

# ESSENTIAL ENEMIES 1

# THINGS FROM BEYOND



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Requires **Old-School Essentials**

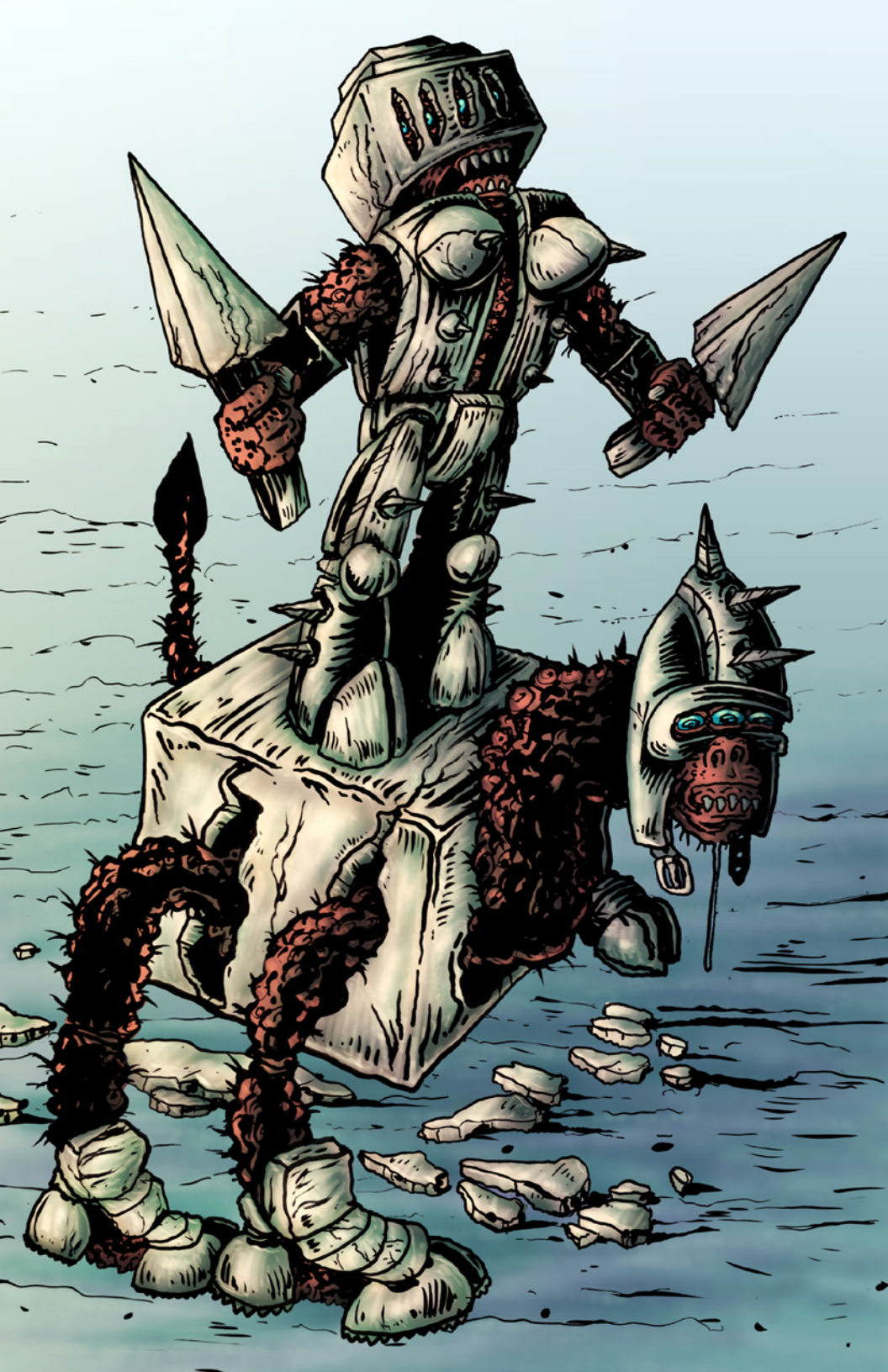
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# ASTRAL PALADIN

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Duke Vehasir has hired a new court wizard to summon eldritch horrors for him to suppress the unruly peasants who resist his iron-handed rule. Koros Etkadir supposedly hails from a small county in the south, although none of those who call the duke's court their home have ever heard of it. The duke is only concerned with results, however, and these have been provided. Etkadir has summoned a champion from beyond the stars and planets we know, from an age one million years in the future. Who better to send against the duke's foes, to trample them down like grain, and slaughter them like pigs at the abattoir?

The duke's so-called Astral Paladin (and his steed, too) are mammal-like creatures that share the same red, warty skin. What he is called in his own language is not known to humans, nor would he care to tell them. He comes from a world where intelligence is

measured in eyes, and even his steed has more than humans do. Likewise, Etkadir has no interest in communicating with beings from other worlds except to issue commands, which he does through magic, not language. Indeed, curiosity itself seems to have been burned out of him at some point in the past.

But there are other wizards who know this spell, too, and their attentions have been piqued. Perhaps they, too, will see the usefulness of the Astral Paladin and covet one for their own purposes (or those of their noble employers). And what happens when they wish to know more of its native world than Etkadir does? Wizards are nothing but trouble.

## The Paladin

**AC** 3 [16], **HD** 7 (31hp), **Att** 2 × sword (1d8 + infection), **THACO** 13 [+6], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 450, **NA** 1 (2d6), **TT** U (or None if newly arrived).

- ▶ **Infection:** Marble swords cause extraplanar fungus to grow explosively on or inside skin and hurts like fire as the terrestrial atmosphere burns it away. Victim of successful attack must **save vs. spells** or suffer +1d6 damage.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Half damage from cutting weapons. Immune to cold and frost-based attacks.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Double damage and effect from gases, inhalants, vapours, and a lack of air.
- ▶ **Steed:** Always rides a steed.

## His Steed

**AC** 3 [16], **HD** 4 (18hp), **Att** 1 × bite (1d8) or 1 × trample (2d6), **THACO** 16 [+3], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 75, **NA** 1 (2d10), **TT** None.

- ▶ **Trample:** Can only trample a foe after charging 20' or more to get to them.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Half damage from cutting weapons. Immune to cold and frost-based attacks.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Double damage and effect from gases, inhalants, vapours, and a lack of air.
- ▶ **Stone Armour:** AC 8 [11] and MV 180' (60') without the armour.
- ▶ **Milk:** Turns the most inedible of flora into sweet red milk that feeds the paladin, and he honours her with breasts on his own armour.
- ▶ **Domesticated:** Reliant on the paladin for guidance. If he is killed or defeated, runs wild until exhausted. Can then be caught and tamed by humans or other creatures.

# BUILDING BLOCKS

4 |

A gaping hole in the ground yawns behind the ruined structures. A faint purple glow illuminates this area at night, but there are few here to see it. This place has been dead for centuries, still cursed by some terrible doom. Interlopers find themselves in the arms of Death before they find this quarry. The wizard does his work in peace, away from the worlds of men and beasts alike.

He thinks back to when he found the toxic ore. His colleagues had always thought this place was devoid of any worth, and said as much whenever they had the opportunity. For all their braggadocio, they were truly oblivious. This wizard would not believe in tales. He would find out for himself what treasures that ancient doom had left intact, for him alone to uncover. He would leave the others to their ignorance, and keep his just rewards all to himself.

At least, so long as these strange new minions prove reliable. He could not, of course, mine the toxic ore himself. A preposterous idea! Nor could he refine it. He had tried cajoling adventurers into coming here, to aid him in acquiring this blighted fruit. But they had died, horribly, screaming. The wizard can still hear them screaming, on cold, windless nights. But these new friends of his, summoned from another world entirely, are not so weak.

The Building Blocks are from a plane of existence very different than this one. They are masters of cube-like shapes, reworking all that surrounds them into images of themselves, only without the limbs (usually). For these square-shaped creatures are used to a world of cubes and right angles, and so they forge the matter of this world into shapes they know as best they can. And they do so easily, for they are immune to the toxic effects of the magic that infuses this strange, unique ore. They pull it from the ground both day and night, never weakening beneath

its emerald glow. They put it through the refining procedures, stacking the final product—still toxic, but in a form the wizard can work with—into luminous piles of blocks.

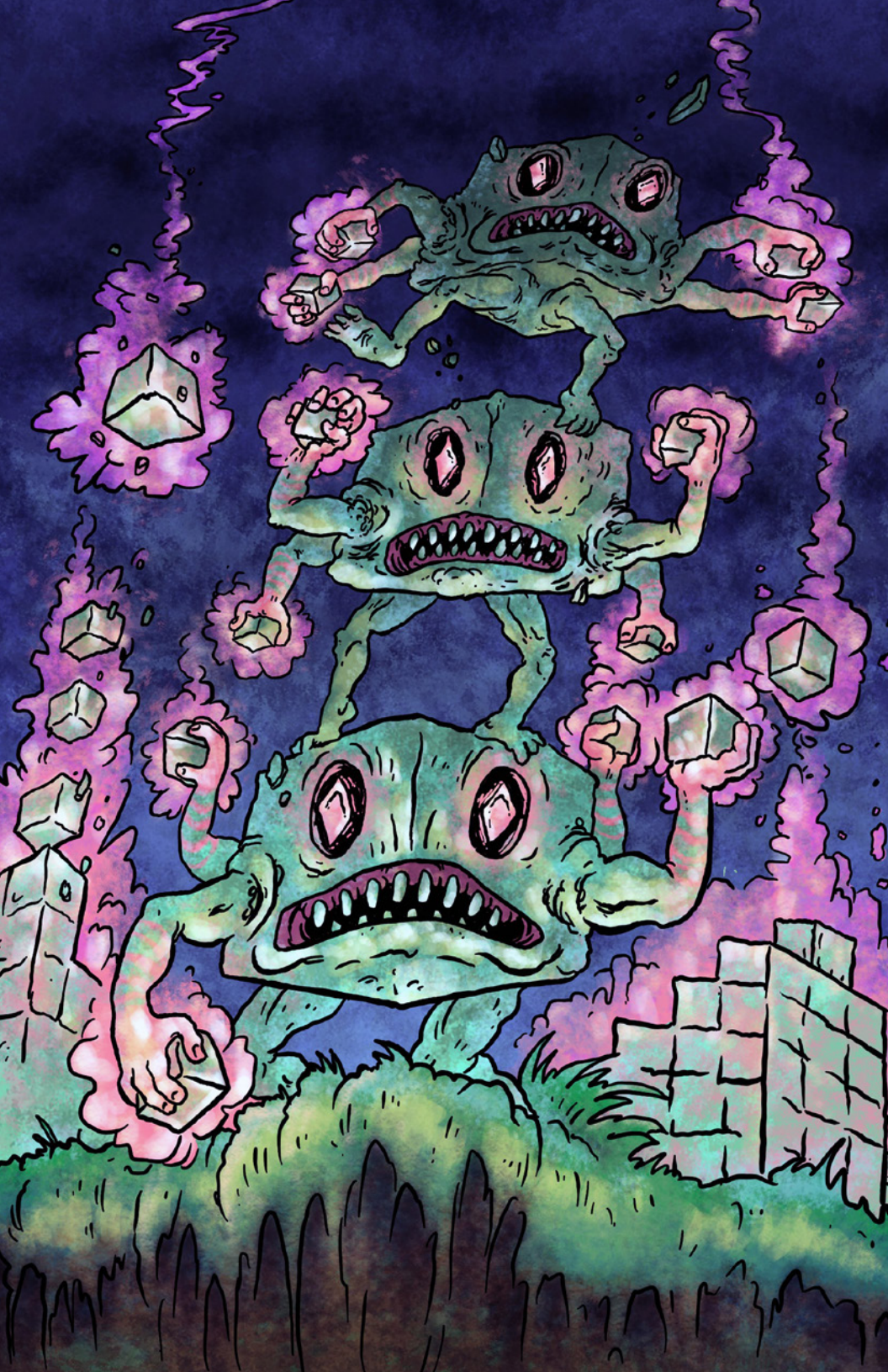
Soon the wizard will be done with this place, and it really will be as barren and useless as people think it is. Then the wizard can move on to the next part of his plan, and the Building Blocks can go home for good. If he lets them, that is...

## Summoned Minions

Because the Building Blocks are beings from another world that have been summoned here by the wizard in order to complete a task, they are compelled to mine the toxic ore and refine it until exhausted, at which point they return to their home plane. They do not bother with other creatures unless they interfere with this process, and even then, they still do not attack in order to kill. They just want to push interlopers away so they can complete their assigned tasks.

Only if intruders attempt to slay any of the Building Blocks do they, as a group, abandon their work and turn on their attackers and attempt to slay them. When this happens, though, they stack themselves into towers, two or three stories high, to get an advantage over their foes. In order to attack smaller foes, they must split up and try to get lower to the ground, but larger enemies are not so lucky.

The Building Blocks do not know this world and thus have no conception of their strengths and weaknesses here. Their tactics do not take such things into consideration. They do not understand poisons, for example, so they do not know to keep away. And they hate being cut, even though their tough exterior affords them additional protection from blades. They are more concerned with doing their job than anything else, unless they are obviously about to die.



## Building Blocks

Fleshy cubes with arms and legs—and more importantly, a mouth with gnashing teeth.

**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 3 (13hp), **Att** 1 × unarmed (1d6), **THAC0** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 8, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 35, **NA** 1d6+1 (3d6), **TT** None.

- ▶ **Unarmed attacks:** Mad series of bites, kicks, and punches.
- ▶ **Stacks:** They stand on top of each other to fight better. In a 2-block stack, both have AC 5 [14], get +2 to hit, and make 1 attack that causes 2d6 damage. In a 3-block stack, all have AC 4 [15], get +3 to hit, and make 1 attack that causes 3d6 damage. Stacked Building Blocks cannot attack creatures smaller than a grown human, only individuals on their own can.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Half damage from cutting and piercing weapons. Immune to magical effects not directed consciously by a caster.
- ▶ **Vulnerability:** Double damage and effect from terrestrial poisons.

## Toxic Metal

When you spend a significant amount of time around the toxic metal, you begin to exhibit the symptoms of being poisoned by it. How much time depends on the amount of exposure:

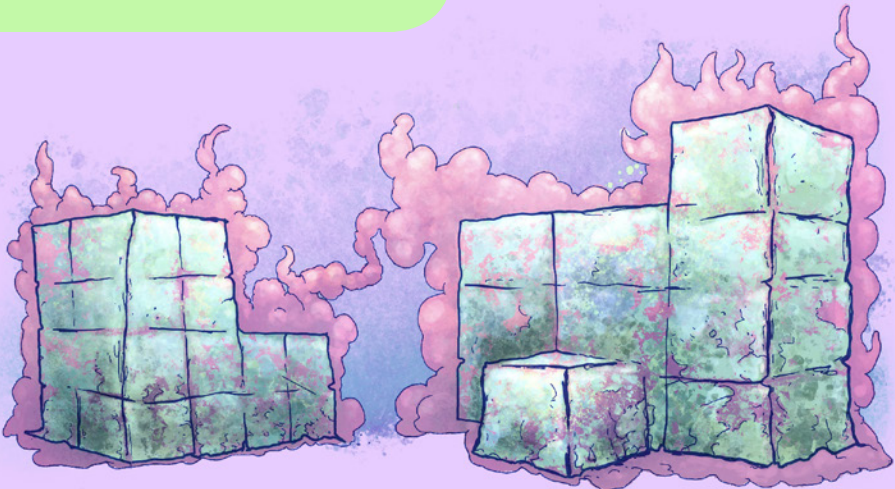
- ◆ **1 hour** in the mine itself.
- ◆ **1 day** around the stockpile.
- ◆ **1 week** around a single piece.

**Once the indicated amount of time has passed,** roll 1d20 to determine what new symptom you gain.

**If you are already exhibiting any major symptoms,** add +5 to your roll for each major symptom. You also gain a new minor symptom, roll 1d10 to determine which. If you roll a minor symptom you already exhibit, it just gets worse.

## The Cure

This metal is magical in nature and the symptoms, caused by arcane pollution, are a kind of curse. They are not a disease or an actual poison, and cannot be treated as such. *Remove Curse* only cures one symptom at a time, and cannot cure someone who has already begun to die. The will of the gods can reverse all changes, of course, but divine intervention can be hard to come by.



## Roll Minor Symptoms

- 1 You begin to look more haggard and dishevelled.
- 2 You feel stiff and irritated most of the time.
- 3 You have a slight headache at all times.
- 4 You hear rushing sounds in your ears whenever things get quiet.
- 5 Your bones and joints ache a little more.
- 6 Normal daylight begins to hurt your eyes.
- 7 Your eyes turn sickly yellow and you can no longer see colours.
- 8 Your fingers seem to grow longer and slightly clumsier.
- 9 Your gums recede, making your teeth look huge and ferocious.
- 10 Your skin turns greenish and sickly.

## 1d20 Major Symptoms

- 11 You always feel slightly drunk from now on.
- 12 You are always nauseous and find it hard to eat properly.
- 13 You lose your sense of smell, except for extremely bad smells.
- 14 You lose your sense of taste, and everything tastes slightly bad now.
- 15 You suffer from bouts of vertigo at inopportune moments.
- 16 You are insatiably thirsty at all time, no matter how much you drink.
- 17 You are ravenously hungry at all times, no matter how much you eat.
- 18 Your eyes bleed constantly.
- 19 Your hair falls out in clumps.
- 20 Your skin dries out, becoming scabby and flaky.
- 21 You begin to glow a faint green colour.
- 22 You grow 1d6 new fingers.
- 23 You grow a new set of teeth, all of them crooked.
- 24 You become nocturnal, and feel anxious in direct sunlight.
- 25 Your skin starts peeling off.
- 26 You begin vomiting black blood several times a day.
- 27 Some of your teeth fall out (2d6 of them).
- 28 All of your fingernails and toenails fall off.
- 29 You become too weak to walk around anymore.
- 30+ You begin to die. This takes 1d6 turns and is extremely painful.





# The CRYSTAL KINGDOM

When people first began to see strange crystals in the forest, few thought it was a cause for concern. Odd things always happen here, what with all the reckless wizards wandering the land. But then they became more numerous. And then the crystal men came.

At first, frightened woodsmen told tales of glittering men, dancing in the forest. Most people thought these were just fanciful tales, but no. For then they came in hordes, attacking towns and villages outside the forest and marauding through their streets. Every season—every month—the crystal kingdom grew in size, consuming the land around it. When the locals fought back, even more of these crystal men came crawling out of the woods to cut them down. And when the floating, obsidian-black titans arrived, the war began in earnest.

## The Kingdom

The forest changed, too. It began with a single crystalline monolith. Then another and another and another, until the ground itself turned to glass and this invasive alien kingdom's inhabitants emerged. But it was not until armies were dispatched and the war between flesh and glittering stone ground to a stalemate that humanity discovered who ruled this land. Ambassadors were exchanged, negotiations occurred, and the Crystal King was revealed.

Under the Crystal King's direction, his kingdom has displaced local farmers and villagers, diverted rivers, and destroyed forests. That first truce was broken, after several years of peace, and the war began again, until a new truce was made. This too lasted for years, but in the end, was also broken. And so the war rages on, in fits and starts. The crystal kingdom does not shrink in size. It only grows larger and larger. The forces of humanity stand arrayed against it and yet, still it grows, undefeated.

## Adventure Hooks

There are numerous ways to become enmeshed in the business of the crystal kingdom. Here are four:

- ♦ **Converts:** Wild tales are told of those who make a pilgrimage to the crystal kingdom. They swear fealty to the Crystal King and are anointed with petrifying water. They practice rituals to replace parts of their bodies with crystalline structures. The PCs might accompany them, as bodyguards, spies, or even as fellow supplicants. What will they do once they reach the kingdom and witness what goes on?
- ♦ **A Quest:** Elona Maria, matriarch of the House of Weldern, has a problem. Her son is ill, his body slowly petrifying. Whatever the source, if a cure is not found, he will eventually die. And that day draws ever nearer. Perhaps there is magic in the crystal kingdom that can reverse the stone curse? The Welderns are desperate, and the rewards they offer to bold adventurers willing to risk everything for the heir to the house are great.
- ♦ **Recon:** Human kingdoms lying near these invaders want to know the extent of that which they fight. But whenever scouts and surveyors are sent out, they are inevitably attacked. Perhaps if mercenary adventurers did the job, it might be more successful, even if it proves more expensive?
- ♦ **The Rescue Mission:** The young wizard Charnuvor went missing in these very woods right before the otherworldly crystals first appeared. His colleagues are now concerned for his fate. Some may care about him personally, but others want to know what connection his disappearance has to this invasion. The PCs might agree to investigate for them, as it is always good to have a wizard owe you a favour.

## Charnuvor

He specialized in elemental magic—particularly water and stone—but was never good at the politicking that leads to affluence. After several years of monastic contemplation, Charnuvor went out to put his research into practice. But things went awry. Though he opened a portal to another plane of existence, it proved too much to handle. Those on the other side seized control of it, and then of him.

The Crystal King pushed through this portal into our world, and he brought his kingdom with him. He conjured a prison made of crystal to hold Charnuvor's body, and now the wizard

is stuck, immobilized at the kingdom's heart. Petrifying water flows from his hands, feeding the crystalline structures around him. Charnuvor is still alive, but in stasis. The crystal kingdom feeds off his magical energy, leeching him slowly.

Charnuvor still has some magical items that could be recovered with him:

- ◆ **Diamond teeth:** Can grind down and tear through any non-magical material.
- ◆ **Emerald eyes:** Can see in complete darkness, and also into the elemental planes.
- ◆ **Magic coat:** +1 AC bonus and +3 to saves against breath weapons.





## The King

At the epicentre of the crystal kingdom, directing all of its expansions outward, is a king. The absolute monarch of his realm, the other crystal men obey his every whim with unquestioning loyalty.

## As an Enemy

The Crystal King has been learning human language, and is willing to strike a deal. If his foes are strong enough, he agrees to a truce, and might even give back some conquered territory. After all, he is patient. These lands will be claimed again, even if it takes decades.

But if a deal cannot be struck, he is merciless. He orders his minions against his enemies or fights them himself, whichever is most expedient. He may not always kill his enemies, though—some can be encased in crystal, the way Charnuvor is, so their magic can power his crystal empire.

## As an Employer

Alternately, the Crystal King is always interested in waging war against his neighbours, with whatever tools are available. He is not opposed to hiring adventurers willing to agitate for war between the kingdoms of men, commit assassinations, or sabotage human military structures. He can pay them in diamonds and other precious stones, or in treasure stolen from humanity, or even in petrifying water. Successful missions may even inspire the Crystal King to offer initiation into his crystal cult.

## Petrifying Water

The clean, clear water produced by the crystal kingdom has the ability to turn living things immersed in it to stone. Throwing a bucket of it on someone turns them to stone for 2d6 rounds (save vs. petrification to avoid), but only magic can resist a constant flow of it.

## The Crystal King

Immense and blue, with a crown atop his head.

**AC** 1 [18], **HD** 12\*\* (54hp), **Att** 2 × fist (2d6 + throw), **THACO** 10 [+9], **MV** 180' (60') flying, **SV** D6 W7 P8 B8 S10 (12), **ML** 9, **AL** Lawful, **XP** 2,700, **NA** 1 (1), **TT** A + M.

- ▶ **Throw:** If the first fist attack hits, may throw a human-sized or smaller victim up to 50' instead of making a second attack. **Save vs. petrification** or suffer an additional 3d6 damage.
- ▶ **Harmful resonance:** All foes within 60' must **save vs. petrification** every round or suffer 1d6 sonic damage.
- ▶ **Magical sight:** Immune to illusions. Can see what is invisible. Can also sense magical weaknesses in enemies unless they **save vs. spells**.
- ▶ **Mundane damage immunity:** Can only be harmed by magical attacks.
- ▶ **Value:** If killed (0 hp), the Crystal King's body is worth 2d6 × 1,000gp. Treasure types A and M are only found at the heart of the crystal kingdom.
- ▶ **Ruler:** Up to 5 times per day, instead of attacking, can instantly summon minions. Roll 1d6 to determine which minions and how many arrive:

### 1d6 Summoned Crystal Men

1-2	1d12 Crawling crystal men.
3-4	2d4 Dancing crystal men.
5	1 Dark titan & entourage.
6	1 Faceless titan & entourage.

- ▶ **Hates music:** Is pained by the frequencies and harmonies of human music.

## Crawling Crystal Men

Though humanoid, crawls along the ground on all fours like an animal.

**AC** 5 [14], **HD** 1 (6hp\*), **Att** 1 × spiky claws (1d6 + brittle) or 1 × thrown rock (1d4), **THACO** 19 [+0], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 12, **AL** Lawful, **XP** 10, **NA** 1d12 (3d10), **TT** None.

- ▶ **Climbing:** Can cling to and climb across any surface at full movement rate, unless it is magically smooth.
- ▶ **Leap:** Can jump 30' up or over a 30' gap instead of crawling.

- ▶ **Fixed hp:** Every crawling crystal man has 6 hp. Do not roll for hit points.
- ▶ **Brittle:** Made of purple crystal that becomes more jagged when chipped. Add the damage a crawling crystal man has taken to the damage it causes with its pointy claws.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease and poison. Half damage from cutting and piercing weapons.
- ▶ **Defenders:** Protect important areas of the crystal kingdom, rarely leave.
- ▶ **Pack hunters:** Prefer to swarm as few different targets as possible.



## Dancing Crystal Men

A figure made of greenish crystal, dancing and capering.

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**AC** 4 [15], **HD** 2+2 (11hp), **Att** 2 × fist (1d6 + breakage), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 12, **AL** Lawful, **XP** 25, **NA** 2d4 (2d8), **TT** None.

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- ▶ **Explosive:** When killed (0 hp), shatters into flying shards, causing 1d6 damage to all within 5' of them.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease and poison. Half damage from cutting and piercing weapons.

- ▶ **Breakage:** Heavy fists are topped with crystal blades. On a damage roll of 1, destroys a random piece of the victim's non-magical equipment. Can break swords, slash through backpacks, and shatter vials.
- ▶ **Dancing:** Full of volatile energy. If forced to stand still, crumbles to dust after 2 rounds (and does not explode).
- ▶ **Invaders:** Used mostly to attack humans outside the crystal kingdom. Without a leader or a mission, continues to do so, attacking any and all humans that can be found.





**1d6 Dark Titan Entourage**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | 2d8 Crawling crystal men.                  |
| 2-3 | 2d8 Dancing crystal men.                   |
| 4-5 | 1 Faceless titan & its entourage.          |
| 6   | 2 Faceless titans & both their entourages. |

## Dark Titans

Flying, red-tinted obsidian brutes.

**AC** 2 [17], **HD** 6 (27hp), **Att** 1 × beam (2d6) or 2 × fists (2d4), **THACO** 14 [+5], **MV** 150' (50') flying, **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), **ML** 12, **AL** Lawful, **XP** 275, **NA** 1 (1d4), **TT** None (see value below).

- ▶ **Beam:** Dark energy blasts 1 target within 100' who suffers 2d6 damage (save vs. petrification for half).
- ▶ **Crystal hornets:** Can detach fingertips and send them flying through the air to swarm 1 foe within 50'. Victim has -2 to hit and a -2 AC penalty until the hornets are recalled or sent against a different foe.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease and poison. Half damage from cutting and piercing weapons.
- ▶ **Poisonous:** If consumed, save vs. poison or die. Even long periods of close proximity will cause illness.
- ▶ **Entourage:** In the crystal kingdom, accompanied by 2d4 crawling crystal men. Outside of it, roll 1d6 on the dark titan entourage table.
- ▶ **Value:** If killed (0 hp), each dark titan's body is worth 2d6 × 100gp.



## Faceless Titans

Hovering, purple and featureless, but only slightly larger than a human.

**AC** 3 [16], **HD** 3 (13hp), **Att** 2 × fists (1d8), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40') flying, **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 12, **AL** Lawful, **XP** 35, **NA** 1 (1d4), **TT** None (see value below).

- ▶ **Entourage:** In the crystal kingdom, accompanied by 2d4 crawling crystal men. Outside of it, roll 1d6 on the faceless titan entourage table below.
- ▶ **Value:** If killed (0hp), each faceless titan's body is worth 1d6 × 100gp.

### 1d6 Faceless Titan Entourage

1	1d12 Crawling crystal men.
2-3	1d12 Crawling crystal men & 1d6 crystalline cultists.
4-5	2d4 Dancing crystal men.
6	2d4 Dancing crystal men & 1d12 crystalline cultists.

## The Cult of Crystal

There is peace now, but how long will it last? This is not the first treaty the crystal men have agreed to. Meanwhile, in the dark corners of society, desperate people make deals with the Crystal King. Will his kingdom even need to wage another war of conquest against the humans who live next door, or will it expand this time through their betrayal? Some fools are willing to betray their own people in exchange for power.

And yet, others see the futility of fighting back against the invaders, and seek to join them instead. They choose to serve the Crystal King instead of their ineffectual human aristocracies. They drink the petrifying water willingly, and swallow gemstones that will grow inside their bodies. Slowly, they turn themselves to crystal and are accepted into this new empire. Perhaps these crystalline cultists truly have found the only path to victory that this awful, fruitless war has to offer humans?

## Crystalline Cultists

Most are peasants, armed with knives and makeshift suits of armour, their bodies showing inhuman changes.

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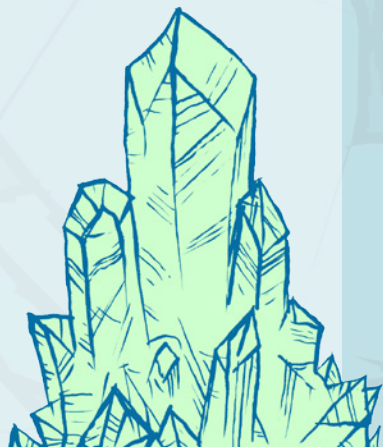
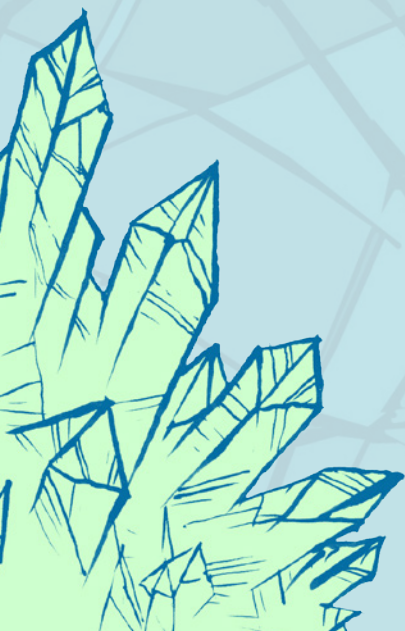
**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1 × dagger (1d4) or other weapons if available, **THACO** 19 [+0], **MV** 90' (30'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 8, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 10, **NA** 1d6 (2d10), **TT** None.

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- ▶ **Changed body parts:** For each cultist (or group of cultists) roll 1d12 on the table to the right to determine what body part of theirs has been changed.
- ▶ **Leader:** A group of 6+ crystalline cultists are led by a crystal knight who has 3 HD, a sword (1d8), and two changed body parts.
- ▶ **Escort:** 1 in 6 chance that a group of crystalline cultists is accompanied by crystal men. Roll 1d6:

### 1d8 Cultist Entourage

1-2	1d12 crawling crystal men.
3-6	2d4 dancing crystal men.
7	1 dark titan & entourage.
8	1 faceless titan & entourage.



## 1d12 Crystalline Body Parts

- 1 **Crystal arm:** Hand includes crystalline knives and can be used as a combat weapon (1d8 damage).
- 2 **Crystal body:** AC 5 [14]. Cannot eat human food.
- 3 **Crystal brain:** Can communicate and coordinate with any crystal men up to a mile away.
- 4 **Crystal eyes:** Can see in the dark, up to 90'. Can save vs. spells in order to see things that are invisible.
- 5 **Crystal face:** AC 6 [13]. Can see in the dark, up to 60', but cannot speak.
- 6 **Crystal leg:** MV 60' (20'). Must drag it around until the other leg becomes crystal too.
- 7 **Crystal organs:** Piercing weapons have a 2 in 6 chance of breaking after causing damage.
- 8 **Rock eater:** Can live off eating rocks and dirt alone.
- 9 **Sand for blood:** Half damage from cutting weapons.
- 10 **Stone bones:** Half damage from blunt weapons.
- 11 **Stone face:** No longer has any facial expressions.
- 12 **Stone hands:** Can be used as weapons (1d6 damage) but not for delicate tasks or fine manipulation.



# The FIREHORSE

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The ground before you cracks wide open, only for this awkward hoofed worm to emerge. It breathes fire from both of its mouths, and hears all with not one but two types of ears upon what passes for its head. But it cannot see, for it has no eyes. Viewed from afar, in the dark, one might think this would make it an easy target. Shoot it full of pellets and arrows before it can get to you, one might think. But this horse is no fool. It cares nothing for your puny weapons. If it wanted only to kill you, it would come at you quickly, or by surprise, and overwhelm you. But now, it does not.

The firehorse wants the taste of your fear. It may come for you in moments of your weakness, but it will never ambush you. It will come at you below the ground, in caves and other constraining environments, where there's no room to lob your missiles at it, like you want. But it will never come upon you by surprise. It wants a warm, still-palpating heart to burst between its teeth like the delicious morsel that it is, yes, but only after your meat is marinated in your terror.

It seethes with hate. Burns with it. Some say the fire horse is the souls of a thousand crippled horses, but they are wrong. It is the all-consuming soul of fire in the form of meat. The hunger of the ifrit bound in skin and bone, dazed and pained by the weird, unfriendly sensations of these mammalian organs.

Living fire has but a single sense, viewing all of creation through sight, via the light it projects. It has no need for ears and tongues, even though its fingers do nought but consume. It has no eyes, of course, because it can already see with every fiery piece of itself.

But the flesh of the firehorse comes with no eyes. Nor does its skin care much where the light may fall. In this body, the ifrit has—much to its horror—all the other senses. Now it can taste the earth, the air, the blood of its foes. Now it

can feel the shudders of all Creation. No longer must mages translate the sound of their words into picture of light to converse with it, for now it can hear.

But now it will not listen. Now it is mad. It cannot comprehend this new state of being, like some spiteful sack of nails it has been stuck inside of. It rages. It burns. It turns back to its essential nature and it consumes. And what it hungers for the most is your fear.

## Firehorse

It screams like a horse and reeks so much of ash and charred meat you can't even smell the ground opening up.

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**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 5\* (23hp), **Att** 2 × trample (1d8) or 1 × breathe fire, **THACO** 15 [+4], **MV** 180' (60'), **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (5), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 300, **NA** 1, **TT** None.

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- ▶ **Surprise:** Never surprises others, is never surprised.
- ▶ **Breathe fire:** 20' line of flames, 5' wide. Anyone caught in it suffers 5d6 damage (**save vs. breath weapons** for half). Only uses this attack after taking damage or if it cannot reach any foes to trample.
- ▶ **Bleeds fire:** Anyone in melee with a firehorse when it is cut must **save vs. breath weapons** or suffer 1d6 damage.
- ▶ **Mundane damage immunity:** Only harmed by cold, frost-based effects, and magical attacks that do not involve fire.
- ▶ **Confusion:** When under the influence of mind effects or drugs, stampedes in a random direction every round and fails all morale tests.
- ▶ **Friendly fire:** Never attacks other fire creatures unless attacked first.



# The IRIDESCENTS

They come from outside our world, from beyond the limits of the astral sphere, appearing like a madness of protoplasmic flesh, somehow contained within congeries of shimmering, iridescent globes. As each glowing sphere floats through the night air, images of a frothing, primal slime, writhing in the chaos of elsewhere, flicker inside them.

Although these iridescent globes are native to the nethermost outskirts of space and time, they are not (as a rule) actively hostile to humans. But their presence bends reality and they parasitic life cycle destroys intelligent life.

If a settlement does not fight them off when these globes arrive, it soon disappears. The people are found slain and stripped of their skin, or gibbering mad. Some become cannibals, wearing the flayed skins of those who were once their neighbours and loved ones. Iridescent colours bleed from their eyes, staining reality itself. These unfortunates lose all sense of their humanity, and live only to prey upon others. Until they too, are found slain, nothing but an empty skin wearing the skins of others.

## Iridescent Globes

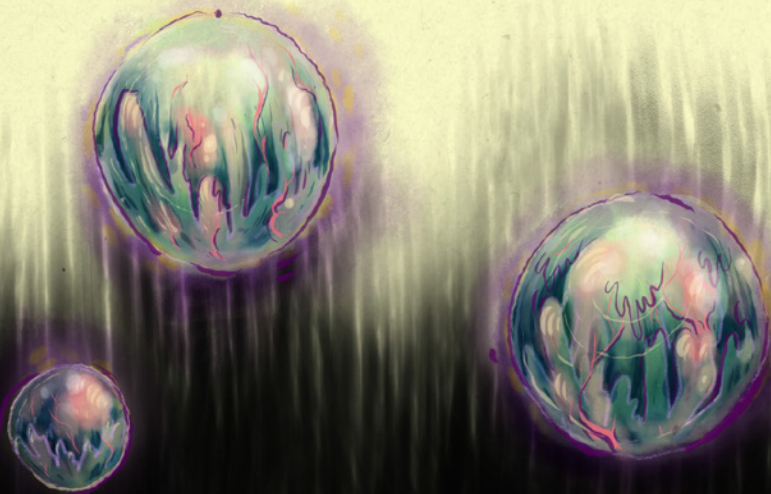
Head-sized floating spheres.

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**AC** 3 [16], **HD** ½ (2hp), **Att** None (but a group of 5+ will use magic powers), **MV** 180' (60'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 7, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 5, **NA** 3d6 (5d8), **TT** None.

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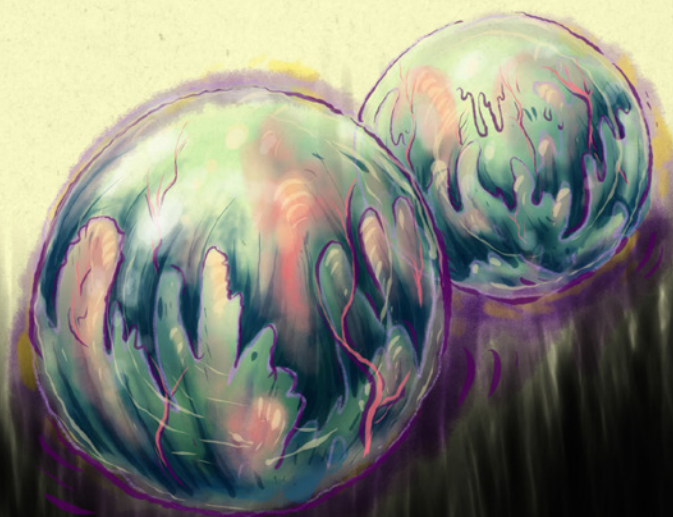
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease, lightning, paralysis, and poison.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Instantly destroyed by life drain. Healing magic causes damage instead of healing.
- ▶ **Residue:** Left behind when they burst (0hp). If collected, this wet, sticky substance reduces the cost to prepare a potion affecting time and space by 1d6 × 10gp per globe.
- ▶ **Environmental change:** If the globes are left to roam a location for a month, the leaves subtle changes in the landscape. But after three months, they leave the earth almost entirely unrecognizable.



- **Magic powers:** While they have no natural means of making physical attacks, **5 globes working in concert can use one magic power per round.** This power is always random. Roll 1d6 each round and determine the target randomly, from among those who are attacking the globes.

#### 1d12 Iridescent Magic Powers

- 1 **Curse:** Target suffers -1 penalty to attack or save against the globes until a full day has passed (multiple curses are cumulative).
- 2 **Disarm:** Target's weapon is transported 1d100 feet in a random direction. If unarmed, target is transported instead (but not to a space already occupied by solid matter).
- 3 **Engulf:** Target must **save vs. spells** or be paralysed for 1d4 rounds, plus there is the possibility of infection. If a person is engulfed 5 times, they must **save vs. death** or become infected (see next page).
- 4 **Prismatic Spray:** Target suffers 1d8 damage (**save vs. spells** for half).
- 5 **Rewind:** Target re-experiences the last 10 minutes in reverse, but over the course of the next 10 seconds. This includes moving backwards and suffering any mental effects again (but not physical effects). Wounds suffered during these 10 minutes do not close, and the target is not moved into or through locations that are no longer accessible.
- 6 **Visions from Beyond:** Target loses 1d6 points of Intelligence or Wisdom (select randomly). Lost points are regained at a rate of 1 per day, unless reduced to zero, in which case the target becomes infected (see next page).



## Skinwearers

Beast-like human beings, wearing flayed skins, leaking iridescence.

**AC** 8 [11], **HD** 3 (13hp), **Att** 1 × claw (1d6) or magic power, **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3), **ML** 9, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 35, **NA** 1d6, **TT** U or trinkets.

- ▶ **Magic powers:** Every skinwearer has two magic powers (see the previous page and roll 1d6 twice). Each of these powers may be used up to twice per day.
- ▶ **Targets:** Skinwearers are more discerning about who they choose to fight than the globes are. They attack the people who have the nicest skins first, or use their magic powers on the ones who fight the fiercest.
- ▶ **Globes:** 1 in 6 chance of being accompanied by 3d6 iridescent globes, and 2 in 6 chance that there are 5d8 iridescent globes nearby, spreading their infection.
- ▶ **Skin:** Flayed skins wear out after several days. They do not actually help the infected person who wears them, nor do they stop their skin from hurting, it is simply a behaviour they manifest due to a combination of the poor state of their mental faculties and the otherworldly nature of the iridescent infection that is destroying them. Roll 1d6 to see what kind of skin each skinwearer is wearing:

1d6	Worn Skin
1	A fresh, newly-flayed skin.
2-3	A horribly rotted skin.
4	A slightly rotted skin.
5-6	No skin but its own.

Once infected, a person degenerates. They lose the ability to learn, and then their ability to socialize and use language. Their skin becomes thin and raw, causing them terrible pain. They see other humans looking perfectly normal and become jealous. They must murder someone so they can flay them and wear their skin.

Skinwearers do not usually work together, unless they all have proper skins. But they also tend to stay close to the iridescent globes, as long as there are any of them left.

Over time, the iridescent colours leak out of them, especially their eyes, creating a sparkling shimmer. After 1d100 days of being infected, the iridescent colours burst forth out of them and escape into the stars, leaving behind a dead, brittle husk.

- ▶ **Trinkets:** If treasure type provides no valuables, roll 1d12 to see what each skinwearer is carrying. Valuable items may be worth up to 1d6 × 50gp each, or more in special cases.

1d12	Skinwearer Trinkets
1	Engraved portrait.
2	Fancy dagger.
3	Gemstone earrings.
4	Gold ring.
5	Ivory comb.
6	Jade statuette.
7	Jewelled bracelet.
8	Necklace of coins.
9	Rosary.
10	Silver locket.
11	Silverware set.
12	Spiritual pendant.



# The LIGHT COLLECTOR

High up in the hills, just outside of town, there lies a hidden cave. At night, members of the cult make their way to its grottoes in secret. Hooded or disguised, they move furtively, in fear of their discovery. For if they were found out, they could be tried in a court of law or—even worse!—forced to share the fruits of their worship.

The town has a wizard, you see, and he lords it over everyone. The wealthy flock to his mansion, eager to sample the food he grows inside his own private greenhouse. Beneath the magical stones that emit health-inducing sunlight, the wizard has all manner of exotic herbs and tubers growing. But those in the cult have grown weary of his arrogance, his favouritism, his insidious mind control, and they want him gone.

And what does this weird, glowing god ask of them, when they go to meet it in the caves? All it wants are the wizard's magic, light-emitting stones. It gives to them wondrous devices that seem so useful, exhorting them to take careful action. It whispers that one, irresistible promise to them: "I will plunge your enemies into eternal darkness in exchange for their light."

## The False God

The light collector travels the many planes of existence, tracking down magical sources of illumination. Where does it come from? Are there others like it? No sage can say for sure. Every light it obtains, it consumes and absorbs, thus creating the colourful glass-like material that sits upon its head. This thing has no eyes, and yet it can perceive meticulous intricacies in every spectrum of light. It can see billions of colours, appreciating the subtle, yet unique, differences in every hue. It has grown bored of shades and tints that human beings cannot even imagine.

In its acquisitive endeavours, the light collector places little value on the lives of other creatures. It is well-versed in underhanded tactics. So when it finds something it wants, and that thing cannot be taken quickly by force, then it builds itself a cult. With a supply of alien artifacts and magical know-how, it organizes a group of minions. Once they obtain the lights it wants—taking all the risks, suffering all the consequences—the light collector gobbles up its treasure and leaves them in the lurch without a second thought.

Roll 1d8 to generate a type of light that might be of interest to the collector:

1d8	Types of Light
1	Artificial sunlight.
2	Harmful and visible radiation.
3	Healing or rejuvenating light.
4	Illuminates the invisible.
5	Matter-penetrating x-ray.
6	Unseeable light.
7-8	Roll 1d6 on this table twice.



Then roll 1d6 to see what produces the light (add +1 if the light is unseeable):

1d6	Types of Illuminators
1	Cheap, ordinary item that glows.
2	Crystal, rock, or stone.
3	Holy relic or object of worship.
4	Living organism or creature.
5	Magic beacon, lamp, or lantern.
6	Strange machine or contraption.
7	Valuable mundane object.





## Cultists of the Light

Those who join the light collector's cult are not the sharpest tools in the shed. They are being exploited for their greed and their gullibility by an extraplanar intelligence they believe is a god or other powerful spirit.

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**AC** 8 [11], **HD** 1 (4hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d6 or by weapon), **THACO** 19 [+0], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1), **ML** 7, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 10, **NA** 1d6 (2d6), **TT** S.

---

- ▶ **Strange devices:** Every group of 4 cultists has one item given to them by the light collector. This is either a random scroll, a random magical item, or a random strange device from the next page.
- ▶ **Gifts for the god:** 1 in 6 chance of possessing a random source of light, generated by using the tables on page 26, that they mean to bring to the light collector.
- ▶ **Gullible:** It is not hard to convince them of something, especially if they want it to be true.
- ▶ **Transactional:** Obeys the light collector in exchange for concrete rewards.

## The Light Collector

A greyish mass of warty tentacles, with a huge mouth and a 10' high crown of coloured glass upon its head. The "fingers" of its "hands" unfold like glowing flowers.

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**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 6 (27hp), **Att** 2 × tentacles (1d8) or 1 × bite (3d6), **THACO** 14 [+5], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (6), **ML** 6, **AL** Neutral, **XP** 275, **NA** 1, **TT** E (plus devices, see below).

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- ▶ **Tentacles:** Able to attack up to 10' away. If an enemy charges past these tentacles and into melee range, the light collector gets one free tentacle attack on them first.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Half damage from cold, fire, light, lightning, and radiance. Able to exist in several outer planes that are hostile to human life.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Double damage from magical darkness and weapons made of obsidian, black mithril, or shadow silver.
- ▶ **Strange devices:** The light collector has at least one random scroll, one random magical item, and all six strange devices in its possession (see next page). It gives these devices to its cultists when they have need of them, or when doing so will bring a specific light source closer to its grasp. This is not charity, by any means.
- ▶ **Cult leader:** 4 in 6 chance of being accompanied by 1d6 cultists of the light and a 2 in 6 chance of possessing a random light source from the tables on page 26.
- ▶ **Coward:** Will attack those it sees as weak and easy prey, but is not a violent creature by nature and does not relish the thrill of combat. Prefers to let cultists kill and die for it.

**1d6 Strange Devices**

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Enhancement ruby.    |
| 2 | Fire key.            |
| 3 | Graphobosian leaves. |
| 4 | Magic-blocking egg.  |
| 5 | Sticky gloves.       |
| 6 | Unassailable fluid.  |

**Enhancement Ruby**

A polished gem, very small and normally kept upon a ring, that can be attached to any mundane weapon to make it magical. It sticks to any tool's surface like a magnet. The stone flares with light when the weapon comes into violent contact with another creature, ravaging their soul with harmful magic. Whoever wields this weapon may roll their damage twice and count the better result.

**Fire Key**

This key glows red hot when inserted into a lock. Then the lock melts and the key falls out. No more lock. Some would say this is not as useful as a skeleton key, but the light collector doesn't care about the fallout once it gets what it wants.

**Graphobosian Leaves**

This poison causes its victims to doubt the veracity of what they read, gives them a sense of anxiety over it, and then makes them paranoid. The more they read, the worse this feeling gets until finally they have nightmares about every text they have consumed. Written stories seem both true and false to them. They see characters from literature stalking them in real life. Only if they stop reading entirely does this feeling go away.

**Magic-Blocking Egg**

This wrought iron decorative egg creates a shimmering, barely-visible sphere of energy around the person carrying it when its two halves are twisted away from each other. This glimmering shield makes visible any magic it comes into contact with, and slows it down, so the egg's possessor has time to avoid it (roll your saving throw twice and count only the better result).

**Sticky Gloves**

Whatever you touch when you wear these gloves sticks to them, until you want it not to. They let the wearer climb sheer surfaces and keep an unbreakable hold on their possessions, or on someone else they have grabbed. Anyone (or anything) strong enough can still rip your arm right out of its socket, though. Don't get cocky.

**Unassailable Fluid**

When this thick, iridescent salve is used to coat a person's limbs and body, any harm done to them seems like an illusion. No wound will prevent them from living, moving, or staying conscious as long as it is inflicted upon a part of them covered in the fluid. After 1d6 hours, the fluid's properties wear off and then the user feels the full effect of all wound suffered while covered in it. Unassailable fluid has no effect on magical harm.

# The MUNG MUNG

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From the outer reaches of time and space they come to our world, to warble their bulbous, segmented chins and roll their misshapen eyes at us. Can you hear the clacking of their many violet legs and the chattering of their nasty, crooked teeth? From behind those same yellowy chompers emerge their demands. For they are merchants, these horrors. They buy and sell all manner of oddities, from the tears of murdered angels to the memories of ancient empires, from the hardwoods of the elemental planes to the treasures of civilizations that have not even yet been founded.

The extraplanar nature of the Mung Mung is obvious to all—they care not for the pull of gravity. Instead, they bring their own with them wherever they go, even floating through the air itself. Their minions, seemingly gathered piecemeal from the outer planes unnumbered, are perhaps not so lucky, but if the master cares, it does not show it.

Beware the Mung Mung's arrival until you are certain it has not fixated its attentions upon you. These merchants trade in many things, but when they find something of immediate interest, they will not take "no" for an answer. They stop at nothing to procure whatever things (they say) they must have—even if what they want are your limbs and memories.

On the other hand, if one can find a Mung Mung merchant in a more pacific state of mind, one can make a trade at a price that is so favourable, you will barely believe it. For they do not see value the way we do. Gold means nothing to them, while the sand of a particular beach might be worth more than its weight in diamonds. Ancient magical items can be had for the price of a few flowers, or an unruly neighbour, or best of all, unwanted and painful memories! It all seems to make sense to the Mung Mung, even if it makes no sense to us.

## Mung Mung Merchant

**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 8\* (36hp), **Att** 2 × punch (1d6), 1 × tail spit (weakening), 1 × trample (1d8 + knock prone), **THACO** 12 [+7], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D8  
**W9 P10 B10 S12** (8), **ML** 7, **AL** Chaotic,  
**XP** 1,200, **NA** 1, **TT** F + G.

- ▶ **Tail Spit:** Ejects black, viscous fluid from tail orifice by to 50'. On a hit, the target must **save vs. poison** or their Strength score is halved (round up) for 1d6 rounds. Can affect the same target multiple times, further reducing their Strength until the effect wears off.
- ▶ **Trample:** Victim of a trample attack must **save vs. paralysis** or be knocked prone (+1d4 damage).
- ▶ **Defy gravity:** Moves across any surface as though it were flat. Floats through the air when detached from the ground.
- ▶ **Teleport:** May teleport itself to any visible location, up to 5 times per day. May travel to another plane of existence once per day, taking minions along as well.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease, life drain, magical emotions, and poison.
- ▶ **Bag of holding:** Has an invisible bag of holding that carries all the goods it offers in trade for what it wants.
- ▶ **Minions:** Accompanied by 1d4 rolls on the minions table (page 35). Some may be facsimiles and not the genuine article, but all have ML 12. If offered in trade as a slave, minion is loyal to the death but will never willingly attack a Mung Mung.
- ▶ **Treasure:** Types F and G are carried on its person, or by its minions. May offer these items for trade.



## Supply and Demand

We all want things, and the Mung Mung merchant is no exception. Because these transdimensional traders deal in so many different goods and with so many different creatures, their interests may seem quite strange.

Each time a Mung Mung merchant is encountered, there are 1d3 things it desires to buy. Roll 1d8 for each:

1d8	Immediate Desires
1	An <b>artifact</b> that does not belong to the party.
2	A <b>body part</b> that belongs to a random party member.
3	A <b>commodity</b> that does not belong to the party.
4	A <b>creature</b> that does not belong to the party.
5	An <b>emotion</b> possessed by a random party member.
6	<b>Experience levels</b> possessed by a random party member.
7	A <b>memory</b> possessed by a random party member.
8	A <b>possession</b> that belongs to a random party member.

It is up to the referee to fill in any missing details of the things that a Mung Mung merchant wants. Artifacts, commodities, creatures, and memories especially will need to be tailored to the characters and setting of your game.

## Artifacts

If the Mung Mung merchant wants an **artifact that the party does not possess**, the referee chooses something of value that will be difficult for them to acquire. It might belong to an enemy, for example, or be guarded by traps and monsters.

## Body Parts

If the Mung Mung wants a **body part**, roll 1d20 to see which one. If the party member has tattoos, roll twice and select the body part with the most tattoos.

1d20	Parts	1d20	Parts
1	Arm.	11	Head.
2	Brain.	12	Heart.
3	Ear.	13	Intestines.
4	Eye.	14	Leg.
5	Face.	15	Liver.
6	Finger/toe.	16	Lungs.
7	Foot.	17	Mouth.
8	Genitals.	18	Nose.
9	Hair.	19	Skin.
10	Hand.	20	Stomach.

A replacement part is offered and, if accepted, the swap is made by magic. The Mung Mung are not very careful when it comes to providing something aesthetically or functionally similar, however. Roll 1d6 to determine what the replacement part is like:

1d6	Replacement Part
1	Annoying qualities.
2	Incongruous appearance.
3	Inhuman look or function.
4	Poor quality replacement.
5	Seemingly perfect replica.
6	Wrong body part.

Mung Mung merchants like to buy tattoos, but also want the flesh that the ink is sandwiched between. Of course, what they replace it with might well be more like alligator skin, or transparent, or covered in feathers, scales, or hair.

## Commodities

If the Mung Mung merchant wants a commodity that the party does not possess, the referee chooses a substance that is difficult or dangerous to acquire in the quantities the Mung Mung wants.

## Creatures

If the Mung Mung merchant wants a creature, it asks the party to capture it, but should they refuse, it does not press the matter. Roll 1d6 to see what type of creature it desires:

1d6	Creatures
1	Specific magical animal.
2	Specific monster.
3	Specific person.
4	Type of magical animal.
5	Type of monster.
6	Type of person.

## Emotions

If the Mung Mung merchant wants an emotion, roll 1d20 to see which one. Once this emotion is traded away, it can never be felt again.

1d20	Emotion	1d20	Emotion
1	Affection.	11	Guilt.
2	Anger.	12	Happiness.
3	Angst.	13	Hatred.
4	Arousal.	14	Jealousy.
5	Boredom.	15	Pity.
6	Courage.	16	Pride.
7	Curiosity.	17	Remorse.
8	Despair.	18	Sadness.
9	Excitement.	19	Serenity.
10	Fear.	20	Shame.

## Experience Levels

If the Mung Mung merchant wants experience levels from a party member, it agrees to trade for each level separately. Losing a level puts you at the minimum amount of experience points for the level just below it. If the party member is only first level, the Mung Mung merchant realizes its mistake and apologizes—it does not care for first levels.

## Memories

If the Mung Mung merchant wants a memory, it asks for something very specific. Roll 1d6 to determine the type of memory. Once this memory is traded away, it is completely forgotten.

1d6	Memories
1	From this adventure.
2	From the last adventure.
3	From your youth.
4	Of a common event.
5	Of a person.
6	Of a significant event.

## Possessions

If the Mung Mung merchant wants a possession, determine randomly which item has caught its fancy. The item's value does not matter, and no substitutions or similar items will be accepted.

## Shadows

You can also trade your shadow to a Mung Mung merchant, though for some reason, they never actually ask for this commodity. If you do trade your shadow away, however, other people will fear you and shun you as if tainted by unholy magic (which, to be fair, you are).

One may notice that the Mung Mung never go anywhere without both their shadows and their reflections.

## Trade Goods

When the Mung Mung is negotiating for something it wants, it begins by making an offer. Roll 1d12:

1d12	Standard Trade Offerings
1-2	<b>Coins</b> (see table).
3	<b>Emotion</b> (referee decides or rolls randomly).
4	<b>Healing potions</b> (1d4).
5-6	<b>Magic item</b> (see table).
7	<b>Memories</b> (referee decides or rolls randomly).
8	One of its <b>minions</b> as a slave (determine randomly).
9	<b>Potion</b> (determine randomly).
10	<b>Scroll</b> (determine randomly; can be used by anyone).
11-12	<b>Weird item</b> (see table).

For emotions and memories, you can use the tables on the previous page. For any potions and scrolls, use the tables in *Old-School Essentials Classic Fantasy*.

## Coins

When the Mung Mung merchant offers coins, roll 1d6 for the type and 1d6 for the amount. Coins come in burlap sacks, wooden boxes, or wrapped up in decorative paper tubes.

1d6	Coin Types	1d6	Amount
1	Copper.	1	1d6 × 100
2	Electrum.	2	1d10
3	Gold.	3	1d100
4	Platinum.	4	1d1,000
5	Silver.	5	1d10,000
6	Wood.	6	2d8 × 100

If the trade is rejected, but the other party is interested in haggling, roll 1d6 to see what the Mung Mung merchant's new offer consists of:

1d6	New Offer
1	Makes a new offer and will no longer consider its previous offers as valid.
2-3	Makes a new offer, but will still consider previous offers. 2 in 6 chance it will consider a combination of the two offers.
4-5	Makes a new offer in addition to the previous offer. It will trade both for what it wants.
6	Makes the same offer but changes some vital detail of the goods offered.

The Mung Mung merchant does not make a third offer for what it wants.

If the party rejects trading outright, the Mung Mung either attacks or turns its attentions elsewhere, as its nature (and the reaction roll) dictates.

## Magic Items

When the Mung Mung offers a magic item, roll 1d6 to see what type of item. Then roll on the appropriate table in *Old-School Essentials Classic Fantasy* to determine the actual item.

1d6	Magic Item Type
1	Armour or shield.
2	Miscellaneous item.
3	Ring.
4	Rod, staff, or wand.
5	Sword.
6	Weapon.

## Minions

Roll 1d12 (or 1d20 if you have access to *Essential Enemies 2: The Outer Darkness*).

Roll	Mung Mung Minions
1	1 Astral Paladin and steed.
2	1d6+1 Building blocks.
3	1d8 Crawling crystal men.
4	1d6 Crystalline cultists.
5	1d8 Dancing crystal men.
6	1 Dark titan (no entourage).
7	1 Faceless titan (no entourage).
8	1 Firehorse.
9	1d6 Homungcular spawn.
10	3d6 Iridescent globes.
11	1d6 Skinwalkers.
12	1d4 Spawn summoners.
13	1 Dark worm.
14	1d6 Kobolds of Saturn.
15	1d6 Minions of Ammazriel.
16	1 Octohedrone guardian.
17	1 Purple cloud (and a heart).
18	1d6 Rhinocorn homunculi.
19	1d6 Shadowfish.
20	1d6 Void sharks.



## Homungcular Spawn

Alchemically grown from the flesh of its Mung Mung master, an imperfect copy.

**AC** 7 [12], **HD** 2 (9hp), **Att** 1 × bite (1d4), **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W 13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 7, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 20, **NA** 1d6, **TT** None.

- ▶ **Baggage:** Rides the Mung Mung until sent to perform a task.
- ▶ **Defy gravity:** As Mung Mung do.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease, life drain, magical emotions, and terrestrial poisons.
- ▶ **Telepathy:** Communicates with its Mung Mung master silently over any distance (but still chatters its teeth).

## Optional Forms

Things that the Mung Mung offers in trade for what it wants may come from any part of the universe. Weird shapes and unfamiliar forms are normal for it. Roll 1d12 on this table for any offer the Mung Mung merchant makes that might have an ambiguous material form (such as magic potions, memories, or some of the weird items):

1d12 Form	1d12 Form
1 Ashes.	7 Inhalant.
2 Biscuits.	8 Injectable.
3 Crystals.	9 Lotion.
4 Drink.	10 Organ.
5 Dust.	11 Powder.
6 Gravel.	12 Wood chips.

## Weird Items

When the Mung Mung offers a weird item, roll 1d100 to determine what it is.

### 1d100 Weird Items

- 1-5 **Alien Liquid:** Defies the laws of reality when unleashed from its container. It acts like there are flat surfaces in the middle of the air, refuses to interact with other liquids, can flow up or through solid structures, and may even evaporate immediately, becoming a miasmatic cloud. You can buy almost any type of effect you want this liquid to have (dyes, flammables, poisons, etc), but there is only a 2 in 6 chance the Mung Mung merchant has what you request.
- 6-9 **Ambrosia** (2d100 doses) in a small, palm-sized container. Each dose provides 1 day of food and water to the creature that drinks it.
- 10-12 **Black Spectacles:** Show the wearer anything that is invisible and reveals the truth behind any illusions. Only what is magically hidden is visible, however—the black lenses hide the mundane world from sight completely.
- 13-15 **Books** (1d6 in total) written in alien languages.
- 16-17 **Circle of Telepathy:** All creatures touching this bronze bracelet can read each others' thoughts (save vs. wands to resist the entire effect).
- 18-20 **Clockwork version of a random minion** that collapses into a hand-held sphere when not in use. Obeys the one who activates it.
- 21-23 **Fanciful masks** (1d6 in total) made of extraterrestrial materials.
- 24-25 **Hollow Porter:** Animated suit of armour that can carry the same weight as a normal person and follows its owner around. MV 120' (40').
- 26 **Hydra Salve** (1d4 uses): If rubbed on the stump of a severed body part (including a severed head, two of the lost part grow back in its place).
- 27-28 **Indestructible Clothes:** In foreign fashions (1d3 outfits in total).
- 29-30 **Indestructible skeleton** of a prehistoric beast, turned black and glittering with age. May or may not be fastened together and articulated.
- 31-32 **Iron Mace:** Creates shockwaves that disrupt internal structures, so all targets count as unarmoured AC 9 [10]. Damage as mace (1d6).
- 33-35 **Jars full of smoke** (1d6 in total). Once released, the smoke fills a room and only dissipates after 1d20 hours.
- 36-38 **Living Clothes:** In foreign fashions (1d4 outfits in total).
- 39-41 **Magic Pen:** When given ink, writes whatever you say to it in the script of your choice (including someone else's handwriting, if you have a sample).
- 42-44 **Music Box:** Plays inhuman music when activated. Volume is adjustable, may become as loud as an orchestra.
- 45-47 **Oath Skull:** Lies cannot be told by those touching it.

## 1d100 Weird Items

- 48-49 **Orb of Peace:** Anyone who uses violence within 30' of this fist-sized sphere suffers 1d4 magical damage per round (no save) until they move further than 30' away from it.
- 50 **Paperweight:** A tiny city inside a glass jar. Seems to be entirely real, and nothing changes if the jar is turned upside down. If broken, it turns out that the city is real and outside reality imposes itself upon the inhabitants immediately, in a disastrous fashion. There are no real advantages to having this city-in-a-jar in your possession other than the social prestige.
- 51-54 **Perfect duplicate** of a random item that a random party member owns.
- 55-57 **Pickled Animal:** Inside a jar, about the size of an apple. If consumed, it has the consistency of marmalade and the diner gains one use of a random spell connected to that type of animal, even if they are normally unable to cast spells.
- 58-62 **Prayer Wheels** (1d6 in total): Each is good for a one-time +1 to a roll.
- 63-65 **Resin** that smells both comforting and exciting in equal measure.
- 66-68 **Reverse Lenses** (one pair): Looking into one lens shows the view outside the other.
- 69-71 **Robe of Eyes:** Wearer can see in all directions at once.
- 72-74 **Spell Orb:** Has the power to cast a single spell, once per day. Randomly determine which spell the orb can cast.
- 75-76 **Spell Retainer:** When you cast a spell while holding this weird religious icon in front of you, there is a 1 in 6 chance the spell stays memorized.
- 77-79 **Statues of birds** (1d6 in total), 1d6 inches high and made of stone.
- 80 **Thirsty Salt:** Perpetually absorbs water. Can dry up whole oceans.
- 81-84 **Transformable Tool:** Hand-held contraption made of crystal and metal that can be reshaped into any kind of mundane tool or melee weapon.
- 85-86 **Vampire Compass:** Drinks blood and will correctly read the influence of the stars upon the arcanosphere of the material plane.
- 87-88 **Vampire Sword:** When this blade inflicts damage, the wielder heals 1 hp.
- 90-91 **Void Bomb:** All creatures within 30' of it going off must save vs. death or be utterly destroyed. Does not work until 1d20 hours after sale is finalized.
- 92-95 **Weather Oracle:** Prophetic sphere displays what the local non-magical weather will be for the next 1d6 days.
- 96-98 **Weapons** that shrink in size when not being used (1d6 in total).
- 99-100 **Whisper Torch:** This small black rod projects light from one end whenever the wielder wills it, but that light is invisible until it touches a solid surface, which then becomes illuminated.



In ancient, prehistoric days, before the advent of humanity, these highland hills were ruled by a callous race of serpentine philosophers. They built temples to the chthonic nature goddess known to us as Shab-en-Haggálath, to harness her power. Through her they had access to the primal chaos at the centre of Creation, and could make her monstrous spawn obey their bidding. These reptiles are long gone now, but some of their works remain extant, though hidden and remote. And they are not abandoned.

In the lands of Arkas it is common for the people to reflect the wildness of nature in their features. Fauns and satyrs mingle with the commonest villagers, and every town has those with a claim to dryad kin. At night, the howls of the wolf-blooded are not unknown, but neither are the ways to keep them properly at bay. And yet there are those for whom the touch of nature is not enough. They wish also to refute their humanity and revel in the beastly nature of a chaos from beyond the stars.

Inside the ancient temples of this land, hidden behind the forests in the mountains, they learned to summon the spawn of Shab-en-Haggálath again. Weird energies in this magic burned the humanity from their bodies, just as the sight of churning chaos burned it out of their minds. Now they revel in the inhuman delights they can conjure up. They can see through the veil into worlds beyond our imagining. If only they had left this world behind for good.

But they are still here, making trouble. Their black rites go unnoticed until a village is slaughtered by some winged horror or a castle is besieged by colossal nightmares. When they want something from the normal people they so despise, these spawn summoners merely bid their astral minions take it. They care little for the lives of others. To them, we are as nothing.

## Spawn Summoners

Bat-like faces atop the capering bodies of emaciated bears, madly piping away on their carved, wooden flutes.

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**AC** 8 [11], **HD** 2+2\* (11hp), **Att** 1 × bite (1d4) or mad piping, **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2), **ML** 8, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 35, **NA** 1d4 (2d6+3), **TT** D.

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- ▶ **Mad piping:** At the beginning of a round, all who can hear this “music” must **save vs. paralysis** or reel back in terror and revulsion, being unable to approach the spawn summoners or use missile weapons this round at all (including against other targets). A creature that fails this save three rounds in a row must flee from the piping for a full turn or suffer 1d6 damage per round until dead.
- ▶ **Spells:** May cast 2 spells per day, from the following: *Floating Disc*, *Locate Object*, *Read Magic*.
- ▶ **Spawn:** A group of 5 to 9 spawn summoners is accompanied by 1 spawn of Shab-en-Haggálath. A group of 10+ is accompanied by 1d3 spawn. Generate the characteristics of each spawn using the random tables on the next two pages.
- ▶ **Random encounters:** A randomly encountered group, numbering a mere 1d4 spawn summoners, flees from hostility and returns to the same spot several hours later with 1d4 additional spawn summoners and 1 spawn of Shab-en-Haggálath, looking for a fight. If they are not threatened, however, they may try to entice others to join them in dark rites performed at an ancient, abandoned temple.

## Spawn of Shab en Haggálath

Every spawn is larger than a human and few are even vaguely humanoid, but no two spawn are the same.

**AC** 1d6+2 (1d6+11), **HD** 1d10, **Att** 1-5, **THACO** 11-19 [0-8], **MV** 1d8 × [30' (10')], **SV** Varies, **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** Varies, **NA** 1, **TT** None.

- ▶ **Unique:** Every spawn is different. Roll dice to determine most of a spawn's characteristics randomly.
- ▶ **Armour Class:** Roll 1d6+2 to determine descending AC value, or 1d6+11 to determine ascending AC value.
- ▶ **Hit Dice:** Roll 1d10 to determine how many HD a spawn has. Roll hit points as normal.
- ▶ **Attacks:** Roll 1d6 to determine how many attacks a spawn has. A roll of 6 indicates it has 1d4 attacks every round (roll again each round), while any other number indicates how many times it attacks every round.

### 1d6 Attacks

1	1 attack.	4	4 attacks.
2	2 attacks.	5	5 attacks.
3	3 attacks.	6	Roll 1d4.

- ▶ **Damage:** Roll 1d6 to determine what size of die this spawn rolls when it causes damage.

### 1d6 Damage

1	1d4.	4	1d10.
2	1d6.	5	1d12.
3	1d8.	6	2d6.

- ▶ **THACO:** As normal for the spawn's HD value, whatever that is.

- ▶ **Movement rate:** Roll 1d8 to determine how many 10' squares a spawn moves in 1 combat round. Then multiply this number by 3 to determine how far it can move in 1 turn.
- ▶ **Saving throws:** Roll 1d6 to determine what saving throw matrix to use for a spawn.

### 1d6 Save As

1	HD = Cleric level.
2	HD = Fighter level.
3	HD = Magic-User level.
4	Level 1 Cleric.
5	Level 1 Fighter.
6	Level 1 Magic-User.

- ▶ **Damage resistance:** All spawn are immune to terrestrial disease and poison, as well as *charm*, *hold*, and *sleep* effects. Roll 1d6 to determine what other sources of harm a spawn is immune to:

### 1d6 Immunities

1	Acid, corrosion, fire, and heat.
2	Blunt trauma, including falling.
3	Cold, frost, and paralysis.
4	Cutting, slashing, and piercing.
5	Illusions and mental effects.
6	Non-magical weapons.

- ▶ **Special power:** Roll 1d12 for each spawn to generate a special power.
- ▶ **Description:** Finally, roll 1d20 one or more times on the descriptors table to generate some aesthetic elements of a spawn. Fill in the remaining details as you see fit.

## 1d12 Special Powers

- 1 **Additional Immunity:** Roll up another one.
- 2 **Drone Producer:** Every round, produces one humanoid minion with stats the same as a spawn summoner, but with ML 12 and no flute to pipe on.
- 3 **Flying:** Double its current movement rate when it flies through the air. Can also hover.
- 4 **Harmful Touch:** Causes 1d4 damage to anyone touching it or attacking it in melee combat. It might be on fire, covered in acid, blades, or spines, or emanating harmful rays. Look to its immunities for possibilities.
- 5 **Illusory Defences:** Once per encounter, immediately after taking damage, AC improves by 2.
- 6 **Intangibility:** Can move through immobile solid matter as if it did not exist, except for one specific material (e.g. crystals, lead, marble, wood, etc).
- 7 **Multiplying:** When hp are reduced by half but not to zero, splits into two creatures of equal strength, both of which also have this power.
- 8 **Poisonous:** After an encounter, all those who touched the spawn feel sickened and must **save vs. poison** or die after 1d4 days.
- 9 **Age:** Once per fight, after taking damage, increase damage die by one die size (1d12 and 2d6 both increase to 2d8).
- 10 **Ranged Attack:** May attack once per round with a range of 200 feet.
- 11 **Spells:** Every round, casts a random magic-user spell as if it were 6th level. Harmful spells are cast on random enemies, beneficial spells are cast on itself. Roll 1d6 for level, then 1d12 for the specific spell.
- 12 **Teleport:** To anywhere, up to 5 × day.

## 1d20 Descriptor

- |    |                                    |    |                          |
|----|------------------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 1  | Bursting vesicles.                 | 11 | Innumerable limbs.       |
| 2  | Confusingly segmented.             | 12 | Multitudes of eyes.      |
| 3  | Deep pulsing or thrumming.         | 13 | One mouth full of teeth. |
| 4  | Disturbingly transparent.          | 14 | Oppressively quiet.      |
| 5  | Dripping with oil or other fluids. | 15 | Rippling membranes.      |
| 6  | Flapping sheets of fleshy matter.  | 16 | Ropy, coiled tendrils.   |
| 7  | Flashing lights in, on, or around. | 17 | Rotten mucus.            |
| 8  | Forest of spine-like extrusions.   | 18 | Stench of chemicals.     |
| 9  | Gaudy fluorescent hues.            | 19 | Toothed or warty skin.   |
| 10 | High-pitched screams.              | 20 | Void-black sections.     |

# TENTACLE MEN

## Tentacle Men

Portly and hairless, glowing green as if made of bioluminescent fungus, with numerous purple tentacles in place of arms or legs. Has bulging egg sacs instead of eyeballs, sweats profusely, and is able to reach through walls. Scholars have speculated these are a mutant Mass of Limbs variant, whose appearance does not change when it is on a different planes of existence.

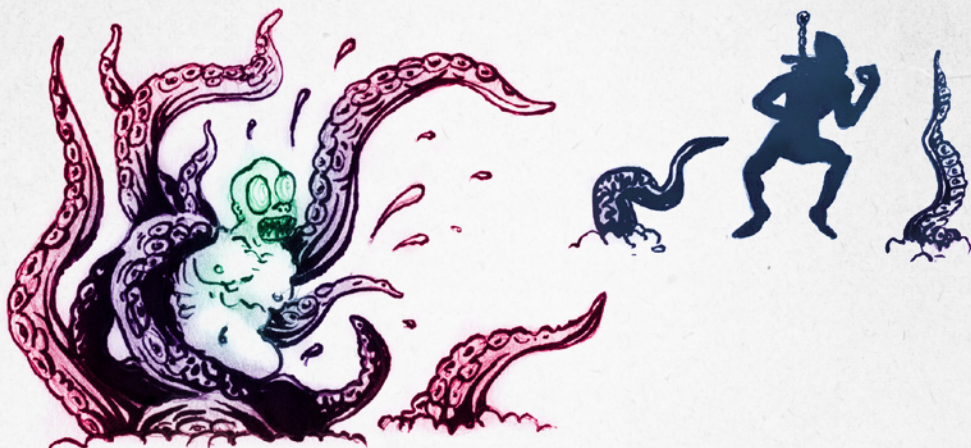
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**AC** 4 [15], **HD** 5 (22hp), **Att** 1d4 × tentacle (1d8 + prone), **THACO** 13 [+6], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** W10 D11 P12 B13 S14 (5), **ML** 8, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 175, **NA** 1 (2d4), **TT** U + V.

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- ▶ **Tentacles:** Attacks 1d4 times per round (roll for number each round). Victims of a successful tentacle attack must **save vs. paralysis** or be knocked prone (or drop what they are holding if already prone).
- ▶ **Semi-solid:** Tentacles can reach through walls, the ground, and other inanimate objects.

- ▶ **Mind trap:** Mental attacks against a tentacle man cause 1d4 damage to the attacker, even if unsuccessful.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to disease, gases, illusions, and poisons.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Double damage from acid, corrosion, and desiccation attacks. Salt causes 1d6 damage per handful thrown at a tentacle man.
- ▶ **Full of gas:** When killed (0hp) with cutting or piercing weapons, or when the body of a tentacle man is opened up, all within 10' must **save vs. poison** or suffer 1d6 damage from the noxious gases the body releases.
- ▶ **Treasure gullet:** Tentacle men are prone to devouring gold and jewels. Random treasure is always stored inside internal organs that seem to resemble stomachs.
- ▶ **Traverser:** 2 × day, can teleport to another plane of existence.
- ▶ **Vision:** Can see in the dark and sense invisible. Not fooled by illusions.



## Tentacle Things

There are places in the multiverse where tentacle men get “stuck” and cease to grow, becoming slower and slower. One group has managed to survive this by parasitizing the local, heat-devouring life forms and occupying their shell-like bodies. And thus a new type of monster is born.

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**AC** 2 [17], **HD** 7 (31hp), **Att** 1 × bite (2d6), 4 × claw (1d4), 4 × tentacle (1d4), **THACO** 12 [+7], **MV** 150' (50'), **SV** W8  
**D9 P10 B10 S12** (8), **ML** 7, **AL** Chaotic,  
**XP** 450, **NA** 1 (1d8), **TT** None.

---

- ▶ **Freezing aura:** Creatures within 10' must **save vs. paralysis** each round or suffer 1d4 damage as the heat is psychically drained from their bodies.

- ▶ **Devours heat:** Always attacks the warmest targets. Always able to damage fire creatures. May extinguish fire with a touch (may use an attack). Enraged by illusions of fire.
- ▶ **Resistances:** Immune to cold and frost, disease, fire and heat, gases, and poisons.
- ▶ **Vulnerabilities:** Double damage from weapons made of gold (including electrum).
- ▶ **Traverser:** 4 × day, can teleport to another plane of existence.
- ▶ **Vision:** Can see in the dark and sense invisible. Not fooled by illusions.
- ▶ **Animal intelligence:** No longer has language or any interest in treasure.



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