon Lord to command greater hordes as an undisputed monarch and the bid towards godhood.

'Archdemon' is a template that can be added to any outsider creature of the demon species (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'outsider.' It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size: Increase by one size category, maximum of Gargantuan.
Hit Dice: Increase by +6HD, minimum of 15HD.
Speed: Increase all forms of movement by +20ft.
AC: Archdemons gain a +8 increase to natural armour. Apply the new size modifier.
Attacks: Same as the base creature.
Damage: All damage from natural weapons increase by one die of the same type.
Special Attacks: An archdemon retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following:

Ability Frequency: The archdemon can use all of its supernatural and spell-like abilities one additional time per day. Abilities accessible a number of times per week or month are now usable that same number of times per day. Abilities that could be used three times per day can now be used at will.

All DCs to resist the archdemon's special attacks increase by a base amount of +2, plus any modifier from an increased key ability.

Spellcaster: The archdemon can now cast spells as a

sorcerer of half its HD; it has access to the spells in the Chaos and Evil cleric domains.

Special Qualities: An archdemon has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus double its darkvision range. The base creature chooses one form of damage it is resistant to and is now immune to it. All resistance scores are increased by +5. Increase Damage Reduction by 10 points of damage, and by +1 to the enhancement needed to pierce it. Spell Resistance increases by +10.

Demonic Command (Su): The archdemon can issue orders to any other demon as if by the *command* ability as if cast by a 20th-level sorcerer.

Summon Demons (Sp): The demon's ability to summon others is more powerful. Add one die to the number of demons of each species the base creature could summon; if there is no die, assign a 1d6. Add another species from the base creature's demonic family, with 1d4 being the number of them who arrive. All chances to summon other demons are increased to 100%.

Protection from Good/Law (Sp): Archdemons are surrounded by an aura of utter evil that protects them against the forces of good as per the spells of the same names as if cast by a sorcerer of the same level as its HD (max 20th). If the effect is dispelled, the archdemon can reactivate it as a free action at the beginning of its turn.

Base Saves: Same as the base creature.
Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +6 Dex +2, Con +2, Int +4, Wis +4, Cha +6.
Skills: An archdemon gain 48 skill points, plus its Intelligence modifier multiplied by 6. Treat skills from the base creature's list as class skills and other skills as cross-class. If the creature has a class, it gains skills for class levels normally.
Feats: Same as the base creature plus two additional feats.

Climate/Terrain: Same as either the base creature or the demon.

Organisation: Same as the base creature.
Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +4
Alignment: Same as the base creature.
Treasure: Same as the base creature
Advancement: By character class.



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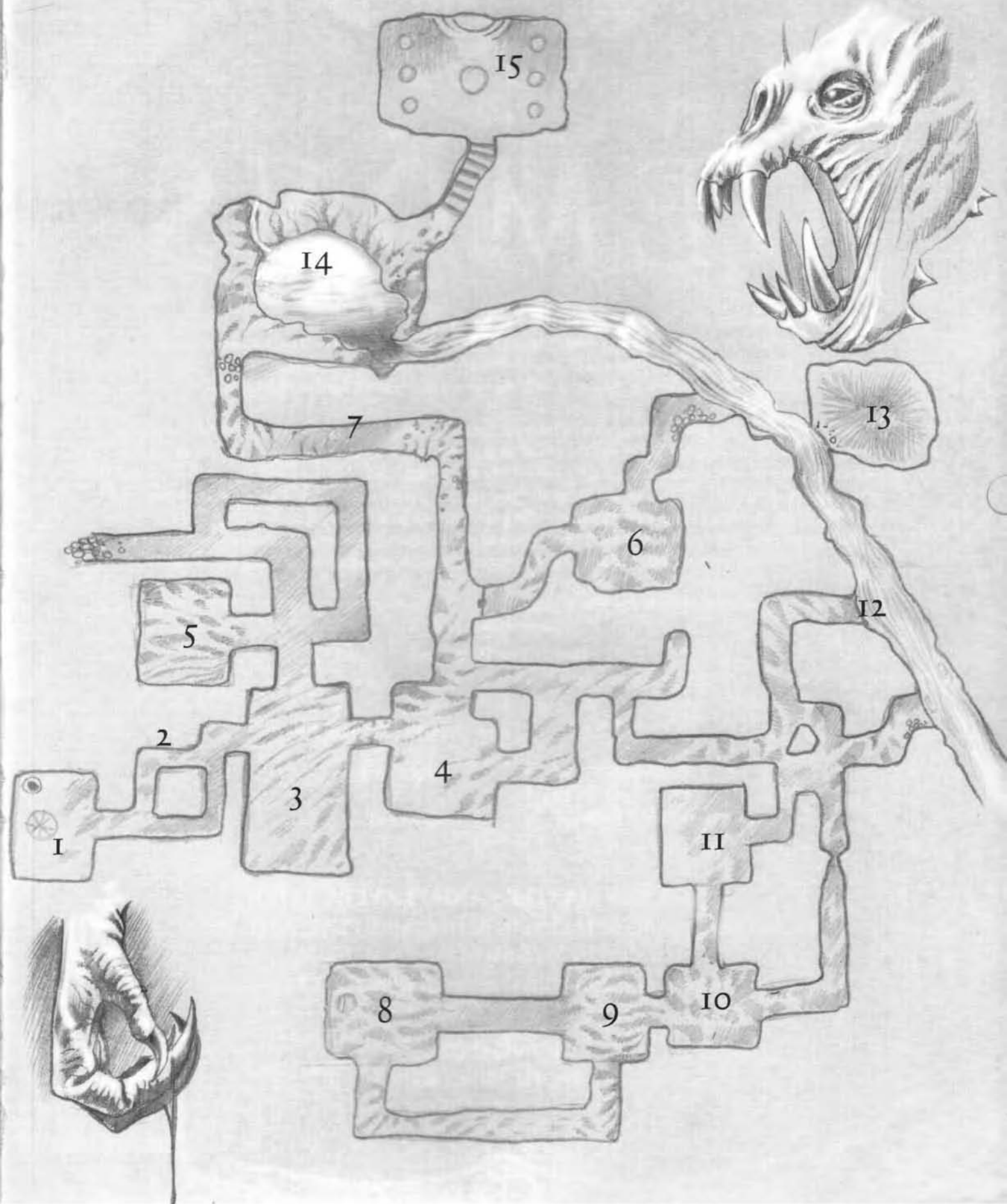
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The Underground Level



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THE
SLAYER'S
GUIDE
TO

DEMONS

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