



WEIRD ANCESTRIES

ROBERT J. SCHWALB

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A RULEBOOK FOR SHADOW OF THE WEIRD WIZARD

Writing, Design, and Art Direction: Robert J. Schwalb

Editing and Development: Sue Weinlein

Proofreading: Jay Spight

Cover Design, Graphic Design, and Layout: Kara Hamilton

Cover Illustrator: Mirco Paganessi

Interior Illustrations: Auri Cavendish, Andrew Clark, Lyrica Costello, Biagio d'alessandro, Jack Kaiser, Vladimir Lubin, Yugin Maffiolo, Britt Martin, Mitch Mueller, Matthew Myslinski, Mirco Paganessi, Svetoslav Petrov, Claudio Pozas, Phill Simpson, and Jonathan Vera

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SCHWALB ENTERTAINMENT, LLC



PO BOX 12548
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
info@schwalbentertainment.com
www.schwalbentertainment.com

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INTRODUCTION

At one point, *Shadow of the Weird Wizard* included several ancestries. I started with a few. The number increased to eleven and kept growing as I reflected on just how strange the world was to become. The idea of dragon folk, dwarfs, elves, and other peoples has become too ingrained in the genre for me to ignore, given the fantastical nature of the world the game presents. How could I leave out these other options?

I realized, somewhat late in the process, that the story the game wanted to tell was humanity's struggle to escape its own downfall and rebuild in a new place, perhaps better than before or doomed to follow the same road to oblivion. I wanted humans to save themselves and not have to rely on elves or woodwoses to pull them out of trouble. At least to start. So, I made the unpleasant decision to yank drag-onets and dwarfs and all the rest from the main rulebook and hold onto them until I could give them the attention they deserve—which, I suppose, is now.

During the *Shadow of the Weird Wizard* Kickstarter campaign, I promised backers 20 ancestries, but I kept coming up with additional fun options, so you have 30 instead. *Weird Ancestries* delivers the weird, giving you rules to play just about any kind of person you can imagine. Have a hankering to play a pollywog? You can now. Maybe you like the old standards—the elf, dwarf, and halfling. They're in this book along with harpies, cambions, archons, haren, and a whole bunch more.

USING THE ANCESTRIES

Each ancestry comprises two pages. The entry gives you a cool piece of art plus information about how you might play the character. You'll find height and weight and cosmetic details too. After the introductory text, I expand on the information in *Secrets of the Weird Wizard* by highlighting interesting details about people living in the borderlands and other places in the game.

Please note that the descriptions are not meant to box your character in. You can make your character taller or shorter, thinner or heavier, with green hair and red eyes, or feathers instead of hair. None of these things matter much, and it's your character, after all.

You're going to find some information about society and culture associated with the ancestries. I have mixed feelings about this. If you want your dwarf to come from a society of murderous, bloodthirsty people, who am I to tell you that you can't? If you want your revenant to be a fun-loving bon vivant, that's cool too. However, to bring these people to life, I can't just wave my hands and say, "Make it up." Also, it does these people a disservice to say they have the same cultures and societies that humans do, even if some of them do or can. Providing information about sample societies helps make the ancestry distinctive, offers ways for characters to fit into the game setting, and gives you roleplaying inspiration. I'm sensitive to the difficulty of writing about fantasy "races" and aim to present these different folk and their common cultures in a light that makes them feel like authentic people rather than cartoony stereotypes.

NOTE: Your character automatically has a descriptor corresponding to the ancestry's name; any additional ones appear in this book in the ancestry's traits section. Descriptors simply identify physiological membership of a particular group of people. Generally, an ancestry descriptor such as "human" or "elf" offers no further benefits beyond the traits the ancestry grants.

RANDOM FEATURES

Shadow of the Weird Wizard presents a slew of tables to help you generate professions, personality, and distinctive features at random. Early drafts of this book offered new takes on these tables, but I found the tables in the main rulebook robust enough to

address the needs of these new ancestries. Rather than duplicate them, I offer guidance about some suitable professions. I also understand that using the rulebook's table for clockworks can create some unlikely results that invite you to exercise your creativity. If you would be a portly clockwork, perhaps you were made this way?

When it comes to professions, you have more chances to use your imagination. A living statue hunter? Well, living statues don't eat, but they might hunt animals to help a community they have befriended. A hobgoblin marine? Maybe you were hidden in a ship and learned new skills watching and helping those soldiers. Even the weirdest combinations create fun stories at the table.

ANCESTRY PATHS

This book introduces the idea of ancestry paths. Before some angry person on the Internet mocks the concept, following an ancestry path doesn't mean your character becomes more dwarf-y or more tatterdemalion-y. Rather, the path offers you a way to enhance your natural traits by training or happenstance, or build out capabilities that reflect dominant cultures associated with the ancestry. You can choose any novice path you like, including the path associated with your ancestry.

ATTRIBUTES: You will see an array of scores assigned to the ancestry path. Don't panic. If you hate them, move them around. You can also use the customization options on page 20 of *Shadow of the Weird Wizard*.

TRAITS: Some ancestry paths offer additional traits; they are defined in *Shadow of the Weird Wizard*, Chapter 3.

SAGE APPROVAL

While every ancestry in this book works for *Shadow of the Weird Wizard* characters, they might not all work for the games you play. Before you set your heart on playing a character with a particular ancestry from this book, talk over your interest with the Sage. The Sage has final say over what fits in the campaign and what doesn't.



ARCHON

For the crime of demonstrating free will, the seraphs cast you out of Paradise. They took from you your wings. They branded your body. And they dragged you through the golden gates to hurl you down in a ball of flame upon Erth, where you will spend the remainder of your days among the mortals whom they believed you chose to emulate. The seraphs see individuality, personality, or identity apart from that bestowed by the maker as a terrible betrayal—one they remedy by removing the offender from their midst.

You feel the loss of your status, but even if you somehow could forget, the pain of losing your wings serves as a constant reminder of what happened to you. Perhaps you believe you somehow failed the High One, but it's just as likely that you see you have outgrown your nature and become something more. It's up to you to decide how you will face this strange new world and what place you will have in it.

Though the seraphs took your wings, and with them the ability to soar among the clouds as you once did, your body remains otherwise intact. Like all archons, you stand 6 feet tall and weigh 160 pounds. No being of flesh and blood, you were forged from precious metals—you can concentrate for a few moments to cause a record of your deeds to appear in divine script all over your body. This manifestation lasts a short time before

fading away. Somewhere on your body—your chest or forehead, perhaps—you bear the mark of anathema that tells all angels you are outcast and shunned. Luckily, few mortals know what this sign means.

COMMON ARCHON NAMES: Astaphaios, Elalos, Iao, Paraplex, Saboath, Samya, and Yabei.

MADE TO SERVE

The seraphs serve. Each carries out a specific function for which they were made. They might be heralds, soldiers, servants, advisors, leaders, or something else. This function defines their identity, so when one acts in a manner at odds with the way others in the same role behave, the response is swift and final. The seraphs drive out their damaged peer.

Most archons come to Erth as near-blank slates. They have no experience with the world and little ability to do more than their original role permitted them. Necessity forces them to learn to navigate the lands, and those experiences help shape their personality and identity. Some archons see their existence in the mortal world as a chance to further the High One's work. But the outrage over their fallen status also can poison them against the god, the seraphs, and even the mortals with whom they must cohabitate.

FORGED, NOT BORN

Exile changes little about the archons, other than the devastating loss of their wings and the branding that marks them an enemy of Paradise. Each has a body assembled from a metal that corresponds to their function (see "Divine Purpose," next page). The bodies have no extraneous parts. Archons have no means of reproduction; the High One himself forges their replacements, drawing the essence from noble souls who earned the reward after a life of exemplary service. Thus, archons have no genitalia, no navels, nor anything else deemed unnecessary for their mission. In fact, they'd be identical to one another if not for the writing that appears on their bodies. The script provides a record of everything the archon has done before and after their fall, which frees their minds of the clutter created by long-term memories.

ALMOST ONE OF A KIND

An archon can go centuries without ever seeing another of their kind. They're more likely to see a seraph than another archon. Paradise recognizes the peril of losing too many seraphs at once, and thus the wisest among them have sought to understand why the failings that create exiles arise. Seraphs who fall include those who have had long-term exposure to the Void, been subject to



or participated in atrocities, or suffered catastrophic damage. To mitigate the risk of irreparable damage, seraphs limit the amount of time they fight demons and give themselves long periods of inactivity to let troubling memories dissipate. Those damaged too much (loss of locomotive ability or extensive head trauma) might be terminated, their materials recycled into new seraphs. Such efforts have reduced the exiles.

One might wonder why seraphs don't just eliminate flawed peers and save them from an existence on Erth. No one knows.

DIVINE PURPOSE

You existed to carry out tasks of a particular kind. Your function defined everything about you, from your body composition to where you spent most of your time.

- **Soldier:** You have a copper body.
- **Messenger:** You have a silver body. Once you carried missives throughout Paradise or down to Erth, speaking with your maker's voice.
- **Guardian Angel:** Your electrum body means you were tasked with watching over a mortal.
- **Builder:** You have the iron body of the builders of Paradise.
- **Demon Slayer:** You have a lead body.
- **Leader:** A gold body reveals the authority the High One invested in you to make decisions, issue orders, and lead the angelic host.

You can choose any function you like without altering your rules; this function replaces your starting profession.

FALL FROM GRACE

You would be in Paradise still, had something not gone wrong. The cause of your undoing could be as innocuous as developing a stutter, a facial tic, or unusual posture. More likely, though, you demonstrated the greater failing of developing a personality. Disobeying or questioning an order, forming a friendship with a mortal, or indulging in an emotional display all would give other seraphs cause to drive you out of Paradise.

After exile, you landed somewhere in the known world. If you fell to a populated area, you might have caused injury—but even if not, a ball of fire streaking down from heaven grabs attention. Your first interactions with mortals can shape how you deal with them forever after. You might be guarded if someone tried to exploit you, defensive if you were attacked, curious if welcomed, or just confused.

ARCHON ADVENTURERS

The reasons for your creation combined with your early experiences ought to suggest the path you follow, at least from the start.

FIGHTER: You were a soldier, forced to defend yourself against hostile people or monsters, or committed to fighting for causes important to you.

MAGE: The essence burning inside you powers the spells you cast. Evocation, Invocation, and Order all reflect your unusual origins and expression of magical ability.

PRIEST: You served the High One and might continue to do so, but breaking ties to him now would surprise no one. Other gods might be reluctant to take you on, though—an angel who fails one god will surely fail another. Further, the High One might object to a rival meddling with exiled servants.

ROGUE: The rogue path makes sense if you served as a messenger, since the job required extensive travel—sometimes to otherwise forbidden places.

ARCHON TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Angel

Natural Defense: +1, **Health:** +4

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: You speak in Tongues. When you speak, any creature that knows at least one language understands what you say. You understand all languages.

Immune: asleep, frightened, poisoned; deprivation, exposure, infection, suffocation

LEVEL 1 ARCHON

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 11

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 18 (both Defense and Health include increases from your Archon traits)

Soldier of Heaven: You ignore the requirements for using weapons. When you attack with a Piercing or Slashing weapon, you roll to attack with 1 boon.

Archon Recovery: You can use an action (or a reaction when harmed) to heal half your damage total. You emit bright light from your body until the end of your next turn. Enemies in this light roll to attack with 1 bane, or 2 banes if they are demons, fiends, spirits, or undead. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 2 ARCHON

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Traditions: One

Divine Utterance (Magical): You can use an action to speak a word of power that unravels your enemies' courage. The sound carries 5 yards. Each enemy that can hear the sound makes a Will roll. On a success, the enemy becomes immune to this talent for 1 hour. On a failure, the enemy becomes frightened of you until it overcomes the effect with a success on a Will roll. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 5 ARCHON

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Spells: Two novice

Immortal Purpose: Choose one of the following:

Radiant Presence (Magical): You can use an action to emit bright light that lasts until you use another action to end it or until you fall unconscious. While you emit this light, enemies within 5 yards of you are cursed for as long as they remain there.

Ruinous Presence (Magical): Whenever an enemy within 5 yards of you takes damage, that enemy takes an extra 1d6 damage.

CAMBION

Cambions exemplify the perils of offending the gods. You descend from a nearly forgotten people called the Azakai, who committed some grievous offense that saw them suffer the full weight of divine retribution. Not only were their cities destroyed, but the survivors were transformed into what most people see as devils. In fact, the name *cambion* means “one born of mortal and fiend.” So even if you were the soul of virtue, committed to doing good deeds and helping those in need, you still must contend with fear and revulsion in almost everyone you meet.

For this reason, you make your home in civilization’s shadows, forced to hide lest you invite trouble for yourself and your kind. But since the Old Country’s troubles and with the borderlands opening to settlers, you have come out into the open to reclaim your place on the world stage.

The Azakai might have been human once; you have a humanoid shape within typical human ranges for height and weight. But your ancestral curse has reshaped you into something other, burdening you with physical signs that make it difficult—or impossible—to pass unnoticed among even the most exotic humans. Some of your kind have backward-bending legs that end in hooves and long, muscular tails that extend from the base of the spine to end in small spikes, hooks, or a spade-like growth. You can have red, black, or pale white skin, dotted with spots. The pair of horns growing from your forehead might be short and sharp or long, ridged, and curling. You have yellow-gold eyes and black hair.

COMMON CAMBION NAMES: Aeshtar, Apollya, Balaan, Haboreem, Nyhasa, Opach, Paacca, Rammon, and Tunrid.

CURSED BY THE GODS

In the years since the fall of the Azakai civilization, different accounts have surfaced to explain what happened and why. Most say the Azakai squandered the gifts of the gods and grew decadent, wicked in their pursuit of pleasure. The gods became offended and cast them down.

The Church of the High One tells a different story, though. The *Book of Malphian* explains that a dark and cruel god created the Azakai in their own image. The dread theocracy demanded living sacrifices, and its priests cavorted with abominations. When the High One broke through the Void to lay siege to Paradise, he cast down the Adversary and all his vile angels to languish in the Netherworld. As above, so below: The Azakai fell into ruin, the survivors scattered across Erth.

DARK DREAMS OF THE CAMBIONS

Nearly all cambions experience dreams of darkness and dread when they sleep. Many report seeing the fall of their ancestors’ civilization, witnessing angels of divine fire cutting down all in their reach, the skies opening to release a flood of caustic rains. The burden of these dreams sometimes makes them cagey and unpredictable.

ONCE HUMAN

Even if not explicitly human, the offspring Azakai produced with humans suggest their compatibility or a shared origin. Cambions pass their curse onto their young, however. The products of unions between cambions and humans are always cambions, confirming to everyone the strength of the taint in their bloodline.

Cambions eat, drink, breathe, and sleep, but they feel warm to the touch. Their higher body temperature reflects their natural ability to tolerate warm climates and resist burning. While flames can consume them, it takes longer for fire to do any meaningful harm. Their fire resistance could be a gift from their creator or a side effect of their curse.

UNWELCOME STRANGERS

The biggest challenge cambions face comes from ignorance. Few people have ever seen cambions before or even know they exist. Most folks express great tolerance when it comes to interacting with people different from themselves, but the similarity between cambions and depictions of fiends puts people on guard. Sure, once they understand that cambions are not, in fact, fiends, relationships can form. But, sadly, too often fear drives people to violence, forcing these unwelcome strangers from their towns before friendships can start.

The difficulty they face fitting into human settlements forces many cambions to go it alone or in small family groups. Islands off the coast of the Devastation hold the ruins of cities older than the Old Empire. Such places as the City of Teeth, Black Mountain, and the Jagged Spires have small but thriving cambion populations. Some cambions make their homes inside large cities, where it’s easier to go unnoticed in the press of people. One can find cambions in all the borderlands’ city-states.

Many cambions hope to unearth the facts about their civilization. Such individuals find themselves drawn to ruins, scouring ancient texts and consulting beings of power in the hope of wresting from them secret truths.

LOST TREASURE

When the gods destroyed the Azakai civilization, they scattered the survivors across the world. With them went items they deemed important enough to carry away from their wicked lives. Such things might be baubles—figures of bronze or gold made to resemble diabolical figures, ancient texts such as *The Secret Flame*, said to hold the names of 666 devils—along with ordinary clothing, jewelry, and heirlooms. Cambions with an interest in their history can do worse than scour the known world for lost treasures and, from them, gain some understanding of their past. It’s possible that the stories painting them as despicable degenerates are true, but the historians may well have wronged them.

CAMBION ADVENTURERS

Cambions contend with the fearful and ignorant almost everywhere they go. Even if you were fortunate enough to have been raised by loving parents in a supportive community, you find little

acceptance outside your people. More likely, you grew up in the ruins of your long-lost civilization with people too afraid and too poor to do much more than maintain the crumbling structures in which you sheltered. The difficulties you experienced could explain why you became an adventurer. You might search for lost treasures of your people to protect yourself, find a new family among the companions who look past your diabolical looks, or seek vengeance against those who wronged you.

FIGHTER: A battle for survival could prepare you for the fighter path. Maybe you clashed with rivals over food scraps and shelter or made a name for yourself in the fighting pits, where you set yourself against increasingly dangerous foes.

MAGE: The mage path gives you the means to even the odds against those who would harm you. Any tradition could suit this end, though Pyromancy is an obvious choice, given your resistance to flames. If you embrace the curse afflicting your people, both Dark Arts and Shadowmancy can serve you well.

PRIEST: For reasons that ought to be obvious, service to the gods has little appeal to cambions, especially the Church of the High One. If you want to play a priest, the Old Gods might make the most sense. You could also forge a pact with some other power—a mighty fiend, an Ancient One, or something else—and recast the path to reflect your association with this entity.

ROGUE: Self-sufficiency teaches you critical survival techniques, which might manifest as rogue talents. Whether you dabble in magic, apply underhanded methods to slip your knife between the ribs of foes, or use your wits to overcome your enemies, the rogue path offers a lot to cambions.

CAMBION TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Vision

Bonus Languages: Archaic

Immune: Exposure

Fire Resistance: You take half damage from fire. Should you catch fire, make a luck roll; on a success, the affliction ends.

LEVEL 1 CAMBION

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 10, Intellect 11, Will 12

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 14

Languages: Archaic (from trait), Common

Traditions: Two

Fiery Weapon (Magical): You can use this talent when you attack. Flames erupt from your weapon for 1 minute. Your attacks with it deal an extra 1d6 damage from the flames. If you use this talent on a ranged weapon, the flames affect the ammunition instead. If you use this talent on an ordinary weapon with flammable components, the weapon is destroyed when the effect ends. You have uses of this talent equal to 1+ half your level and regain expended uses after you rest.



Sulfurous Leap (Magical): When you move at least 1 yard, you can target one empty space you can see within 10 yards. You teleport to that space, then thick clouds of black smoke billow out around you to fill a Size 3 space centered on you. This total obscurement lasts until the start of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 2 CAMBION

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Spells: Two novice

Blazing Recovery (Magical): You can use an action to heal half your damage total and become engulfed in flames for 1 minute or until you are doused in water. The flames harm neither you nor anything you wear or carry, and they make you immune to damage from cold and fire. During this blaze, any creature within 1 yard of you attacking you successfully with a weapon or unarmed attack takes 1d6 damage from the flames if their result was less than 20. The damage increases to 3d6 at level 5. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you've rested.

LEVEL 5 CAMBION

Health: +4

Spells: One expert

Fiery Evasion (Magical): You can use this talent when you dodge an attack from an enemy within 1 yard of you. If the roll results in failure, the enemy takes 2d6 damage. In either case, you gain the Slippery trait until the end of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).



CENTAUR

The borderlands belong to many people, some familiar, others quite exotic. But few people seem more exotic than your combination of humans' and horses' physical features. Most people dismiss you as the stuff of myth. How quickly their opinions change when they stumble into the lands of the horse lords and find themselves skewered on your spears or peppered with your arrows! You guard your lands against all intruders, and any trespassers face death.

Though your body feels natural to you, the merging of human and horse fills others with wonder and, maybe, a little fear. You have a humanoid torso, arms, and head joined with the front of a horse's body (instead of a horse's neck and head). While these features bear some resemblance to humans', you have much thicker hair and gently curved ears that sweep back alongside your head.

You have an unusual anatomy compared to most people. You have two sets of lungs, two hearts, and two stomachs. Food you eat breaks down to pass to your second stomach for true digestion. You have the same height range as horses, but you weigh a bit more thanks to your humanoid body parts.

COMMON CENTAUR NAMES: Achra, Bedaan, Churin, Delmar, Jaksa, Jevre, Kheff, Prajan, Tekka, Vris, Xeeek, and Zaol.

NOMADIC TRIBES

A dozen herds roam the Wilderlands as they have done for over a thousand years. Following the curlbeaks—flightless birds that gather in enormous flocks—centaurs protect them from manticores and poachers

while winnowing the herd to sustain themselves. Each tribe has a few hundred members, with the largest—the Zephyrborn—numbering three thousand. A tribe comprises ten to fifteen families, though the members intermingle enough that nearly everyone can count kinship. Among their own kind, centaurs prove loyal and dedicated. They have little use for other tribes and less for outsiders, and they use violence to solve problems that arise from dealings with them.

VIOLENT XENOPHOBES

Centaurians want nothing to do with outsiders. Their xenophobia stems from past violent encounters with other peoples. Some older herds still tell of clashes with northern humans, trolls, and worse things. Outsiders proved their untrustworthiness again and again, so it's generally safer to keep others at a distance. Further, the Sky Father gave dominion of the Wilderlands to the centaurs—no one else has a right to even set foot on this sacred land.

CHILDREN OF THE GODS

The old stories claim the Sky Father sired the centaurs on Ashaza, Queen of Horses, who captured the god's heart and lured him down from the heavens to consummate their love. From this union was born Centaurus, from whom all centaurs claim descent.

ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

All centaurs hope to avoid the fate of descending into the Underworld following their death. If this happens, they have failed their people, for it is known that the Sky Father intercedes on behalf of the illustrious centaurs who demonstrate courage, wisdom, and heroics. Rather than become diluted in the Underworld's oblivion, these spirits persist in the Wilderlands, where they can advise their descendants and aid them in times of need.

HERD MOOTS

Herds avoid one another as they follow their flocks across the Wilderlands, but they can and do set aside their disdain for each other in the spring. Young mares from one herd run out to "steal" stallions from other herds. A potential mate can refuse the match, but most do not, as they consider selection a great honor. Once the stallion returns with the mare, all ties to his old herd end and he becomes a full member of the new herd.

Any outside threat to one herd counts as a threat to them all. Centaurs might not like each other much, but they understand the danger of letting monsters, such as manticores, run wild in their territory, slaughtering the curlbeaks. When enemies become too great for one herd to manage, they can petition and receive aid from nearby herds.

SHRINES AND HOLY SITES

Throughout the Wilderlands, shrines mark the graves of famous centaurs who died in battle or under other heroic conditions. On windy days, travelers can hear moaning emanating from them. The keepers of each shrine position hollow curlbeak bones in rock piles where the wind is most likely to pass through them. They change the tones by cutting the bones to different lengths. Spirits sometimes communicate through the shrines, their voices riding the roar of the blowing wind.

LIFE IN THE WILDERLANDS

Assuming you came of age in the Wilderlands, you learned a great many things to ensure your survival. You can anticipate the weather for a couple days based on current outdoor conditions. You can identify tracks and follow them, and you know how to dress a kill, build a fire, and make hafted weapons, arrows, and other weapons you might need. If you grew up somewhere else, choose a profession that best matches your upbringing and training.

CENTAUR ADVENTURERS

On reaching adulthood, many centaurs leave their herds for a time to see the Wilderlands and, maybe, venture beyond. Short of death, nearly all return to their herds, wiser than when they left. During such an excursion, you could have met other people and, against all odds, befriended them. Youth helps you shake off your people's intolerance and see others for who they are. These friendships could last a lifetime, but you almost certainly will end such connections if you feel betrayed.

FIGHTER: Hunters and warriors comprise a large portion of centaur herds. Your experiences as either could point you toward the fighter path, which allows you to take advantage of your quickness and durability.

MAGE: Lacking any institutions of magic, centaurs' knowledge of the arcane arts must pass from master to student. As everyone in the herd contributes to its overall health and safety, the study of magic seems frivolous and wasteful. Still, a few people develop the talent and discover Aeromancy or Spiritualism.

PRIEST: Each herd has a small number of centaurs whose task it is to appease the Sky Father and Queen of Horses by offering sacrifices of offal burned on pyres. These centaurs form a priestly class but keep their numbers small, as the herd needs capable members for protection and hunting. Others serve the herd's spiritual needs in other ways by performing ceremonies to invoke the spirits of their ancestors.

ROGUE: Centaurs who follow the rogue path include curlbeak herders and scouts for the tribe. They have some ability to fight but more often let their wits see them through battle.

CENTAUR TRAITS

Health: +4

Size: 2, **Speed:** 6 (Mount)

Bonus Languages: Centaur

Gallop: When you run, you quadruple your Speed instead of tripling it.

Natural Weapons: You can use your hooves as a single natural melee weapon. Attacks with your hooves deal 2d6 damage.

LEVEL 1 CENTAUR

Attributes: Strength 13, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 18 (includes the increase from your centaur traits)

Languages: Centaur (from trait), Common

Centaur Weapon Training: You ignore the requirements for using ranged weapons. You increase the range of your thrown weapons by 5. When you get a critical success on a roll to attack with a weapon, you gain the Slippery trait until the start of your next turn.

Nimble Charger: You can use this talent when you move 4 yards or more. The next attack you make before the end of your turn deals an extra 1d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 2 CENTAUR

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Kick and Recover: You can use an action to heal half your damage total and make an attack with a natural weapon. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 CENTAUR

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Trample: You can move through spaces occupied by creatures and objects smaller than you. A creature whose space you enter makes an Agility roll. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage and falls prone. An object whose space you enter takes 2d6 damage if you choose. A creature or object can be affected by your use of this talent just once each round.

QUADRUPED LIFE

Your physique makes some tasks hard, if not impossible. Attempts to climb sheer surfaces, cross particularly narrow surfaces, and fit through low-ceiling openings lay beyond your ability. Let common sense be your guide: If you attempt something that seems impossible for a horse to do, you can't do it either.

CHANGELING

Just last week, you were a woman of poise and beauty, strolling through the town, charming everyone you met. Yesterday, you were a dwarf, holding up a corner of the bar. And today? Today you can be anyone you like. You are a changeling. You have the natural ability to assume the guise of any person you see. You take their appearance, the sound of their voice, and, if so inclined, their very lives. You change identities as other people change their clothes.

You have no reason to show your true appearance. You can stay in a form for as long as you like. If someone suspects your true nature, you can always assume a different form. You have worn many appearances over the years, adopting them from the people you find interesting or useful. Your reluctance to show your true appearance has merit—people find changelings in their natural form off-putting.

Your humanoid shape remains the only feature you have in common with most other people. You have pale, rubbery skin over a gaunt body with spindly limbs. Your head appears too large for your slight frame. You have large black eyes and the barest suggestion of facial features. You look like every other changeling. Only your mannerisms, speech patterns, and posture individuate you. Typical heights for your people range from 3 to 4 feet, and weights run from 40 to 60 pounds. You can freely decide your gender or forgo having a gender at all.

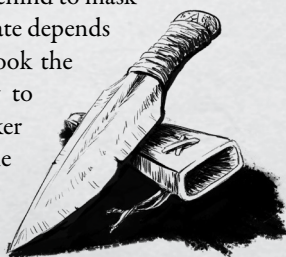
COMMON CHANGELING NAMES: Buttons, Coy, Ember, Filch, Grin, Leer, Malice, Mask, Precious, Spite, Tricksy, and Tytus.

FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

The oldest stories tell of a time when the world was new and the faeries first wiped creation's dew from their eyes. These early people had not yet fixed their forms, unsure of who they would become. They tried out different shapes until they found ones that suited them. From them came elves, atomies, goblins, kobolds, and others. A few, though, could not—or would not—make a choice and thus remained as they were, with only the rudiments of form. Having opted not to become something else, changelings would alter their appearance to match that of anyone they could see, within certain limits.

DARK FOLKLORE

Human folklore paints a much different picture of changelings. The old stories claim the faeries made changelings from sticks and mud and old hair and used magic to disguise them as human children. The faeries would leave them behind to mask the theft of mortal children, whose fate depends on the story. Some say the faeries took the children, as they lacked the ability to create their own young. Other, darker tales claim faeries sold them in the Night Market or, worse, offered them to the Adversary in accordance with some ancient pact.



FEAR AND MISTRUST

The tales mortals tell of changelings reinforce the mistrust and fear that people feel toward them. But humans are not alone. Even faeries would prefer to keep changelings at arm's reach. The ability to impersonate anyone they see gives changelings unequal opportunity to wreak havoc wherever they go. A malicious changeling could commit a series of awful crimes while wearing the guise of someone in the community, only to shed the disguise when witnesses come forward. While the person whom they impersonated dances on the end of a rope, the changeling takes someone else's appearance and slips away. Certainly, many changelings lead good and upstanding lives, but enough of them have caused sufficient suffering that people take steps to protect themselves. In faerie realms, some highborn forbid changelings from using their abilities, while in mortal lands, some communities require people to "take the iron" as a way of exposing any disguised changelings in their midst.

BORROWED HOMES

Lacking the numbers to establish communities of their own, changelings settle in places that capture their fancy. With the right disguise, they can slip into a community unnoticed and live as the person they impersonate for as long as they wish—or until exposure forces them out. Since they can adopt only the appearance of people they see, wise changelings avoid assuming the identities of known locals and instead come to a new settlement in a guise they picked up somewhere else.

FITTING IN

A changeable appearance can carry you only so far. Without the knowledge and skill of those you impersonate, you might display ignorance enough to make others suspicious. Certain professions can help you pull off your disguises. Focus on acting to help you maintain character when interacting with others. Becoming a spy can help you gather useful trivia about those you impersonate; knowing at least something about their lives lets you portray them with confidence.

CHANGELING ADVENTURERS

Since you can live anywhere and become whomever you like, you have endless opportunities to meet interesting people. Lack of roots makes it easy for you to pick up and move on, which suits you to the adventurer's life. Further, your shapeshifting abilities make you an invaluable asset to any company of adventurers.

FIGHTER: Few changelings see much profit in fighting in hand-to-hand combat. If you do become a fighter, it results from staying in a warrior's form for long periods, during which time you were forced to learn how to defend yourself. Alternatively, you might lack the subtlety found in your kind and prefer a more direct way of dealing with your enemies.

MAGE: As a faerie, magic flows in your blood. You can pick up traditions as if born to them. Most changeling mages discover traditions like Enchantment, Illusion, and Psychomancy that accentuate their natural talents.

PRIESTS: Faeries worship no gods. You know divinities exist and possess considerable power, but such qualities fail to make them worthy of worship. If you follow the priest path, rather than be a servant for a deity, you could become a proxy for them. In return for representing them in the world, the god offers you some reward.

ROGUE: The rogue path ought to have the strongest appeal, given that these characters rely on tricks and wits to overcome challenges. The path's talents complement your natural abilities, letting you befuddle, confuse, or assassinate as you choose.

STARTING IDENTITY

As part of creating your changeling character, you should decide on the identity you start with for your first quest. You can be anyone you like: any gender, appearance, height, weight, ancestry, and other details. Also consider who this person was before you started impersonating them. Are they present in your community, or did you borrow their looks at some point in the past? How likely are you to run into someone who knows them? What did this person do for a living and what responsibilities did they have? Play up these details as much as possible until you are ready to reveal yourself.

CHANGELING TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Faerie

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Vision

Bonus Languages: Sylvan

Immune: infection

Impersonate: If at the start of your turn you lack the confused, controlled, stunned, and unconscious afflictions, you can, without using an action to do so, choose one humanoid flesh-and-blood creature of Size 1/2 or 1 that you can see within 10 yards. You assume the target's appearance and retain it until you use this trait again, end this effect (at any time), or touch an object made from cold iron. Use of this trait affects your appearance and voice only; you use your normal rules.

LEVEL 1 CHANGELING

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 12, Intellect 12, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Sylvan (from trait)

Deceitful Strike: You can use this talent with the Impersonate trait. Until the end of your turn, when you attack the creature whose appearance you assumed, you roll with 3 boons, and your attack

deals an extra 2d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Fluid Transformation: Each time you use Impersonate and you are neither held nor slowed, you can move 1 yard without expending movement. You count as Slippery for this movement.

LEVEL 2 CHANGELING

Health: +4

Doppelganger's Advantage: When you attack a creature whose appearance you assumed with the Impersonate trait, you roll to attack with 1 boon, and the target takes an extra 1d6 damage from your attacks.

Restorative Transformation (Magical): When you use your Impersonate trait, you can use this talent to heal half your damage total and increase your Speed by 2 until the start of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 CHANGELING

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Shocking Transformation: When you use your Impersonate trait and its target can see you, the target makes a Will roll. On a failure, the target becomes frightened of you (luck ends).

Superior Impersonation (Magical): When you use Impersonate, you can make an Intellect roll. On a success, you learn where the target has been and what the target did during the previous hour.





CLOCKWORK

Most people rely on faith to inform them of their creator's identity, but you don't need that. You know for certain that the Weird Wizard constructed you—you remember awakening in his workshop. The Weird Wizard made the clockworks to be his helpers, protectors, and, above all, companions. You were only too happy to fulfill those roles. But the Weird Wizard has gone, and now your future feels uncertain.

Had not the Weird Wizard exited this world, you might have remained in the city of your creation—the Forbidden City—forever. With work defining your purpose, you carried out whatever tasks you were given without question, without fail. After all, you owed the entirety of your existence to your maker, and he walked among you. How could you do otherwise?

You remember coming to in the Weird Wizard's workshop, surrounded by other clockworks. Your maker gave you a task, and that task defined your existence. Your body reflects your function, and your key, when wound, gives you the semblance of life. If the Weird Wizard made you to fight and protect, you stand tall, with the head of an animal such as a stag or lion. Or, as a researcher, servant, or entertainer, you could have a more humanoid frame and appearance. In any case, a metal carapace covers the delicate inner mechanisms that enable you to function in the manner of a person.

COMMON CLOCKWORK NAMES: Buckets, Clanker, Digit, Gears, Hours, Mech, Motor, Rustbucket, Shellhead, and Ticktock.

LIFE AFTER THE WEIRD WIZARD

You never thought to question why the Weird Wizard made you. It was clear he needed certain tasks completed and lacked the time or patience to attend to them himself. You were made for a purpose and had no real ambition to do anything else. Now that the Weird Wizard has vanished, you and all your fellow clockworks must decide what to do next. Many of you continued just as before: Candlesticks got polished, books dusted and organized, hybrids fed. Music was played, performances carried out. Sentries stood guard on the city's high walls. But one by one, you have laid down your dusters and tools, abandoned your posts, and exited the city gates to find your destinies.

Now you must decide what you will do, what kind of mark you would leave upon this world. You know some clockworks went north, south, and east, but you traveled west toward the borderlands. You came out of the New Lands along the Causeway between the Silent Sentinels—two colossal statues of bearded wizards. Here you've found people to interact with, learn from, even befriend. Some marveled at you, though many others fled from you, seeing in you all that was frightful and terrible about your maker.

These first encounters likely shaped your opinions about flesh-and-blood people, either endearing them to you or seeding within you suspicion and possibly resentment. The result? An ongoing effort to find an adoptive community—or a reason to continue your existence.

Since you left the Forbidden City, you have experienced strange sensations: disjointed memories of people and places oddly familiar but from a time you cannot remember. You see people, and they remind you of someone whose name escapes you. As you travel, you get a feeling you have been there before. It makes no sense to

you. Has the magic that made you begun to malfunction? Maybe you should never have left your home. But perhaps these visions and memories offer clues about how you came to be.

FORM DEFINES FUNCTION

Your purpose determines your physical characteristics as well as the training you received. Choose one of the options below in place of your profession.

ARTISAN: You made pipes, hoses, frames, weapons, and components. You repaired damage to the Forbidden City and constructed new buildings whenever your master decided. As an artisan, you stand 6 feet tall, weigh 200 pounds, and have a smooth, featureless steel carapace over your inner mechanisms. You have a tool kit.

ASSISTANT: You aided in magical research and experiments. You stand 5 feet tall and weigh 175 pounds. The human features of your carapace resemble the Weird Wizard's, with some expressive capabilities. You know Arcane in addition to your other languages.

ENTERTAINER: You joined the ranks of the clockworks who helped alleviate the Weird Wizard's blackest moods and bouts of depression. You stand 4 feet tall, weigh 150 pounds, and you have a brightly colored carapace that gives you fully expressive human or animal features. You have a musical instrument.

LABORER: You were made to repair and maintain the Forbidden City. You patched walls and replaced roofs, but you also aided in construction. You stand 7 feet tall, weigh 250 pounds, and have a dull iron carapace with no distinguishing facial features. You have a hammer.

SERVANT: The Weird Wizard created you to serve him, which you did by keeping his home clean, his hybrids fed, and by beautifying everything you could. You stand 4 feet tall, weigh 130 pounds, and have a shiny copper carapace with a suggestion of human facial features. You have three sets of spare parts.

SOLDIER: Posted on the outer walls, you protected the Forbidden City from your maker's enemies. You stand 7 feet tall, weigh 300 pounds, and have a steel carapace. Your humanoid body has the head of a beast such as a bull, stag, lion, or wolf. You have some range of facial expression and carry a spear and shield.

CLOCKWORK ADVENTURERS

Freed from service to the Weird Wizard, you can go where and do what you please. The world stands before you, new lands to explore, new peoples to meet. You are among the last of your kind; the clockworks who exist now are all there will ever be, now that your maker has gone. It's time to make a mark on the world before you pass from it.

Your function suggests the path you take. If you were a laborer or soldier, you're likely to become a fighter; an entertainer or servant, a rogue; an artisan or assistant, a mage. Of course, you can always play against type. A servant might leave the Forbidden City with a book of magical lore, while a soldier might value speed and luck over fighting. While rare, clockwork priests do exist, a god filling the Weird Wizard-shaped holes in their minds. Others worship a deified Weird Wizard, whose portfolio resembles that of Abraxus. (See *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, Chapter 2.)

CLOCKWORK TRAITS

Natural Defense: +3, **Health:** +8

Size: 1, **Speed:** 4 (no swimming)

Immune: asleep, poisoned; deprivation, exposure, infection, suffocation

Mechanical Being: When you become injured, you become slowed until you are no longer injured. To heal damage or regain Health from resting, you must expend a set of spare parts. When you become incapacitated, you count as a magical object and lose no Health at the end of each round. You remain an object until destroyed by harm, at which point your soul departs the body and prevents you from being restored to life by any means short of divine intervention. However, a creature can use an action to stabilize you by turning your key; you heal damage and become a creature again at the end of the round rather than healing damage immediately.

Grind the Gears: At the start of your turn, if you lack the confused, controlled, stunned, and unconscious afflictions, this trait increases the number of actions you can use on your turn by one. At the end of the round, make a luck roll. On a failure, you become stunned (luck ends). A creature that can reach you can use an action to remove this affliction early by winding your key. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 1 CLOCKWORK

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 9, Intellect 10, Will 12

Natural Defense: 13, **Health:** 22 (both Defense and Health include increases from your Clockwork traits)

Languages: Common

Clockwork Upgrade: Choose one of the benefits below.

- You roll to attack with 1 boon.
- You discover one tradition.
- Replace one of your hands with a natural weapon appendage—a blade, bludgeon, hook, or spike. If you replace your off hand, attacks with the weapon deal 1d6 damage. If you replace your primary hand, attacks with the weapon deal 2d6 damage. In addition, the weapon has one of the following traits: Brutal, Disarming, Nimble, Piercing, or Slashing.
- Gain a profession of your choice, increase your Intellect by 1, and add a language to the list of those you know.

LEVEL 2 CLOCKWORK

Health: +8, **Speed:** +1

Surging Violence: You can use this talent with your Grind the Gears trait. Until the end of the round, your attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage.

Self-Repair: If you have a set of spare parts, you can use an action to expend it, healing damage equal to half your damage total.

LEVEL 5 CLOCKWORK

Health: +8, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Advanced Clockwork Upgrade: Choose one of the following benefits.

- Gain the Dark Vision trait.
- Gain the Slippery and Strider traits.
- Either discover two traditions, learn two novice spells, or learn one expert spell.
- Gain a fighting style of your choice from the options available to fighters.

DAEVA

What kind of life might you have had if not for that stone? Maybe you would have fallen in love, started a family, lived a life—simple but good. But that life ended the moment you took up that stone you found, gleaming in the rubble. On pulling it free, you heard a voice in your mind that told you tales of another time and place. The voice offered you a chance at a different kind of life, one that could lead to greatness, knowledge, wisdom, and, above all, adventure. The entity, a spirit held in the crystal, offered you everything—but only if you would become its host. Did you have doubts? Did you think twice? You can no longer remember. It no longer matters. You made the choice, and you must live with it. Everything you now do, you do to protect the being living within you. The two of you have grown so close, it is hard to tell where you end and the symbiote begins.

You were born human and remain so for the most part. You have human characteristics, traits, and needs. The symbiote chose you not for your looks, but for your character, so you can have any appearance. When you bonded with the symbiote, the crystal containing its essence crumbled away, leaving just one or a few small shards embedded in the center of your forehead.

COMMON DAEVA NAMES: You can keep your name, but you also answer to the daeva's name, which can be any of the following: Apollonia, Ariel, Boread, Casiel, Dina, Ezepherel, Gilgamar, Kafziel, Llerial, Mykkena, Raphael, Samael, Tintena, and Uriel.

DUAL EXISTENCE

You share your body with an ancient spirit you liberated from a crystal shard. The spirit belonged to a person who lived in fabled Oraldia, an ancient kingdom whose rise to greatness offended the gods. Since you've bonded, the spirit's consciousness lurks in your mind: sometimes a dim presence, other times emergent and able to converse with you. If you allow it, the symbiote can take over your body and speak with your voice. But it prefers not to expose itself in this way and instead shares its thoughts to counsel you when you need help.

Although your body anchors the spirit to the mortal world, it can emerge from you for short periods to help in battle and perform certain tasks. When you choose, light pours out of the crystal on your forehead and in the radiance a luminous humanoid form takes shape.

ANCIENT TRAGEDY

From the symbiote, you learned the gods sank the island nation of Oraldia and drowned its people in response to their attempt to become immortal. They anticipated an attack and prepared by migrating the souls of many of their folk into crystal shards, where they could wait until the time to rebuild. The Oraldians had planned for survivors to prepare new bodies to hold the shard-bound spirits. No one survived, however. A million crystals were washed away, scattered across the world.

The crystals protected the spirits, but time has chewed away at their memories until just the personality and will to exist remain, alongside a fading vision of the home they lost. On bonding with a mortal host, the spirit regains something of who they were, bit by bit, reflected in the talents their host develops along the way. The daeva's identity could fully return one day, in which case the host must decide whether to surrender to the symbiote or break with it.

RARE CRYSTALS

A market for Oraldian crystals exists. Each crystal holds magical energy useful for powering large devices such as portal gates, magitech, and certain weapons. Draining the crystals of their energy kills the spirit inside. Though thousands of crystals have been exhausted this way, many more remain, hidden or lost.

So few people ever happen on a crystal that those who do never find another unless they hunt for them. As a result, daevas can go their entire lives without ever encountering another like them. Most daevas remain with their former people, though some are forced out of the community if others are unsettled by their nature.

SYMBIOTE OBJECTIVE

Your symbiote has a goal. It can relate to something that happened before its soul vanished into the crystal or an overarching pursuit that might influence your decisions. Use the following table to generate a random objective.

SYMBIOTE OBJECTIVES

D6	GOAL DESCRIPTION
1	Find shards and help the spirits within find hosts.
2	Weaken or defeat agents of the gods.
3	Locate a particular spirit contained in a shard.
4	Learn all about the world and how it has changed since ancient times.
5	Discover a way to free itself from your body to inhabit a new one—perhaps a soulless mechanical form or one grown using magic.
6	Locate Oraldian artifacts scattered across the known world.

DAEVA ADVENTURERS

Accepting the symbiote changed the course of your life and set you apart from your people. These unusual circumstances could force you into an adventurer's life, especially if your friends and family no longer regard you in the same way.

You can follow any path—your profession could suggest it. Your symbiote might urge you toward magic, and the traditions you discover could come from knowledge it bestows. Oraldian traditions include Chronomancy, Eldritch, Evocation, Symbolism, and Teleportation.

DAEVA TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Spirit

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: Archaic

Symbiotic Aid: You can use this trait in combat when you make an attribute roll; add 10 to the result. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Divine Doom: You make luck rolls with 1 bane.

Luminous Symbiote: You can use an action to release a luminous symbiote into one Size 1 empty space within reach. The symbiote remains apart from you until it returns to your body or becomes incapacitated, which ends the separation regardless of your distance apart. While separated, you are weakened but lose access to the Divine Doom trait. The symbiote uses the rules below. It takes its turns when you do, and you decide what it does on its turns. If you become incapacitated while separated, the symbiote becomes weakened. If you die, the symbiote dissipates and is lost forever. In addition, your own soul is destroyed; effects that would restore you to life fail. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute after its effects end.

LUMINOUS SYMBIOTE

SPIRIT

Defense: 20, **Health:** 10 plus twice your level

Strength: 10 (+0), **Agility:** 16 (+6)

Intellect: 16 (+6), **Will:** 16 (+6)

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6 (Fly, Hover, Insubstantial, Slippery)

Languages: Understands all languages you know

Immune: asleep, blinded, controlled, deafened, frightened, held, on fire, poisoned, prone, slowed; exposure, deprivation, infection, suffocation

Radiant: The symbiote emits bright light.

Divine Doom: The symbiote makes luck rolls with 1 bane.

ACTIONS

Radiant Touch: The symbiote targets one flesh-and-blood creature within reach, then makes an Agility (+6) roll with 1 boon against the target's Agility. On a success, the target takes 1d6 damage.

REACTIONS

Dazzling Light: When harmed, the symbiote can release a flash of blinding light. Each sighted creature within 3 yards makes a luck roll. On a failure, the creature becomes blinded until the end of its next turn. The symbiote then loses access to this trait for 1 minute.

LEVEL 1 DAEVA

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 11, Intellect 10, Will 11

Natural Defense: 9, **Health:** 10

Languages: Archaic (from trait), Common

Traditions: Two

Ancient Wisdom: You can use this talent when you make an Intellect or Will roll. Roll with 1 boon. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Durable Symbiote: Increase your symbiote's Health score by 10.

LEVEL 2 DAEVA

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Spells: Two novice

Instinctive Release: You can use a reaction when you are harmed to use your Luminous Symbiote trait.

Shining Recovery (Magical): If you are not under the effects of your Luminous Symbiote trait, you can use an action to heal half your damage total and emit bright light for 1 minute. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 DAEVA

Health: +2

Spells: One expert

Dread Symbiote: Increase your symbiote's Health score by another 20. In addition, its Radiant Touch now deals 3d6 damage.



DAEVA

DEMIGOD

You had an auspicious birth—perhaps you were born from a cow, or a half dozen strangers showed up at the place of your birth, laden with gifts. You had an absent parent, and the one who raised you never spoke of them. As you grew, you seemed to escape unscathed from the most harrowing circumstances, and you displayed uncommon abilities that made people question who you truly are. The signs were everywhere. You are not as others. The blood of the gods flows through your veins.

Even with all the evidence pointing to a supernatural origin, people overlooked the fact that you were a demigod. You appeared human, acted as a child might, and—aside from the occasional head-scratching event—had a perfectly normal childhood. When you came of age, though, the divine aspects began to show. You could heal from almost any injury. You never got sick. You seemed able to do things others couldn't. Depending on the god who sired you, your body might have started changing beyond what one expects from puberty: For instance, you turned pale as a ghost, a light shone from within you, or writing appeared all over your body.

COMMON DEMIGOD NAMES: As a demigod, you choose your name from among those used by humans.



UNLIKELY OFFSPRING

You are a rarity among rarities. Without the aid of magic, unions between mortals and immortals never produce offspring. A mortal and immortal could have compatible physiology, such as elves and humans, but no matter how often they try, nothing comes from it. Gods can perform such miracles, but few bother. Why would a god create a demigod child? Who needs a future rival? Are there not gods enough?

Any child born of a divinity and a mortal serves some larger purpose in the god's vision. The demigod could lead mortal peoples to some new land or introduce an entirely new way of thinking and acting to the world. Some undertake heroic tasks, while another might sacrifice themselves to enable some greater event to occur. A demigod could also become a leader of their parent's people or fight as proxy on the deity's behalf.

HUNTED AND EXPLOITED

Other gods take a dim view of demigods running around the mortal world, so demigods often must contend with plots and machinations of the powers who would rid creation of them. The immortals are not alone in this: A demigod proves the existence of the divine and can be a figure people either rally around or flee from in terror. Religious groups follow up on all rumors of demigods; any they find they either elevate to a position of great influence or hide away to prevent rival sects from abducting them. Less scrupulous individuals see opportunities to exploit captured demigods—perhaps steal their immortality or drain away their supernatural essence, using it to achieve their own goals.

DIVINE EXPRESSIONS

As physical manifestations of your supernatural heritage began to reveal themselves, people took notice. Unusual coloration and facial features appear often enough that no one would sense anything amiss from that. But growing horns, vestigial wings, or scales, shining light from your skin, and similar qualities make you hard to miss. And when people take notice, they start asking questions. Once the truth comes out, word invariably spreads, which attracts allies and enemies in equal numbers. Such pressure could explain why you left home to venture out and seize your destiny. If you managed to conceal your identity or it remained largely unknown to you, seeking out the god who sired or birthed you could impel you to travel and adventure. Then again, if the god has already taken an interest, you might go where the divinity directs.

Use the Divine Heritage table to generate at random the immortal who sired you and the effects of such kinship on your appearance. (Read more about them in *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, page 65.)

DIVINE HERITAGE

D20 HERITAGE DESCRIPTION

- 1 **High One:** You have silver, gold, or copper skin.
- 2 **Lord Death:** Pale and sickly, you have bruised eyes and sunken cheeks.
- 3 **Daughter of Death:** Choose Hate, the Pale Lady, Want, or Calamity.

Hate: Your hair grows long no matter how often you cut it and seems to move on its own.

Pale Lady: You become incredibly attractive, but your skin feels cold and clammy.

Want: You grow corpulent.

Calamity: Your mouth curves into a smile and remains that way.

- 4 **Mother Sun:** You glow. In total darkness, you emit a faint light from your skin.
- 5 **Sister Moon:** Shadows bend toward you. Ordinary flames seem to cast less light in your presence.
- 6 **Sky Father:** You grow large and muscled with a fierce countenance.
- 7 **Draconus:** Fine scales cover your body, growing thicker along your arms, legs, and neck.
- 8 **Oceanus:** You have orbs for eyes, and fleshy wattles and barbels appear on your face. Your nose shrinks until it disappears.
- 9 **Grandfather Tree:** You have grass, tender branches, and vines instead of hair, and your skin turns brown or green if it's not already.
- 10 **Grandmother Spore:** Fungal growths appear all over your body—you might have jellies on your arms or a shelf fungus on your torso.
- 11 **Horned Lord:** You grow a pair of horns or antlers, while thick hair covers much of your body.
- 12 **Wild Woman:** You gain feminine physical traits or, if already present, they become enhanced.
- 13 **Urbanus:** Words form stories all over your body. Fragments of history, philosophy, snatches of poetry, and a bit of fiction surface on your skin and change at times, as if someone were turning pages.
- 14 **Revel:** The perfume of wine, fresh-cut flowers, and honey swirls around you.
- 15 **Fates:** Each time after you rest, roll a d6. The change to appearance lasts until you finish another rest and has no effect on your capabilities.
 - 1–2: You look like a young adult.
 - 3–4: You look like an adult in the prime of life.
 - 5–6: You look aged, even venerable.
- 16 **Blind:** Your pupils turn white, making you appear blind, though you can see as normal.
- 17 **Abraxus:** A third eye opens in the center of your forehead.
- 18 **Fetch:** You grow a sixth finger on each hand.
- 19 **Kaen:** You feel hot to the touch. Rust spots appear on your skin, and your eyes seem to smolder.
- 20 **Faerie or Small God:** You come from a minor god or other immortal. You look like a perfect human specimen, physically fit with striking features and a pleasant voice. People like you and want to be near you.

DEMIGOD ADVENTURERS

An unusual heritage gives you a unique opportunity to change the world. Depending on your divine parent, your efforts might tip the scales toward justice and virtue or end a terrible threat from the Void, the Netherworld, or some alien vista. If you have dark origins, you might counter your god's influence, working to stop plagues, hunger, or war.

DEMIGOD TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Divine Attribute: Choose one of your attributes and increase its score by 1.

Divine Heritage: Upon reaching adulthood, you show no signs of growing older. Your wounds heal without leaving scars and, after a rest, you regrow any severed body parts. You live until killed by mishap or violence, after which the god who made you takes your body.

LEVEL 1 DEMIGOD

Attributes: Assign 11, 11, 11, and 10 to your attributes and then apply Divine Attribute.

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common

Traditions: One associated with your deity (see *Shadow of the Weird Wizard*, page 25), **Spells:** One novice

Divine Favor: You make luck rolls with 1 boon.

LEVEL 2 DEMIGOD

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1 d6

Spells: One novice

Divine Recovery: You can use an action to heal half your damage total. Then, for 1 minute, you take half damage from all sources. You regain use of this talent after you rest.

LEVEL 5 DEMIGOD

Health: +4

Spells: One expert

Divine Intercession (Magical): When you make an attribute roll, make a luck roll as well. You get a success if either result is a success, and a critical success if both are successes. You can use this talent a number of times equal to half your level. You regain expended uses after you rest.



DAUNTLESS DIVINE

Demigods are a rare breed of adventurer, possessing a potent blend of mortal courage and divine power. Their journeys are often marked by a search for identity, purpose, or revenge. These extraordinary individuals walk a perilous path, straddling the line between humanity and divinity.

DHAMPIR

Vampires earn the attention of hunters by their acts against the living. The parasitic creatures creep about the shadows, use weird magic to influence the minds of their victims, then drain them dry to feed their unnatural thirst for blood. You carry something of the vampire's curse, gained from an encounter with the undead or inherited from an ancestor. And though you live and breathe as any other human, you bear the burden of thirsting for fresh blood. Lest you descend into monstrous savagery, you must find some way to control your appetite.

You look human: pale and thin, maybe sickly. You have gleaming red eyes, but no other physical qualities that would set you apart from those on whom you sometimes feed. Your normal appearance conceals the corruption you gained from the vampire who fed on you or inherited from one of your ancestors. You must eat food, drink water, and sleep—but you also can nourish yourself on a diet of blood. When you enjoy periods of high blood consumption you appear healthier, even youthful, compared to when you go a long stretch without.

COMMON DHAMPIR NAMES: As dhampirs live among humans, they often carry human names. You can use any of the common names on page 19 of *Shadow of the Weird Wizard*.

VAMPIRIC SCIONS

Normally vampires create other vampires by draining their victims to the brink of death, then feeding them vampiric blood. The feeding kills the victim and causes them to rise as a new vampire. Sometimes, though, a vampire feeds without killing, leaving the prey weak but able to recover. If the vampire's corrupted essence passes through the "kiss," it transforms the mortal into a dhampir. These unfortunates gain a thirst for blood and some vampiric traits but remain as alive as before the encounter; they pass the curse onto their offspring.

TOUCHED BY DARKNESS

Dhampirs have the same physiology as humans, except they can ingest and digest blood without growing ill. The blood they drink vitalizes them for superhuman feats. Aside from their cravings for fresh blood—and the ability to draw sustenance from it—dhampirs also acquire certain physical quirks. Hair can grow from the palms of their hands, or their eyes might shine in the darkness. They might reflect faintly in mirrors or cast no shadows at all. Dhampirs who surrender to their thirst develop more and more of these qualities, with the cumulative effect of stripping away their humanity.

UNDERGROUND SOCIETIES

Living among humans serves dhampirs well. Not only can they hide in plain sight, but they also have ready access to people on whom they can feed. Of all the places where one might find dhampirs, the most infamous is Sanguine: the City under the City. Hidden beneath the capital of the Great Kingdom, this shadowy underworld is home to thousands of dhampirs who serve their regent, the Queen of Blood and Beauty.

Smaller communities have taken root in nearly all cities across the known world—especially in the borderlands, which, until recently, the High One's inquisitors could not quite reach. Such societies tend to be close knit, though larger groups might divide into smaller clans. Naturally, many dhampirs live apart from their kindred, believing themselves unique, undead, or monstrous. Long-term isolation and a diet of vermin blood can transform dhampirs into the ghoulish nosferatu (see *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, page 153).

FEAR AND LOATHING

As few people distinguish between dhampirs and vampires, such misidentification causes endless trouble for dhampirs. Well-intentioned undead slayers hunt them, and mobs of torch- and pitchfork-wielding commoners form to drive out suspected blood drinkers. Even if dhampirs mind their own business, sequestered in some isolated place, they're bound to run afoul of adventurers who think they do good by kicking down doors and attacking with wooden stakes. For these reasons, dhampirs eager for long lives do well to stay out of view, keep their true natures hidden, and make sure to feed without any witnesses.

LOATHSOME SUN

Speed, a keen sense of smell, an incredible constitution that enables you to ignore any toxin—these traits come at a cost. Sunlight hurts. You don't burn in the manner of some undead, but you feel weak, dizzy, and sick. No matter how much you cover up, the sunlight finds a way to get to you, so you prefer to do your business at night.

WHAT'S DONE IN THE SHADOWS

How and when you became a dhampir should suggest the kind of experiences and profession you had before you set out on your first quest. A second-, third-, or later-generation dhampir might find you living in the company of other dhampirs, passing time as an artist, dilettante, or carouser. If you came to this state in recent days, your brush with vampirism could have happened under any circumstance; you have a profession described in Chapter 1 of *Shadow of the Weird Wizard*.

DHAMPIR ADVENTURERS

Your traits and curious ancestry nudge you outside "normal" society. The petty complaints of work and ordinary life bore you. Needing something more stimulating, you find the adventuring life enchanting. Not only does the travel and excitement stave off ennui, but you also move around a lot, which is useful when enemies pick up your scent and go on the hunt.

FIGHTER: You have had to defend yourself in the past. Too many witch hunters and inquisitors seek your death. Skill at arms helps you teach them a fatal lesson.

MAGE: The curse might limit your activities, but it does open doors to society's shadowy underworld. You meet many people who study the arcane arts and can learn from them and

the books they hunt. Any tradition can serve your interests, but many dhampir mages prefer Enchantment, Illusion, Shadowmancy, and War.

PRIEST: Dhampirs might join the worship of just about any god, from the guilt-ridden devotees of the High One to the effete followers of Urbanus. More than any other, though, dhampirs follow Lord Death, the Daughters of Death, or Vaymar, the blood god and lord of murder whose cult has enemies from most other faiths. Followers of the blood god stain their hands red as a show of faith and use the blood droplet as their symbol. Vaymar's traditions include Shadowmancy and War.

ROGUE: Embracing the shadows and relying on underhanded methods to stay ahead of your foes and get what you need make the rogue path a perfect choice. A burglar, hired killer, or thief of magical secrets: the rogue path could be the best road for you.

DHAMPIR TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6

Senses: Keen Scent

Immune: poisoned

Natural Weapons: You can use your teeth as a Nimble natural melee weapon to deal 1d6 damage.

Drink Blood: You can use this trait when you attack with your teeth against a flesh-and-blood target that is held, stunned, or unconscious or when you get a critical success against any flesh-and-blood target. The target loses 1d6 Health. Then, for 1 minute, your Speed increases by 2 and you make attribute rolls with 1 boon.

Sunlight Weakness: If you start your turn in a space lit by direct sunlight, you become weakened until the start of your next turn.

LEVEL 1 DHAMPIR

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 11, Intellect 10, Will 11

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common and one other language

Bloodthirsty Recovery: When you use Drink Blood, you also heal half your damage total, and the target becomes weakened (luck ends). Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Swarm of Bats: You can use this talent when you dodge. You, along with everything you wear and carry, turn into a cloud of bats and fly to an empty space within 5 yards. For this movement, you have the Insubstantial and Slippery traits. When you reach your destination, you return to your normal form. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.



LEVEL 2 DHAMPIR

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Fearsome Visage: You can use this talent when you attack. Your face becomes monstrous until the end of your next turn. You impose 1 bane on rolls to attack you by creatures not immune to the frightened affliction. Once this talent is used, you lose access to it (luck ends).

Feral Dhampir (Magical): You gain the Dark Vision and Climber traits. In addition, your natural weapons have the Brutal trait.

LEVEL 5 DHAMPIR

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Enchanting Gaze (Magical): You can use this talent at the start of your turn without using an action provided you lack the confused, stunned, and unconscious afflictions. Target one creature within 5 yards and make a Will roll against its Will. On a success, you pull the target up to 5 yards and gain 1 boon on rolls you make against it until the start of your next turn. On a failure, the target becomes immune to this talent for 24 hours.

Throat Rip: When you get a success on a roll to grab a flesh-and-blood target, you can use a reaction to make a Natural Weapons attack against the same target.



DRAGONET

Everyone knows that dragons and drakes descend from the dragonets. Sure, it's easy to believe that dragonets traded size and strength for their abundant smarts and agility. However, it makes far more sense that some dragonets had a fall from grace—that the pollution of their spirit caused them to swell and bloat, living out their days in dark caves. You've heard arguments against this fact, but you pay them no attention, as you yourself are a dragonet, and who should know better than you and your fellows?

The kinship you share with the larger, nastier dragons shows in your physical form. Although quite a bit smaller—being 3 to 4 feet from snout to tail tip and at most 60 pounds—you have a long body, four limbs that end in claws, and a sinuous neck with a reptilian head. Wings sprouting from your back can carry you to the treetops and among the highest-flying birds. Scales cover your body, growing finer around your joints and heavier and thicker on your back, belly, and along your tail. They can be any hue from pearly white to coal black or any color in between. You probably have a few horns, barbels, and fleshy wattles too.

COMMON DRAGONET NAMES: As their long, multisyllabic names are difficult for humans to pronounce, most dragonets go by nicknames such as Amber, Coils, Petal, Scales, Smoke, or Snarf.

CHILDREN OF THE DRAGON QUEEN

The dragonets tell their hatchlings to be on their best behavior, for one never knows when the Dragon Queen is watching. The old stories claim that before Lord Death came to clap the Ancient Ones in chains, the god Draconus had many children—but he loved his daughter most of all. When Death compelled Draconus to bind the old powers, then cast him into a slumber, responsibility for his offspring passed to his daughter. She became the Dragon Queen: mistress of all scaled things. Dragonets can trace their lineage all the way back to her, which gives them a sense of superiority over dragons, wyverns, and other foul monsters.

UNDER THE QUEEN'S EYE

Unlike some other gods, the Dragon Queen resides in the mortal world, living in an ancient, primeval forest called the Auld Wood. That not even the dragonets can find this place is no reason for them to fret; she guards the ways into her realm against her siblings who would claim the mantle of divinity from her. The Dragon Queen might keep to her place, but her children interest her greatly and she can monitor them by peering into the Mirror of Stars, the perpetually still waters of a lake that stands at the center of her realm. On its shores, she focuses her mind on her beloved children and watches their antics, their trials, and their victories, lending what aid she can by way of her devoted priests.

Thanks to the Dragon Queen's beneficence, dragonets are spared a journey to the Underworld after their death. Instead, the god gathers up the spirits of her departed descendants and gobbles them up. Sometime later, they are born again into eggs to give them new life. Some dragonets claim to recall previous lives—it's become quite fashionable to state that one was once a famous hero such as Bright Claw, a dragonet who stole the Sword of Secrets from Kaen's armory, or Myxlin the Magnificent, who bound a dragon with his powerful magic and with it fought back the trolls. Since several dragonets make these same claims, such beliefs are counted dubious at best.

FIRE INSIDE

As intelligent, talking, miniature dragons, dragonets also can exhale flames. The fire springs from a special gland in their mouth. Normally, the gland produces an oily substance that aids in digestion. However, they can squirt the substance from their mouth; it catches fire in the air. Dragonets use their fiery breath for personal defense but also as a handy fire-starter.

FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS

More than anyone else indigenous to the borderlands, the dragonets have welcomed the refugees to their lands and lent what aid they could—for as long as they deemed their assistance welcome. If there were more dragonets with more resources at their disposal, all the refugees would be cared for, comfortable, sheltered, and fed. Alas, dragonets have small populations compared to the newcomers. What help they offer has done little to erase the refugees' need.

Remote dragonet villages exist, especially in the Jungle of Za, but more and more dragonets find living among humans fascinating and profitable. Many humans find dragonets endearing to the point that they seek out their company. Dragonets would never subject themselves to becoming pets, but they do form strong bonds with human companions. Large populations of dragonets thrive in Four Towers, Eastport, and Westport.

INCORRIGIBLE OPPORTUNISTS

Dragonets living among their own kind and those who dwell alongside humans have access to the same kinds of professions humans do. Some trades have greater appeal than others, though. When determining your profession, roll using your choice of the Academic, Criminal, and Entertainment professions. If you would prefer a different profession, work out the details with the Sage so that it makes sense. For example, if you get woodcutter, you're not likely to swing an axe—but you might help woodcutters find suitable trees.

DRAGONET ADVENTURERS

You're not like other people in the borderlands. After all, you look like a miniature dragon! That you can talk takes some people by surprise, and that you have something to say makes you even more of a marvel. Fortune-hunting, thrill-seeking, and similar dangerous endeavors could tempt you from a comfortable life. A close companion who chooses adventuring could dislodge you from your cushions and candies to launch you into the unknown.

FIGHTER: Few dragonets become fighters. Weapons, armor, all the blood and gore—these are low things, appealing to those of low culture. Yet, if your enemies make you mad enough, you might just start to see the appeal.

MAGE: As with many dragonets, magic might be a source of fascination for you. Being able to reshape reality as you like has a certain attraction. You can discover any tradition, but it's best to seek out ones that complement your nature. Rather than War, for example, consider Illusion.

PRIEST: Dragonets recognize and worship all the major deities associated with the Old Faith, though the dark, bleak gods hold little interest for them. Instead, they favor Urbanus, Fetch, and Revel. Nearly all dragonets also pray to the Dragon Queen. Her associated traditions include Enchantment and Order, and she encourages her priests to make peace, cooperate with others, and find nonviolent solutions to problems.

ROGUE: You have the speed, agility, and frame to infiltrate the most well-guarded sites. Plus, being able to fly lets you access places normally out of reach for other scoundrels. Being a rogue could result from your devil-may-care nature or could be an outgrowth of your criminal training.

DRAGONET TRAITS

Natural Defense: +3

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5 (Fly)

Slight Form: You make Strength rolls with 1 bane, and you grant 1 boon on rolls against your Strength.

Fragile Flier: You lose the Fly trait while injured.

Prehensile Tail: You can use your tail as an additional arm to interact with things, carry objects of Size 1/4 or smaller, and wield off-hand weapons.

Fire Breath: You can use this trait immediately after you attack. Target one creature or object within 5 yards. The target makes an Agility roll; on a failure, the target takes 1d6 damage. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 1 DRAGONET

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 13, Intellect 11, Will 10

Languages: Common

Natural Defense: 14, **Health:** 10 (includes the increase to Natural Defense from your dragonet traits)

Quick and Nimble: While you are not injured, confused, stunned, or unconscious, you make Agility and Intellect rolls with 1 boon.

LEVEL 2 DRAGONET

Health: +2

Blazing Breath: When you use your Fire Breath trait, you impose 1 bane on the target's Agility roll. The target takes an extra 2d6 damage. On a critical failure, the target also catches fire.

Swift Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and move up to your Speed. You have the Slippery trait for this movement. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 DRAGONET

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Able Flier: You lose the Fragile Flier trait. When you use an action to Run while flying, you quadruple your Speed score instead of merely tripling it.

Sneaky Tail Strike: When you get a success or a failure on a roll to attack, you can use a reaction to make an unarmed strike using your tail or to attack with a weapon you wield in your tail. You make this roll to attack with 1 boon.



DRAGONET

DWARF

Deserved or not, dwarfs have a reputation for being a stubborn folk, dour and taciturn. Indeed, many of you remain bitter about wrongs done to your kind over the long years. Outrage has become part of your identity.

And who can blame you? Once, dwarfs counted among the world's mightiest people, living in comfort behind the high wall of their mountain fastnesses, wealthy beyond measure. Your ancestors never expected to lose all they'd built. First came the trolls from under their feet, then the orc blight that transformed many dwarfs into bloodthirsty killers. Overwhelmed by enemies, they found no aid, no allies anywhere they went. History might describe you as a long-suffering people, but your courage, determination, skill, and hardiness have helped preserve you after so much misfortune.

You stand between 3 and 4 feet tall and have a heavy, strong body that weighs about 200 pounds. You are a hirsute people—hair covers just about every inch of your body. (In fact, you find it a little difficult to trust people who lack facial hair.) You take great pride in your well-groomed beard and choose a mate partly based on the length, silkiness, and softness of their chin hair. In weddings, your people gently tie their beards together, while mothers and fathers alike carry their newborn babes in swaddling made from the luxurious growth.

COMMON DWARF NAMES: Beregon, Brata, Corfin, Corfina, Dreban, Dugan, Edga, Grom, Guran, Ragnar, Rora, Tegwin, Ulsten, and Vala.

FALLEN KINGDOMS

The mountain kingdoms that belonged to the dwarfs have become the stuff of legend, and adventurers still test their mettle by venturing into the ruins to recover treasure from the endless corridors and echoing halls. The dwarfs once plundered the earth of precious metals and stones, then hid that wealth in deep vaults. Their riches made them the envy of others, and soon the greedy trolls invaded their strongholds from farther below. Aided by orcs, the trolls slaughtered the dwarfs and scattered them across the world. Dwarfs strive to reclaim their lost lands, but time and again, other peoples frustrate their efforts—from the faeries who refuse to allow them to cross their lands to the humans who have neither the time nor the will to lend a hand. Thus, many dwarfs doubt others' good intentions and keep non-dwarfs at arm's length.



CHILDREN OF THE MOUNTAIN

Dwarfs are renowned for their tenacity and skill, forged in the fires of adversity. Once mighty rulers of subterranean kingdoms, they were driven from their homes by monstrous foes. Though scattered and diminished, their spirit endures.

MYSTERIOUS ORIGINS

The dwarfs have several stories about their origins. None of them involve a god creating them from dust or stone but they all feature the dwarfs overcoming great challenges. Some claim trolls made dwarfs from early humans, while others say dwarfs awoke from the scraps in the cyclopes' forges. Some claim dwarfs hail from another world, and a few even propose they once were giants—until the gods cursed them for being avaricious.

The story most dwarfs believe has their ancestors digging into the ground from the fiery place of their creation. They dug and dug until they finally broke through to the surface. Always did they believe that their exile here was temporary, so they searched the depths for veins of precious metals that eventually would lead them back to their long-ago home.

THE GREAT DIASPORA

A few dwarfen kingdoms remain in the Old Country. There are also stories about a lost stronghold in the borderlands, its name and history having been wiped from the chronicles. Most dwarfs in the borderlands came from elsewhere. They migrated here before the humans—and now along with them, as life in the Great Kingdom became intolerable. Dwarfs adapt well to human settlements. Their culture values honor and good behavior; since most dwarfs believe they live under the scrutiny of dead ancestors, law-breaking and acting in a base manner would shame their family. Thus, dwarfs cause little trouble and keep to themselves.

SACRED ANCESTORS

Nearly all dwarfs know their ancestors watch over them. These spirits weigh the actions of the living and judge them. Those found worthy can join them upon death. Those who come up short face oblivion in the Void, according to dwarf beliefs. As few people relish the idea of being torn apart by demons, dwarfs cleave to their customs and weigh the effects of every action on their personal honor.

Custom dictates that dwarfs carry something from their ancestors: bones of dead heroes, a family weapon, a carved relic, or similar important item. Losing it is cause for tremendous shame; some dwarfs have voluntarily gone into exile to make amends for such failure.

ARTISANS AND WARRIORS

Dwarfs can adopt any profession, though their culture emphasizes certain trades. Artisans enjoy high standing in society, as these dwarfs have the skill to create works that outlast themselves and bring honor to the clan. Dwarfs believe these great works earn the ancestors' esteem and guarantee the dwarf's place among them in the afterlife. Typical occupations include metalwork, masonry, sculpting, and carpentry.

Conflict has dogged the dwarf peoples for countless generations. Necessity elevates warriors to positions of high standing in their communities. Many dwarfs have at least rudimentary training as soldiers. Even the miners know how to protect themselves.

DWARF ADVENTURERS

Being displaced as they are, many dwarfs find the adventuring business a good way to earn a living. Not only can they fill their coffers with the rewards from quests, but they also can hone their skills for the day when they can reclaim the lands lost to their kin.

FIGHTER: Dwarfs who follow the fighter path might have been miners, tunnel guards, soldiers of fortune, or monster hunters. Dwarfs have a special loathing for trolls and giants; many make it their life's work to hunt them down.

MAGE: Since their earliest days, dwarfs have produced many effective mages, usually focused on magic that aids in the defense of their people. Typical traditions include Symbolism, Technomancy, and War.

PRIEST: Nearly all dwarf priests serve the Sacred Ancestors. These powers have Divination and Spiritualism as their associated traditions.

ROGUE: Dwarfs who become rogues exemplify their mastery over certain trades and have the skills needed to thwart traps and escape dangerous situations.

DWARF TRAITS

Health: +4

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Dark Vision

Bonus Languages: Dwarfish

Hard Target: You impose 1 bane on rolls to attack you by creatures that are larger than you.

Low Center of Gravity: When an ordinary effect would move you against your will, you can make a Strength roll. On a success, you ignore the movement effect. In addition, you count as Size 1 for the purpose of making unarmed attacks and for unarmed attacks made against you.

Superior Constitution: When you become poisoned, make a luck roll. On a success, the affliction ends.

Short Legs: When you run, you merely double your Speed score instead of the normal benefits for this action.

LEVEL 1 DWARF

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 9, Intellect 10, Will 12

Natural Defense: 10, **Health:** 18 (includes the increase from dwarf traits)

Bonus Languages: Common, Dwarfish (from this trait)

Aggressive Advance: When you deal damage with a melee weapon, you become Slippery until the start of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

Dwarf Weapon Training: You ignore the requirements for wearing armor and using weapons. When you attack with a Bludgeoning or Brutal weapon, you roll with 1 boon. Finally, when you get a critical success with such a weapon, the attack deals extra damage equal to your Strength modifier (minimum 1).

LEVEL 2 DWARF

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Indomitable Recovery: You can use an action to make an attack and heal half your damage total. You roll to attack with 2 boons. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Make It Count: When you get a failure on a roll to attack, you can use this talent to add your level to the result of the roll; if doing so would turn the failure into a success, you get a success instead. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 5 DWARF

Armored and Natural Defense: +1, **Health:** +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Make It Count More: When you make any roll to attack, you can use this talent to add your level to the result of the roll—even a success—to increase the likelihood of a critical success. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute. (This talent replaces Make It Count.)

Obstinate Strike: When you get a success on a roll to attack, you can use this talent to deal an extra 2d6 damage. For 1 minute, you make attribute rolls to resist harmful effects with 1 boon. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Stubborn Resolve: When you get a failure on a Will roll, you can use this talent to discard the failure and roll again. You must use the second result. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.



DWARF



ELF

You have lost track of the years you have lived. You might have been born a few years ago or been present when the world was new. That you cannot quite recall bothers you little; you have other things with which to fill your mind. You might have committed to memory the seven thousand sonnets of Gavalan, that wondrous faerie poet who never saw a sunrise or sunset that he didn't commit to verse. Then, there's the food. You have savored the finest dishes ever made and can call to mind their flavor whenever you choose. You find that mortals worry too much about the past and the future, when the present is all that really matters.

Being an elf means you live forever—or, at least, until something kills you. Your faerie blood protects you from the minor calamities that set the short-lived peoples back. You never grow sick, no scar ever appears on your body, and you remain in the prime of your life as long as you wish. Mortals find your appearance enchanting, as only the nymphs have greater beauty. You stand between 4 1/2 and 5 1/2 feet tall, with a slim build of no more than 130 pounds. Your people come in all colors, from the common skin tones to the exotic—rose red or deep azure. Some have spots! You also have some physical trait that betrays your true nature. Most elves have pointed ears, but you could have a fox tail, grasshopper legs, the appearance of hollowness, or delicate butterfly wings.

COMMON ELF NAMES: Aeron, Ethelren, Faenor, Gilgorian, Ilmodea, Llorwydon, Maelena, Niroth, Pwyla, Rillifan, Senthorina, and Tilwillin.

IDYLIC ISOLATION

Too much war, too many lives lost, too much horror drove elves and other faeries from the mortal world. A catastrophic conflict with the trolls for dominion over creation left the elves sickened to the point where they wanted nothing more to do with the world. The greatest magicians among them spun spells to shape other worlds: havens where faeries could live without fear of falling once more into the mire of death and depravity.

The faerie realms, sometimes called hidden kingdoms, exist as self-contained realities that can obey the laws that govern the universe mortals inhabit but have no obligation to do so. Many realms offer brilliant, paradisaical landscapes in which faeries frolic and play; among them one finds strings of islands floating in a midnight sky, endless castles that shift and move on their own, places of twilight and dawn, and more.

THE TIME OF WANDERING

Elves pass time in these hidden kingdoms doing just as they wish. With everything they could desire provided by the realm's magic, they have little reason to leave—and yet, faeries come and go all the time. A restiveness kicks off the Time of Wandering, typically when elves reach adulthood. Before they while away the decades devising the perfect couplet or dabbing paint on canvas to perfectly capture the sunrise, elves consider it wise to see something of the mortal world and meet mortals. Only then, with the benefit of experience, can they decide whether to embrace an existence removed from all creation. That most elves return to their homelands tells you everything you need to know about how the Fair Folk see what humans have done to Erth.

MANY AND VARIED APPEARANCES

One expects a people to have qualities that distinguish them from one another, but elves take individuality to a new degree. They do share certain physical traits, as noted above, but most have something about them that makes them special. Wings, scales, feathers, animal appendages, or anything one can imagine might appear on elves' bodies. They choose these traits, shaping their forms in the manner that mortals might try out a new cut for their hair or change of clothing. The transformation process is slow; it can take years for swan feathers to replace an elf's hair. But it is never permanent—it's only a matter of time before they change it again. Elves embrace their diverse appearance as a way they remain distinct from other faeries.

GODS AND THE ELVES

Elves have no gods. They know they exist and might treat them with a healthy dose of respect, but worshiping them never crosses their mind. Any elf, given time and effort, could reach the same heady heights of power that gods enjoy, but few elves want the responsibility that comes with the position. Further, the gods display all the same flaws and failures found in their worshipers. Lord Death becomes petulant when a mortal monkeys around with death magic, and the Sky Father is positively shameful about his pursuit of Mother Sun. Just as they don't bother with the Old Gods, elves have even less esteem for the Ancient Ones. Those brutes would undo creation out of revenge. Such pettiness makes them unsuited to anything but the chains that hold them.

FRITTERED THE TIME AWAY

Even for the inestimable elves, there's only so much one can recall. Elves have the luxury of pursuing all manner of diversions. They produce brilliant artists, great poets, accomplished warriors, and incredible users of magic. After a few centuries exploring one school of thought or one pursuit, elves grow bored and do something else. In time, all they learned before slips away to make room for what obsesses them now. The profession you have at the start represents the area that interests you now. Eventually, you will set it aside as something new crosses your path.

ELF ADVENTURERS

You might very well set out on your own Wandering, but you could have other reasons for leaving your homeland. As content as faeries are in their hidden kingdoms, they understand their continued existence depends on the stability of world beyond their borders. If demons spilled out of the Void to invade the mortal lands, the demons would discover the lost realms and invade them too. Magic capable of reshaping continents or sending them sliding under the sea could drag the hidden kingdoms along with them. The faeries' dependency on a healthy, functioning mortal world ensures the elves monitor happenings beyond their borders and, if needed, step in.

FIGHTER: You spent time studying the art of combat. You could be a noble warrior sworn to complete a quest in the hopes of winning the hand of the elf you love, or you could be an embittered hunter of demons, drawn from your home to meet a terrible threat to creation.

MAGE: The magic flowing through your veins makes you a natural practitioner of the arcane arts. Subtle magic such as Enchantment, Illusion, and Psychomancy have great appeal among the elves, but any tradition has its practitioners in the hidden kingdoms.

PRIEST: Faeries serve no gods. Their existence goes back to a time before the gods as mortals worshiped them even existed, and thus few faeries consider bending a knee and offering up prayers to these "latecomers" to be a worthwhile use of their time. Still, elves recognize that gods command impressive magical powers, and for those eager to expand their own capabilities a bargain with a deity could supply them with the advantages they need. If you choose this path, you make a pact

with the god. There's no "patron" and "servant" in this relationship. You are partners working toward a common goal.

ROGUE: Many elves have a dim view of ownership and possessions. You could be one of them, taking what interests you from whomever you please. Taking the rogue path could also reflect a lack of commitment on your part to pursue any one occupation. You dabble.

ELF TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Faerie

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6

Bonus Languages: Sylvan

Senses: Keen Hearing, Keen Vision

Immune: infection

Protection from Magic: You impose 1 bane on rolls against you from magical effects. You roll to resist or end magical effects with 1 boon.

Unearthly Grace: You can use this trait when you make an Agility or Intellect roll. Add 5 to the result. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Iron Abhorrence: Whenever you take damage from a weapon made of iron or an alloy of iron, you become weakened until the end of your next turn.

LEVEL 1 ELF

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 14, Intellect 11, Will 9

Natural Defense: 13, **Health:** 12

Languages: Common, Sylvan (from trait), and one other language

Traditions: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Benefit of Experience: When you use your Unearthly Grace trait, you can use this talent to add 10 to your roll instead of 5. You can use this talent a number of times equal to half your level (minimum 1). You regain expended uses after you rest.

Elf Weapon Training: You ignore the requirements for using the bow, longbow, and shortbow. You treat the sword as Nimble. When you attack with a bow, dagger, longbow, shortbow, or sword, you roll with 1 boon.

LEVEL 2 ELF

Health: +2

Traditions: One, **Spells:** One novice

Fey Recovery: You can use an action to heal half your damage total and teleport to an empty space you can see within 5 yards. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 ELF

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Spells: One expert

Ethereal Being: You impose 1 bane on rolls to attack you and rolls made against you. You make all rolls to resist and end harmful effects with 1 boon. Finally, when you gain an affliction, you can make a luck roll. On a success, the affliction ends. On a failure, you lose access to this talent until the end of your next turn.



FAUN

There was a time when the fauns lived apart from the so-called civilized world, when they dwelt in peace with nature and reaped the rewards of close association with the gods they worshiped. No good thing lasts forever, as you've discovered. The world has become darker than it once was. Monsters creep through the shadows, foul monstrous humanoids clamber out of the mountains to wreak havoc. Settlers cut down the forests, while prospectors open mines in the hills. The time for isolation has come to an end. If your people would live into the future, you must change.

Many depictions of fauns present your kind as hybrid creatures, as though some unnatural force attached the hindquarters of a goat to a human torso and forced you to stand upright. In truth, your body is as complete as anyone else's. The parts that appear human reveal differences under close inspection: You have widely spaced eyes with oblong pupils under bushy eyebrows. Your broad nose forms a slight depression at the tip, which follows the contour to join your philtrum.

You stand between 4 to 5 feet tall and weigh between 90 and 140 pounds. Thick curly hair covers your backward-bending legs, which end in hooves. You have a small tail in back and a pair of horns growing from your brow. The horns might be small nubs or the size of a boar's tusks—or even great stag-like antlers.

COMMON FAUN NAMES: Azyen, Bora, Cedwena, Dalia, Ere, Finilfan, Goro, Hert, Iowen, Lugh, Ophen, and Tuff.

BORN FROM LOVE

The love between the Horned Lord and the Wild Woman has become the stuff of legend. In one tale, a wicked elf used powerful magic to bind the Horned Lord in adamant chains. Not only did the Wild Woman shatter the bindings with brute strength, but she also tore apart the wicked elf and all who served him as a bloody lesson for faeries who would trespass against gods.

The two gods met beneath the boughs of Grandfather Tree, and from their love sprang forth many creatures. None were more beloved or favored than the fauns, whom they have watched over and aided ever since.

DEVILISH DETAILS

It's unfair to fauns, but many people confuse them with devils. After all, the two have similar physical traits—goat legs and horns,

for example. Yet where devils work to corrupt mortal souls and drag them down into the Netherworld, fauns want only to dwell in peace, in harmony with nature, with the freedom to live as they choose. Fauns know foolish, superstitious people resort to violence when afraid, so they have long tried to keep their distance from human settlements near their lands, even going so far as finding somewhere else to live when humans encroach.

COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES

Everyone living in a faun community has equal standing. But when decisions must be made, they look to their leaders, who always include a priest of the Wild Woman, an accomplished warrior, and the eldest faun. When the settlement calls upon these leaders to sort out trouble, everyone goes along with their decisions.

Families make up most of a faun community's population. Sprawling, messy arrangements involving marriage between a great many people, the families form social groups of their own. They share the responsibility of feeding, clothing, and rearing offspring, and of looking after each other. Within these groups, people take on the tasks that suit them best; gender never has a place in determining one's role.

SECRETIVE SETTLEMENTS

Fauns have always striven to be self-sufficient. They grow their own food, produce their own materials, and if they come up short, they go without if they can. Sometimes, though, they might need supplies that they cannot produce themselves—a blight might wipe out a harvest, or sickness could weaken the population. Fauns conduct trade, but only with people who earned their trust, such as woodwoses, some faeries, and possibly spriggans. Even then, the fauns conduct business far from their own settlements and on the trip home they cover their tracks, double back, and take the long way around to throw off pursuit.

Parents instill in their offspring a commitment to the community to forestall any rebellious impulses that might compel their children to go off and see the world. If someone insists on leaving, the community permits it, but departure is tantamount to exile. Fauns blindfold the individual and transport them some distance away from the settlement before parting ways.

Recent troubles have thrown the faun way of life into turmoil. Fomorian numbers have grown; bands of them now prowl the wilderness, looting and killing as they go. The fauns can defend themselves but lack the numbers to drive off these enemies.

As a result, more and more settlements have relaxed their secrecy to the point that the fauns there work openly with other wilderness folk—and sometimes even nearby human communities. But fauns ultimately prefer the company of other wilderness folk such as faeries, woodwoses, wargs, and, sometimes, centaurs. They might have their differences in belief and custom, but they share their adoration of the natural world and work well together to protect it.

LIFE IN THE WILD

Unless you don't come from a faun community, your starting profession helps your family and neighbors. Farming, carpentry, herding, hunting, and similar trades serve you well. If you have an



GUARDIANS OF THE WILD

Fauns are a people deeply connected to the natural world. Misunderstood and often feared, they prefer the solitude of the forest to the chaos of civilization. Their communities are built on equality and cooperation, and they possess a deep reverence for the Horned Lord and the Wild Woman.

academic profession, you likely keep the community's history and myths, recalling useful trivia to help navigate the present troubles.

FAUN ADVENTURERS

It takes a significant event for fauns to leave their people, and so you need a good reason to take on your first quest. Tragedy provides an excuse, but you need not choose such a bleak origin story. You could have found a friend and joined them, caught a case of wanderlust, or received a mission you could not refuse.

FIGHTER: Experience fighting the fomorians and orcs pointed you toward the fighter path. Your training enables you to protect your family and your friends.

MAGE: Likely, you discovered magic in nature. A friendly faerie could have taught you how to cast spells, but you also could have learned from nature spirits. Popular traditions include Animism, Primal, and Protection.

PRIEST: Fauns have deep connections to nature gods such as the Horned Lord and Wild Woman. Your god or a representative of your deity came to you and gave you a holy mission to complete. You will be forced to leave your homeland, but you have faith that you will succeed.

ROGUE: You probably worked as one of the woods watchers, sentinels who guarded the lands around settlements against trespassers and enemies. You developed many tricks to overcome your foes, and your wits always keep you one step ahead of them.

FAUN TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6 (Strider)

Bonus Languages: Sylvan

Senses: Keen Hearing

Animal Friendship: Animals not controlled by a hostile creature or harmful effect are friendly to you until you do something to change their disposition.

Avoidance: You impose 1 bane on rolls against your Defense and Agility. You lose access to this trait while you are injured, confused, stunned, or unconscious.

LEVEL 1 FAUN

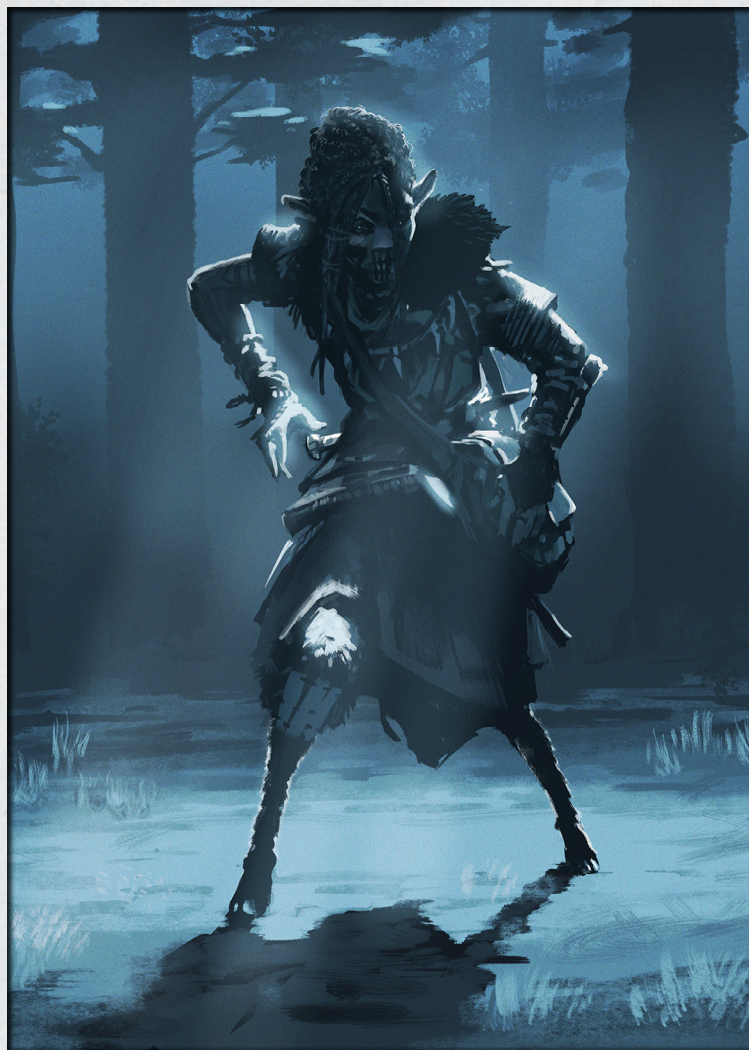
Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 13, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Language: Common and Sylvan (from trait)

Astonishing Reflexes: You can use this talent when you dodge. Until the end of your next turn, you increase your Speed by 1, make attribute rolls with 1 boon, and deal an extra 1d6 damage with successful attacks. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

Fleet-Footed: When you use an action to run, you quadruple your Speed instead of merely tripling it.



Outmaneuver: When you get a success on a roll to attack an enemy, and the result of your roll exceeds the target's Intellect score by 5 or more, the target becomes confused until the start of your next turn.

LEVEL 2 FAUN

Health: +4

Springing Strike: If you move at least 3 yards before you attack, your attack deals an extra 1d6 damage and you gain the Slippery trait until the start of your next turn.

Swift Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and move up to your Speed. You have the Slippery trait for this movement. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 FAUN

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

One Step Ahead: Once per round, when you get a success on a roll to attack, increase your Speed by 2 and increase by 1 the number of banes imposed on rolls against your Defense and Agility from the Avoidance trait. These benefits last until the start of your next turn.

Springing Assault: If you move at least 3 yards before you attack, your attack deals an extra 2d6 damage and you gain the Slippery trait until the start of your next turn. (This talent replaces Springing Strike.)

FERREN

Those who have traveled in the borderlands learn fast to take nothing at face value. Too many people can change their shapes for something like appearance to be a reliable method of identification.

Yes, there are many shapechangers, but only *you* enjoy the advantage of moving among mortals as a human or—when you like—adopting the superior form of what fools call an “ordinary house cat.” Shifting from one form to the other and back again grants you great mobility when exploring the world’s cities and towns. Add to this your uncanny ability to escape danger, and you rank among the most fortunate people in the known world.

Even though you have two forms, a few feline qualities carry over to your human self. You might stare off into space, experience sudden outbursts of energy, scratch at things, obsess over personal hygiene, or come off as aloof to the point of rudeness. You do, however, appear fully human when you want to and can pass for such even under the most careful inspection. When you adopt a feline form, you shrink down and take on a quadrupedal posture; a tail extends out from your back, and fur covers your whole body. Your coat can have any coloring and pattern you choose.

COMMON FERREN NAMES: Ferren use human names, though they might acquire nicknames in their feline forms. Sample nicknames include Devil Cat, Eat Bugs, Goober, Hot Pie, Mister Boobers, Poopy Pants Stinky Bottom, Potato, Sausage, Sir/Dame Pounce, and countless other silly names bestowed by thoroughly enchanted humans.

SELF-CIVILIZED

Ferren have always lived among humans, though few humans realize this. The ferren—cats changed long ago by faerie magic—were feral until one day they decided that living among humanity could be good for them, especially when dressed in their feline skin. After all, who doesn’t like cats? Only monsters. As opportunities for food, petting, and warm places to sleep became more widely available in the borderlands, ferren crept out of the wilderness to infiltrate human communities. Rather than compete with ordinary cats, ferren tolerate their non-shapechanging kin. It seems the feeling is mutual.

HUMAN FRIENDS

Like the animals they resemble, ferren find it to their advantage to adopt humans and establish an almost-parasitic relationship to them. Humans offer ferren much: a friendly human offers a place to sleep, regular food, pettings, and companionship, all while expecting little to nothing in return. Ferren have a good sense for identifying useful marks and seek out people vulnerable to their wooing. They look for the lonely, but also for kind-hearted, friendly, decent folks who look after animals rather than exploit them. Humans who abuse their ferren friends tend to disappear.

Some ferren bristle at the idea of settling down with one human or one human family. Instead of taking a place inside their homes, they wander. They might have two, three, or more potential hosts, on whom they can rely on for a tasty fish or a nice saucer of milk.

THE PERFECT FORM

Though ferren can adopt their human forms whenever they wish, they do so sparingly.

The feline form is the superior one, and in that guise ferren can move even more freely—without having to fret over all the complications humans invented to make their lives difficult. As felines, ferren need neither coin nor permission to get what they want. Becoming human just complicates matters; then ferren must obey the “rules,” at least as long as people are watching. Still, their human forms give them greater strength, weaponry, and access to magic (if they bother to learn it). These assets help them deal with problematic people they might encounter along the way.



SPONTANEOUS COMMUNITIES

Somehow, ferren can find each other in communities and form tentative alliances that last for as long as such arrangements suit them. Sometimes, romance blossoms from these encounters, and families form for a time before both parents lose interest and go their separate ways. This reluctance to forge strong bonds with other ferren prevents them from establishing societies of their own.

UNWILLING PROFESSIONALS

If you're like most ferren, the whole idea of working seems absurd, especially when you can achieve your desires by rubbing up against a person who finds you charming in your cat form (or human one). You're likely to pick up skills that serve your attempts to winkle what you need from humans. Such skills translate well to your human form.

FERREN ADVENTURERS

Needing little excuse or opportunity to find trouble, most likely you stumbled into the adventurer's life rather than chose it. Adventure beckons to you, and your natural curiosity makes it almost impossible to ignore. Whether that situation was to your benefit or not remains to be seen as you head out on your first quest.

FIGHTER: You might be soft and cuddly, but you're a killer deep down. Your whole body serves this end. You're sleek, muscled, and have considerable strength in your feline form. In a fight, you lash out at foes in bursts of violence and send them reeling away in fright.

MAGE: Like cats, your kind has a reputation for being indolent. Such unwillingness to put in much effort puts magic out of reach for all but the most disciplined of you. Either you were born with magical gifts, or you somehow had the patience to learn the craft. You probably favor the Primal tradition.

PRIEST: Will a god pet you? Give you a steady supply of tasty treats and a warm place to sleep? Maybe. If so, you see no trouble taking up with a god, though you know you're the one in charge. You might worship Fetch, who matches your mischievous disposition. You also could worship Old Man Cat. It's believed he comes and goes as he pleases, watches over all cats, and rewards followers with warm sunbeams, tasty fish, and all the catnip they could want. Old Man Cat's associated traditions include Enchantment, Skullduggery, and Teleportation.

ROGUE: There's probably not a more suitable path for you to follow than the rogue. It's in your blood. You take what you want using guile and charm, sneak everywhere you go, and feign innocence whenever—if ever—anyone catches you. The rogue life is for you.

FERREN TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Hearing, Keen Vision

Feline Form: You can use an action to switch from your human form to your feline form or vice versa. If you switch to your feline form, everything you wear and carry is absorbed into your new form. You remain in your chosen form until you use this trait

again or you become incapacitated, at which point you revert to your human form (if you were not in it already). In your feline form, use your normal rules with the following modifications:

- Your Size becomes 1/4.
- Increase your Speed by 1 and gain the Climber, Silent, and Strider traits.
- **Natural Weapons:** You can use your claws and teeth as a single Light and Nimble natural weapon that deals 1 damage.
- You lose the ability to speak.

Nine Lives: You can use this trait when you get a failure on a luck roll to turn the failure into a success. You can use this trait nine times. You lose access to the trait when you expend the last use.

LEVEL 1 FERREN

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 12, Intellect 11, Will 10

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 12

Languages: Common

Ferren Cunning: You can add your Intellect modifier to your natural and armored Defense. In addition, once per round, when you make an attribute or luck roll, you can roll with 1 boon.

Hybrid Form: When you use your Feline Form trait, you can adopt a hybrid form, in which you gain the traits of your feline features but remain bipedal, keep your normal Size, and can speak. In addition, attacks with your natural weapons deal 1d6 damage instead of 1, and they lose the Light trait.

Land on Your Feet: You suffer no harm from landing after a fall of 20 yards or less, and you always land on your feet.

LEVEL 2 FERREN

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Swift Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and move up to your Speed. You have the Slippery trait for this movement. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Wildcat Form: When you use your Feline Form trait, you can choose to assume the form of a large wildcat instead of a house cat. While in this form, use your normal rules with the following modifications:

- Your Size becomes 1/2, increase your Speed by 2, and gain the Climber, Silent, and Strider traits.
- **Natural Weapons:** You can use your claws and teeth as a single Nimble natural weapon that deals 2d6 damage.
- **Leaper:** You can expend 1 yard of movement to jump to a space within 5 yards. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.
- You lose the ability to speak.

LEVEL 5 FERREN

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Swift Transformation: Instead of using an action, you can expend 1 yard of movement to use your Feline Form trait. In addition, whenever you use this talent, you impose 1 bane on rolls against your Defense and Agility until the start of your next turn.

GOBLIN

Back when mortals were first crawling down from the trees and figuring out things like foraging and hunting and making fire, one faerie saw the potential in them and realized that they would become a dire threat to the immortals if allowed to develop any further. To deal with these up-jumped animals, the faerie gathered others who shared his concerns and committed them to humanity's extinction. This faerie became the first Goblin King and, even though successor Kings arose over time, his followers were henceforth called goblins.

You belong to the large and diverse assortment of faeries who have sworn fealty to the Goblin King. Although goblins display incredible variety in their appearance, they all have certain features in common. You're small, somewhere between 2 and 4 feet tall, and light, no more than 80 pounds. You have pointed ears and a large hatchet-shaped nose. You might be green-skinned, but ochre, mud brown, bone white, and jet black are all common too. You probably have red eyes that shine a bit in the dark.

You also might have some distinctive quality about you. You could be quite small—a mite—or reach the stature of typical humans—a mog. Perhaps you have extra digits, a spare mouth, eyeballs in odd places, feathers, scales, talons, or a snout. Most likely, though, you are somewhere in the middle: similar enough to other goblins that you can blend in with the mobs.

COMMON GOBLIN NAMES: Envy, Knife, Piggy, Porridge, Rug, Shadow, Snot, Squiggles, and Trent.

A SOCIETY OF THE WICKED

There's the potential for good and bad in just about everyone, to be clear, but when sifting through goblins, it's difficult to find examples of virtue, kindness, or empathy. If they had these traits, they wouldn't be goblins in the first place—exceptions exist, but goblins have few redeeming qualities. Selfishness, meanness, venality, and cruelty all come with serving the Goblin King. Some goblins demonstrate wicked cunning, but most tend to bumble about, foolish to the point of silliness. The rare goblin with some goodness in their heart either got it from long association with “normal” folk or from a desire for another way to live.

Goblins rarely associate with other peoples. A goblin might be taken prisoner and rehabilitated or become lost and forced to adapt to a new set of circumstances. Most goblins, though, live in a complex society in which members expect treachery from everyone around them. Goblins trust no one, not even—especially not—their family members. Goblins reward signs of weakness with a knife in the kidney, and few are above plundering the cooling bodies of rivals for everything they find.

CITY OF GOBLINS

Most goblins live in Goblin City, in the middle of the Wyvern Wood; the first residents were brought there by the current Goblin King, Oberon, and more arrive often. Routes into and out of it appear all over the world and take the form of innocuous portals set in odd locations. A door could appear in a boulder or high above a street in the side of a building—a door no one can find

from the inside. These passageways appear and disappear all the time. Some blink out of existence, never to be seen again; others reappear in the light of the full moon.

The city is like a maze. Bizarre-looking buildings, mostly abandoned or home to squatters, line the meandering streets. Some roadways connect to stairs that end at doors or just stop for no reason. The streets might even pick themselves up and wander away, leaving nearby buildings to close in on each other to fill the gap. Secret places, pools, fountains, and surreal architecture, while commonplace to goblins, frustrate and baffle outsiders who find themselves ensnared there. (For more on Goblin City, see *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, Chapter 2.)

BIZARRE ANATOMY

Goblins owe their weird anatomy to their King. Failure, insubordination, or simply a whim can earn them punishment in the form of an unwanted transformation. Many goblins spend weeks or months running around as pigs or swimming in filthy pools as eels. When the magic wears off, a slight alteration remains to remind them of what happens when they anger the King.

MISCHIEF AND MAYHEM

The reasons for breaking with the other faeries still hold for the goblins. Much of their activity at the behest of their leader—or to curry favor with him—involves making mischief for humans. Goblins might settle in a ruin somewhere in the wilderness and launch raids from there against nearby communities. They waylay caravans. They creep through the sewers, coming up under the cover of darkness to burgle homes and rob people on city streets. Most people see goblins as a menace, which makes life a bit difficult for any of them who have a change of heart.

THE HATEFUL SUN

The sun never rises fully on Goblin City. Instead, it might reach the horizon and loiter there, skirting the edge of the surrounding wood before retreating in defeat. The Goblin King and his people despise the light, for it pains them. The trouble with the sun began when the Goblin King courted the Daughter of Flowers in hopes of making her his queen. After she rebuffed his advances, he stole her prized black rose, which he still wears in his lapel. Outraged, the Daughter of Flowers beseeched the Faerie Queen to curse the goblins, which she did. Since they skulked about in the night on errands of evil, let them forevermore hate the light of day.

GOBLIN ADVENTURERS

Normally, no goblin would deign to consort with mortals. Your willingness to do so makes you an abomination in the eyes of your kin. Becoming an adventurer helps you feed and clothe yourself, and it also gives you a release for all those nasty impulses imprinted on you during your upbringing in Goblin City. How you changed course is up to you. Unexpected friendship, a debt to repay, enslavement, or some other cause tears you from service to the Goblin King and frees you to live among mortals.

FIGHTER: A small size and slight build leads many folks to underestimate you in battle. Yes, the front-lines might not be the best place for you, but what you lack in Strength and durability, you make up for in your speed, agility, and cunning. Staying alive requires a bit of scrappiness. You do well with ranged weapons and melee weapons that let you exploit your natural dexterity.

MAGE: You have always been around magic. You've seen the Goblin King cast spells, and many other goblins dabble in magic. You could have filched a few spells and taught yourself. Or you could have been a wizard's lackey, learning the art through observation. If you're like most goblins, you prefer traditions that boost your sneakiness such as Illusion and Skulduggery.

PRIEST: Like other faeries, you're unlikely to prostrate yourself before a god. Further, slipping away from the Goblin King—who is much like a god to your people—makes it doubtful you'd sign up to serve someone else. If you must play a priest, you probably serve Fetch.

ROGUE: Most people living in Goblin City steal and defraud others. From these early lessons, you can build an entire career as a rogue, finding that trickery meshes well with your traits.

GOBLIN TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Faerie

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 6 (Slippery)

Bonus Languages: Goblin Tongue

Senses: Dark Vision, Keen Vision

Immune: infection

Sunlight Weakness: If you start your turn in a space lit by direct sunlight, you are weakened until the start of your next turn.

LEVEL 1 GOBLIN

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 14, Intellect 11, Will 9

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 12

Languages: Common, Goblin Tongue (from trait)

Goblin Boons: At the start of your turn, if you are not confused, controlled, stunned, or unconscious, you gain a number of goblin boons equal to 1d6 + half your level and retain them until you expend them or you regain the use of this talent. When you make an attribute roll or a luck roll, you add one or more goblin boons to your roll. In addition, if you roll a 1 on any of these boons, you can discard the result and roll again, though you must use the result of the second roll, even if it's another 1. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Underhanded Strike: When a creature within your reach is harmed, you can use a reaction to attack the harmed creature. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 2 GOBLIN

Health: +2

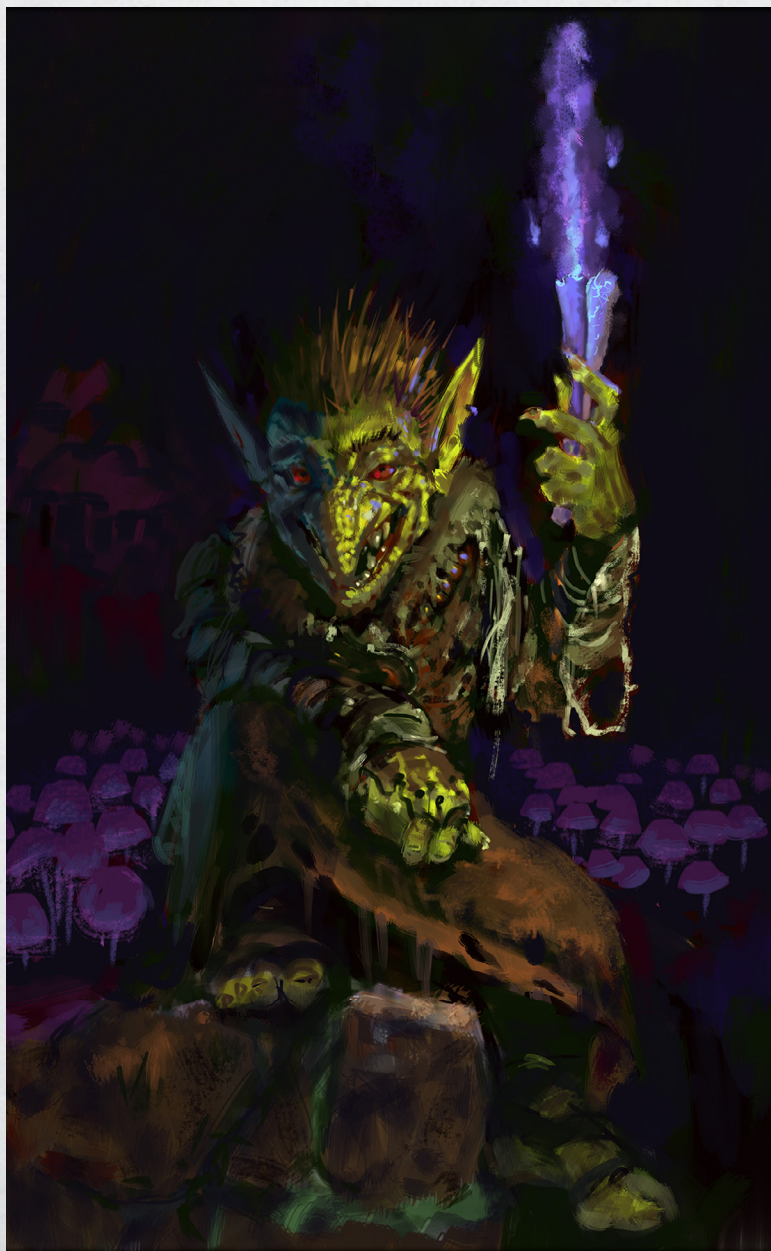
Goblin Tactics: When you get a success on a roll to attack a target within the reach of one of your allies, your attack deals an extra 1d6 damage. If the result of your roll was a critical success, the target also becomes Agility impaired until the start of your next turn.

Wicked Recovery: You can use an action to make an attack. If the roll to attack results in a success, you also heal half your damage total. If the roll results in a failure, you increase your Speed by 4 until the end of your turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

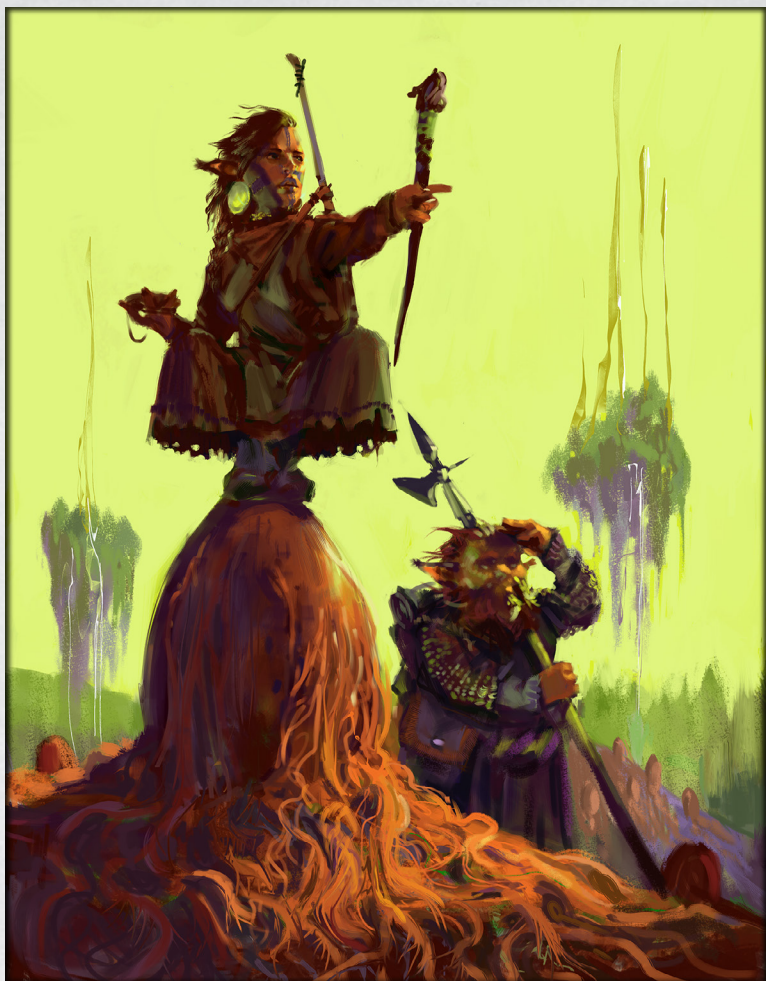
LEVEL 5 GOBLIN

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Shadow Stalk (Magical): If you are neither held nor stunned when an enemy you can see starts its turn, and you are hidden from that enemy, you can use a reaction to become invisible, move up to your Speed, then become visible again.



GOBLIN



HALFLING

You haven't let the sun set on you twice in the same place more than a few times in your life. The road calls to you, much as it does to every other halfling you have known. You have gone here and there, visited cities, explored tracts of wilderness, laid eyes on the Sea of Fear, and wandered under the boughs of the banyan trees. You have met more people than you can remember, sampled dozens of cuisines—and still you itch to be on your way. Borders are for other people. You are a citizen of the world, and you're at your happiest when you put one foot in front of the other toward some unknown destination.

Folks call your kind halflings, but you refer to each other as the Kin or the People. You can understand others' name for you: You stand 3 feet tall, give or take a few inches, and weigh between 30 and 60 pounds. In some ways, you look like a small human—you have the same variations in skin color that humans have—but there are important differences. You have long pointed ears with tufts of fur growing from their tops. Also, you have three fingers and a thumb on each hand and four toes on each foot.

COMMON HALFLING NAMES: Halflings take their names from plants and animals, such as Froggie, Maple, Poppy, and Robin.

PERPETUAL WANDERERS

Most halflings belong to nomadic communities comprising several multigenerational families bonded by friendship and cooperation. Each family owns at least one wagon. Halfling wagons dwarf other wagons—they look more

like wheeled houses, complete with glass windows, slate roofs, chimneys, and multiple interior rooms. Halflings use domesticated mastodons to draw these large and cumbersome vehicles. Traveler caravans have twenty or more house wagons and twice as many mastodons. Two dozen outriders and their sure-footed ponies can speed toward attacking enemies, scout the way ahead, and, if needed, circle back to guard the rear.

SELF-SUFFICIENT COMMUNITIES

Halflings take pride in being self-sufficient. Caravanners share most of the work, pitching in with necessary tasks without complaint. When they camp, they emerge from their wagons to share meals, play games, and put on plays, sing, dance, whistle, and engage in other diversions. While folks fill their time doing everything needed to keep the caravan in good repair, the communities all have a specialty. One traveler caravan might have expert tinsmiths, while another boasts gifted weavers. Halflings use the goods the caravan produces for trade with settlements they visit during their travels.

A PLACE FOR THEMSELVES

Some of the oldest writings throughout civilization mention halfling caravans coming or going from town. The existence of such writings suggests the Travelers have been wandering the world since long before the Old Empire. Halflings believe, generally, that they search the world for the Lands of Plenty, a place the gods promised to them long ago in return for some great service they performed. Once any halfling discovers the place, they will gather their people and bring them all to their new home. For the halflings, the Lands of Plenty lay just over the horizon—and so, push on. That they have not yet found this home has in no way dampened their hopes of discovering it. They enjoy their travels and take great pleasure in making discoveries, meeting people, and seeing creation in all its glory.

EVERYONE'S FRIEND

Only the rudest, most despicable people turn away halflings who come to their door. Most folks welcome them and enjoy their company for as long as they wish to stay. Halflings make excellent entertainers, and their performances evoke both laughter and tears. Little work gets done when halflings come to town, but no one minds, as all profit from their friendship.

Halflings come to towns mainly to trade their goods and rest their animals, but they do have other

motives. Visiting communities builds bonds of friendship they can rely on if ever they're in need. Halflings also share news about other places they've stopped and learn what awaits them in the miles ahead. Really, though, visiting settlements gives halflings a chance to rest and regroup, especially after a harrowing journey. Halflings demonstrate their resourcefulness during their travels by knowing where to go and how to slip out of danger, but even they have their limits—they welcome the security a walled town or village affords them.

HALFLING PROFESSIONS

Your story likely begins in a caravan, where you grew up in a large family. From them, you learned a useful trade. You could have been a performer, acting, singing, or dancing for coin. Or you might have been a blacksmith, apprenticing in a forge wagon as it trundled down the road. Halflings even grow their own crops; most wagons have gardens on their roofs. Finally, you could join the outriders—whose stout ponies walk beside, ahead of, and behind the caravan to watch for danger—and warn the families to take cover when danger reveals itself.

HALFLING ADVENTURERS

In one custom common to all caravans, halflings who have reached adulthood strike out on their own on a journey called a Far Wandering. The elders encourage younger halflings to see the world for a while without a caravan's responsibilities. Few halflings return to the communities they leave; most happen upon another caravan, find a mate there, and join them on the road.

You might be on your own Far Wandering, which introduced you to the other members of your group. Seeing the benefit of safety in numbers or making friends among them convinced you to stay with them awhile. Being in their company does nothing to keep the road from calling to you—you might urge the group to explore more broadly and go beyond the region where you undertook your first quest.

FIGHTER: Halflings travel through dangerous lands. Though most prefer to deal with conflict through peaceful means, monsters are rarely agreeable to a conversation to settle their differences. You learned how to fight with spear and bow to protect the wagons as they roll on down the road.

MAGE: Any halfling can learn magic if they feel the urge, but not many do. Most take pride in relying on themselves rather than spells to see them through tough spots. Halflings who do study magic focus on traditions to enhance other skills, such as Skullduggery and War.

PRIEST: When it comes to religion, the halflings prefer the Old Gods over the High One. Of these deities, halflings look to the gods of the skies and nature. Caravans have at least one wagon set aside for shrines, which contain altars to the Wild Woman, the Horned Lord, Grandfather Tree, Mother Sun, and others. Revel has also become a popular god, though the halflings have a gentler interpretation of him.

ROGUE: Halflings see resorting to crime deleterious to their greater purpose. If they steal, people won't be so welcoming next time they come around. Still, small size, quick fingers, and cunning can make the rogue path a good fit. Perhaps during your

Far Wandering you fell in with scoundrels and got up to all sorts of shenanigans. Then again, you might have a natural talent for burglary and find yourself unexpectedly thrust into that role.

HALFLING TRAITS

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: Ranger Signs

Immune: frightened

Pluck: You can use this trait when you make an attribute roll and get a result you dislike. Discard the result and make a new attribute roll. You must use the second result, even if it is worse than the first. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Wanderlust: You roll to climb, jump, swim, and toss with 1 boon.

LEVEL 1 HALFLING

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 12, Intellect 11, Will 10

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Ranger Signs (from trait)

Fast on your Feet: When you move, you can cross spaces occupied by creatures of any Size. In addition, whenever your movement would enable a creature to make a free attack against you, you can expend 1 yard of movement to prevent it.

Uncanny Luck: You make luck rolls with 1 boon.

LEVEL 2 HALFLING

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Brilliant Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total. Until the end of your next turn, you make attribute rolls with 1 boon and impose 1 bane on rolls made against you. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Far Wanderer: Increase the number of boons granted by your Wanderlust trait by 1.

LEVEL 5 HALFLING

Health: +4, **Speed:** +1 (Strider)

Lucky Break: You can use this talent when you would become harmed. You ignore the harm. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Parting Shot: If you are not confused, controlled, stunned, or unconscious when you move out of a space occupied by a creature, you can use this talent to cause that creature to take 2d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).



SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Born into a nomadic community, halflings spend their lives under the open sky, citizens of the world. Small stature belies a spirit as vast as the plains. They trade laughter for coin, forge metal in a traveling forge, or gallop alongside the caravan as a watchful outrider. With a heart full of wanderlust and a knack for making friends, they see more of the world than most will ever dream of. The road is their home, and adventure their calling.

HAREN

For generations, your people have fought the Weird Wizard's rule in what humans call the New Lands. You brought down and blinded his observers: giant floating eyeballs under his command. You slew his abominations: chimeras whose wrongness offended your sensibilities. You even fought the clockworks who came to drive you from your boroughs. But you would not be moved. You would not let this intruder take from you what your ancestors fought to create. Imagine, then, the celebrations when word reached your community that the Weird Wizard was gone! It was time to rebuild, to reclaim lost territory—to be free from the existential threat that had hung over you for so long.

Humans call you “rabbit folk,” but you refer to yourselves as the haren. You suppose you can understand the moniker, as you do bear some resemblance to the timid and inoffensive creatures. You stand between 4 and 5 feet tall and weigh from 80 to 140 pounds. Your head and facial features look like a rabbit's, what with your twitching nose, big eyes, and long, sensitive ears. Plush fur covers your body, and you even have a small, tufted tail at the base of your spine. The fur of your people is brown, white, black, or a combination of those colors.

COMMON HAREN NAMES: Aja, Bery, Caf, Doos, Emah, Heej, Intha, Llo, Osho, Sath, and Uvel.

TENSE RELATIONS

As the haren live in the New Lands exclusively, humans from the Old Country have never seen them before. Even the native peoples of the borderlands have relegated the rabbit folk to myth. The centaurs and fauns know better. The centaurs made the mistake of getting embroiled in a few skirmishes with haren scouts, only to be driven off, bristling with arrows. The fauns of the eastern borders maintained peaceful relations, finding in the haren a common cause of preserving their isolation and independence. Human newcomers testing the New Lands' borders erred in thinking the haren were like rabbits: cute, cuddly, harmless. Like the centaurs, they discovered their error before being driven off or killed.

Haren expect humans and others to keep to their own territory and leave them be. They have no need for trade or commerce; they can fend for themselves. Although fierce, they never seek violence. But if pushed too far, they become deadly adversaries. When interlopers come into their lands, haren repel them with ambushes and guerilla attacks. If people settle too close, the haren might warn them off. If settlers choose not to listen, haren are not above arson, sabotage, and bloodshed.

NO FRIEND OF THE WEIRD WIZARD

The haren had lived in the New Lands for just about forever and were not about to surrender their territory to some magic-using lunatic. Even though the Weird Wizard never intended them harm and would have tolerated their presence, the haren made it

clear to his servants that they would not abide intrusions into their territory. Their aggression started the fighting and made the haren a major obstacle to the Weird Wizard's plans.

Though the haren paint a monstrous picture of the Weird Wizard, the facts in no way back them up. The magic-user avoided killing haren when possible—he would even send them gifts of food, clothing, and other supplies. He kept his servants off their lands, yet still the haren opposed him. Perhaps it was a natural distrust of outsiders that created the wedge between them.

EGALITARIAN SOCIETY

Haren settlements crown hilltops in the western reaches of the New Lands. They choose these sites for the vantage they provide: being able to spot approaching enemies before they draw too close lets the haren to prepare a defense. Each community, called a borough, features simple wattle-and-daub buildings arranged in a circle around the mound's summit. Boroughs have no kings or queens or, really, any other leadership. Haren understand that what's good for the community is good for themselves, so they never let ego or personal ambition get in the way of solving problems.

STRICT HERBIVORES

The haren find the act of a sentient being eating another abhorrent; this outlook puts them at odds with many peoples. Haren consume no meat and use no animal by-products—so no eggs, milk, leather, or even honey. Instead, they grow some staple crops and have incredible gathering skills. They supplement their own produce with what they find in the wilderness.

UNKNOWN ORIGINS

The haren have no myths, tell no stories about who made them or their place of origin. The past belongs where it is; only the present time and place matter. They consider home and community sacred concepts. What can be holier than the people you call your neighbors? How could one's home be any more sacred with the blessing of a god?

The truth might lurk inside the old stories about the Wild Woman. In one tale, she and her cherished companion, an intelligent rabbit named Samuel, were enjoying the sun and the wind on a summer day, when Abaddon—the Destroyer in the Dark—came in all his fury to kill the goddess. Samuel attacked Abaddon to cover the Wild Woman's retreat. She never came back to him, believing him dead. Could Samuel have been the first haren?

HAREN PROFESSIONS

Every member of a haren community must contribute to survival. Everyone takes turns foraging, just as everyone spends time pulling weeds and harvesting crops. If a neighbor has need, people pitch in to get them back on their feet. Obviously, some people are better suited to certain tasks than others. Your profession represents the thing you did best, even though you know how to do many other jobs important to your community.

NO METAL

Haren have no experience working with metal. They make do with sharpened stones, wood, and found materials. They've become quite accomplished at arming themselves with weapons and armor that are every bit as effective in battle as those produced by a blacksmith.

HAREN ADVENTURERS

If you are anything like most haren, you would never leave your home and family behind. The obligations you have to your community influence you too much to simply pick up and leave. Only a traumatic event could tear you away. You might have been taken prisoner, been whisked away by magic, or became lost in a terrible storm. You could be the sole survivor of a borough wiped out by orcs or have struck out on your own to kill the people who wronged you.

FIGHTER: You must fight to survive. You learned this lesson early on and so spent all the time you could spare practicing with weapons. You were the first person your kin turned to in times of trouble. You oversaw defenses and led raids.

MAGE: Life in the wild makes formal magical training unlikely. At best, you learned your techniques from an elder magician. Magic must serve the borough to be worth studying, so you might discover Alteration, Protection, and War.

PRIEST: As mentioned, haren have no gods and thus produce no priests under normal circumstances. You might "worship" nature spirits, in which case you have access to Animism and Nature, or elemental spirits, who reveal to you Aeromancy, Hydromancy, or other elemental traditions.

ROGUE: You need speed, stealth, and cunning to combat your enemies—qualities you can develop by following the rogue path. You probably served your community as a scout or spy.

HAREN TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6 (Strider)

Bonus Languages: Haren

Senses: Keen Hearing, Keen Scent

Leaper: You can expend 1 yard of movement to jump to a space within 5 yards. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 1 HAREN

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 11, Intellect 10, Will 11

Natural Defense: 10, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Haren (from trait)

Battle-Trained: You make rolls to attack with 1 boon, and you ignore the requirements for using weapons. In addition, you treat the spear and javelin as Nimble.



Lepus Fury: You can use this talent when you are harmed. Until the end of your next turn, you make rolls to attack with 1 boon, and you score a critical success on rolls to attack when your roll's result is 18 or higher.

LEVEL 2 HAREN

Health: +4

Evasive Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total. Until the end of your next turn, you impose 1 bane on rolls to attack you, and you increase your Speed by 2. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Springing Strike: If you make an attack the same round you use your Leaper trait, and the attack results in a success, the target takes an extra 2d6 damage.

LEVEL 5 HAREN

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Great Leaper: When you use your Leaper trait, you lose access to it (luck ends) instead of for 1 minute.

HARPY

Sailors braving the eastern waters of the Sea of Fear sometimes spot unusually large birds wheeling overhead. So long as the crews do nothing foolish, these fliers permit the landbound to go on their way. But any offense—a stray missile loosed from a bow or rifle—calls down their wrath. At this point, your true nature as harpies becomes alarmingly clear.

For the most part, you keep to yourselves and avoid other peoples, preferring the anonymity that isolation brings. However, people know all about you—though most of what they “know” has been distorted in the telling, twisted out of true in service of a good story. Most people think of you as foul bird women who roost in high places and sing to lure sailors to their doom. Once the ships crash against the rocks, you descend to feast on the fresh kills.

In truth, you’re nothing like this, and it’s unlikely that anyone in your community matches this description. You have a slim, slight humanoid body—lightweight from the hollowness of your bones. You have arms and a torso like other people, but your lower body has more in common with a bird; it’s covered in feathers, and your scaly lower appendages have talon-tipped claws. You also have severe features: a sharp nose, piercing gold eyes, and a small mouth. The wings on your back and your tail feathers complete your hybrid appearance.

COMMON HARPY NAMES: Aea, Blorp, Eecha, Fechee, Ginga, Laloa, Proing, Querk, Tchitchi, and Wabble.



CHILDREN OF MOTHER SUN

At the beginning of all things, Mother Sun looked down on creation and was pleased. But many of the world’s beings crawled and slithered across the ground. She could not be close to these creatures, and the distance filled her with sadness. The Wild Woman noticed her sorrow and asked what troubled her. When Mother Sun explained, the Wild Woman offered her the secret of making life in return for bringing light to living things. Mother Sun agreed and populated the skies with winged beings. The more she created, though, the more magic she lost until she could produce no more wonderful creatures. While she loves all her children, she loves her firstborn the most. The harpies thank her for this enduring affection by elevating her above all other gods.

CLIFFSIDE COMMUNITIES

In the known world, harpies live alongside and atop the cliffs overlooking the Sea of Fear, in the New Lands far to the east. They prefer to live in ready-made shelters, such as caves but have no ability to expand on them. This forces other harpies to settle on shelves and overhangs near the caves, or in small villages dotting the cliff’s edge and in the boughs of the monstrous trees that reach hundreds of feet into the sky. Harpy shelters appear crude by human standards; harpies use what they can find to make their homes: driftwood, detritus from shipwrecks, and the bones of large animals.

Harpies live in small communities called flocks. Each flock comprises several families who work together for mutual benefit. Harpies remain in their homes to raise their young until the fledglings can care for themselves. Parents form bonds that last their entire lives. They might produce many clutches of one to three eggs over the span of their lives. When an egg hatches, the fledgling survives on mother’s milk for a few weeks before starting a diet of nuts, berries, insects, and fish.

A Great Mother—usually the eldest female harpy in the flock—leads the community. She does so with the consent and support from other elder harpies. Once elevated to this position, this harpy rules until she retires or dies. Harpies obey the Great Mother’s commands without reservation, as they see her position as granted by Mother Sun herself.

Each community has an idol of Mother Sun, which appears as a ring mounted atop a wooden pole, positioned where it can capture the sun when it first rises above the horizon. Harpies welcome their goddess each day, gathering here to worship.

WEIRD LOATHING

The harpies never counted the Weird Wizard as an ally. They found him and his creations contemptable and avoid them whenever possible. Some speculate that the harpies invented the story of their creation to conceal their unnatural origins in the Weird Wizard's laboratory. The hatred they have for him would then have roots in what he did to create them, another hybrid creature. Harpies deny such nonsense, being firm in their commitment to Mother Sun and the blessings she bestows on them.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Even though they are a single people, harpies avoid other members of their kind who appear different from themselves. Harpies might have the feathers of ravens or eagles, gulls or bluebirds, or just about any other kind of bird. Reluctance to mingle with other harpies does not mean they come to blows—though they might if resources get scarce—but, rather, they have no obligation to help flocks different from their own. They much prefer the company of their own kind.

If harpies avoid congress with members of different flocks, most want absolutely nothing to do with other types of people. Luckily, they make their homes in hard-to-reach places, so encounters with other folk happen infrequently. As more and more people come into the region, however, harpies might not have much choice about dealing with outsiders. They will either adapt or be forced to fight to hold what they see as theirs.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE FLOCK

Harpies in a flock cooperate with each other, but everyone has a particular role. Some harpies dive from the heights to catch fish, while others scavenge the shores for useful materials. Some stay at the nests to watch over the fledglings, and others make arrows, bows, weapons, and other goods. Your profession describes your place among your folk and should have some influence on your personality and identity: hunters are confident and aggressive, while those who stayed closer to home are watchful and suspicious.

Harpies feel content when they're with other members of their flock but might grow anxious when all alone. The tight-knit nature of the flocks makes crime an alien concept. People work together; selfish behavior accomplishes nothing and weakens the flock. Those who betray their people are driven into exile or killed.

HARPY ADVENTURERS

Considering how seldom harpies wish to leave their communities, becoming an adventurer makes you a rarity. Choosing such a life does not mean you will leave your people behind forever, though. You might strike out to see the world for a time, then return to settle down.

Simple curiosity could be enough to lure you away from the life to which you are accustomed. Maybe you saw a ship sailing on the Sea of Fear and drew close to see who was on it. You could have rescued a drowning sailor and became friends as a result. Or

a storm might have swept you away to some distant place. Before heading home, you took the opportunity to explore.

FIGHTER: You were a hunter and protector of your community. You honed your skills doing your work and became an accomplished warrior.

MAGE: Magic-using harpies have great value to the flocks, so anyone displaying a propensity for spellcasting finds themselves claimed by the elders, who school youngsters in the secrets of magic. Typical traditions include Aeromancy, Astromancy, and War.

PRIEST: All harpies recognize Mother Sun as their creator, so priests almost always worship her. Outcasts might favor other gods, such as Lord Death and his wicked daughters.

ROGUE: You helped your flock by searching the coastlines for anything of value. You have an eye for shiny things, which might lead you into trouble. You are quick and nimble, which helps you snatch what you want and escape before anyone is the wiser.

HARPY TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5 (Fly)

Bonus Languages: Harpy

Senses: Keen Vision

Natural Weapons: You can use your talons together as a single Nimble natural weapon that deals 1d6 damage.

LEVEL 1 HARPY

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 13, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 12, **Health:** 12

Languages: Common, Harpy (from trait)

Deadly Instincts: While you are not injured, you make Agility rolls with 1 boon; when you make a free attack, you roll with 1 boon.

Wing Block: When a creature you can see attacks you, you can use a reaction to block the attack with your wing. You impose 2 banes on the roll that enabled the use of this talent. If the attack results in a critical success, however, you lose access to the Fly trait until you heal your entire damage total.

LEVEL 2 HARPY

Health: +2

Diving Attack: You can use this talent when you make a melee attack after flying at least 5 yards. You roll with 1 boon, and the attack deals an extra 1d6 damage.

Swift Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and move up to your Speed. You have the Slippery trait for this movement. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 HARPY

Health: +2, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Harpy Screech: You can use an action to screech. Each creature (even other harpies) within 5 yards of you becomes deafened until the end of your next turn. In addition, anyone deafened this way makes a Will roll. On a failure, the creature becomes weakened (luck ends). Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

HOBGOBLIN

Even the most tolerant faeries find the idea of willfully living among mortals and offering to help them bizarre, but you see such actions as entirely proper. After all, you live forever, and humans do not. Should you not offer to help these short-lived folk make the best of the time they have? You think so, and so do others like you. Your inclination to spend your time among humans earns your people the name *hobgoblin*, which means “house goblin” or “house faerie.”

In some ways, you resemble actual goblins, though you share none of their malice and cruelty. Like goblins, you have short stature and a small body. You consider it unlucky if you exceed 3 feet in height—most of the time you find it serves your interests to avoid attention; you would rather stay out of sight where you can watch and learn without anyone sensing you. The heaviest of your kind can weigh 60 pounds, the bulk of it carried in their stomach. Your features include a long, pointed nose, small bright eyes, and large ears. You have thick eyebrows and might have equally bushy ear hair—and many of you comb your long nose hair to form a moustache. You can have any coloration.

COMMON HOBGOBLIN NAMES: Byga, Cumble, Dorik, Fleem, Goff, Mikl, Peck, Shimshim, Tounce, and Verge.

A DUTY TO HELP

Sickness of death drove the faeries from the mortal world; if they stayed—assuming they could secure themselves against enemies—they would be living near mortals, whose lives were all too brief. Rather than be reminded of such endings, the faeries turned their backs on creation. Or, at least, this is what hobgoblins believe.

The hobgoblins recognize that mortals must die, as it is their nature to do so, but they also feel great sympathy for their struggles. Humans and other mortal people must endure many hardships; they must toil, fight, and suffer the indignities of aging. Such a sorry lot have the mortals drawn. So, some faeries took it upon themselves to give a portion of their lives to helping people they deem worthy. They have no time or inclination to help the cruel, the greedy, or wrathful. But if they find a family struggling to make ends meet, folk who have had more than their share of hardship, hobgoblins feel compelled to lend a hand.

HIDDEN ALLIES

Hobgoblins might have all the sympathy in the world for mortals, but most would rather not interact with them. Instead, hobgoblins settle into the homes of the people they “adopt,” finding places their hosts seldom go, such as in the attic, cellar, or under the stairs. Although quiet, the noises they make and the odd happenings in the houses sometimes lead people to believe themselves haunted and flee as a result. Those who pay attention to folklore can earn the house faeries’ friendship by leaving offerings of food, cloth, and bits of glass.

Not every hobgoblin has a human to help. Many gather inside large settlements to help people on a larger scale. Hobgoblin communities form in underground grottoes, where they build their

homes from the stone they excavate and beautify their places with found treasures. Sewers might not be ideal, but they work in a pinch, and hobgoblins can seal off sections to keep out unwelcome vermin. Hobgoblins might even venture to the surface, claiming abandoned buildings for themselves, but they make sure to do nothing to draw attention.

ESTRANGED EXISTENCE

Living among mortals, especially humans, makes hobgoblins unlikely to have much contact with their faerie kin. In rural communities, they might trade with brownies and pixies, but elsewhere they could go decades without ever crossing paths with another immortal. Hobgoblins who live too long alone begin to forget the customs of their kind and find themselves unwelcome if they ever try to return.

LIFE BONDS

Sometimes a hobgoblin becomes attached to a certain mortal. The friendship forms when the mortal is a child—and then only if they show kindness, good behavior, and a sweet disposition. The friendship lasts the mortal’s entire life. When they die, the hobgoblin might become so aggrieved that they just fade away.

CHORES. CHORES. AND MORE CHORES

Helping mortals requires some skill at crafts, so you can prepare, mend, and help the people who provide the roof over your head. Even if you live in a hobgoblin community, the skills you can learn tend to be the same ones you would discover living with mortals. Choose a profession that best reflects how you would help the family you select. You could be a cook, preparing meals for them, or a leatherworker, mending shoes and other goods. You might have some artistic skill, such as painting or sculpture, though you would develop these skills in addition to the more practical ones.

HOBGOBLIN ADVENTURERS

You could have gone your entire life living with the family you adopted or the community in which you made your home, but nothing lasts. A sudden bout of sickness could have stolen your human family from you or the child you befriended grew up and stopped believing in you. An earthquake might have destroyed much of your community, or some infestation of monsters might have overrun your underground village’s defenses. In any event, you have been thrust out from your simple life and forced to make your way in the world. The adventurer’s life might grow on you, but you cannot help yourself when you watch other humans to see if they’d be suitable folk for you to help.

FIGHTER: Violence is rarely a good choice, but you could have overcome your disinterest to come to the defense of a loved one. Maybe a monstrous crocotta started preying on your people, or

fomorian came howling out of the wild to burn down the town. You could hardly stand by and watch the people you care about die.

MAGE: Your faerie nature makes you eminently suited to magic use. You need no training—the traditions were in you all along. Useful traditions include Conjurage and Skullduggery. You might also dabble in Technomancy.

PRIEST: Being a faerie, you're not all that into the whole god business. If you follow the priest path, you are more likely to have entered a bargain with some god in which you both profit from your service.

ROGUE: Small, furtive, and armed with all kinds of sneaky capabilities you find the rogue path ideal. Your talents could derive from your efforts to keep out of sight and work in secret. They also could arise from a mischievous side that you only recently discovered.

HOBGOBLIN TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Faerie

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5 (Silent)

Bonus Languages: Sylvan

Senses: Dark Vision

Immune: infection

Fading Form: You can use a reaction when you are harmed to become invisible and immune to damage from ordinary sources for 1 minute. The effect ends early if you harm a creature. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 1 HOBGOBLIN

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 13, Intellect 11, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 12

Languages: Common, Sylvan (from trait)

Traditions: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Magical Mending (Magical): You can use an action to touch one Size 1 or smaller object in reach. The target regains all lost Health. You can use this talent a number of times equal to 1 + half your level. You regain expended uses after you rest.

Secret Passage: You can expend 5 yards of movement to choose an empty space (within 5 yards of you) where you can hide. You teleport to that space and become invisible for 1 minute. The effect ends early if you use an action or reaction. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 2 HOBGOBLIN

Health: +2

Spells: One novice

Flee and Recover (Magical): You can use an action to become invisible, teleport to an empty space you can see within 5 yards, then heal half your damage total. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Unexpected Strike: You can use this talent when you attack, but before you roll the dice. You roll with 3 boons, and the attack deals an extra 2d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 5 HOBGOBLIN

Health: +2

Spells: One expert

Enhanced Strike: When you use your Unexpected Strike talent, the extra damage increases to 3d6.

Hidden Advantage: When you roll against another creature and are either invisible or hidden from the target, you roll with 1 boon.

Improved Passage: When you use your Secret Passage talent, you can choose a space to hide in within 10 yards of you, rather than just 5 yards.

Reliable Fading: When you use your Fading Form trait, make a luck roll. On a success, you regain the use of the trait immediately.



HOBGOBLIN



JANN

The Four Kingdoms of the Maridians control lands far from the borderlands, on the other side of the world and across a vast and unknown sea. A union of four autocracies maintains hold on the continent as they have done for over a thousand years, and the people who live under their benevolent dictatorship enjoy fruitful lives of comfort and plenty.

In recent years, the Autocrats sent forth ships loaded with goods and explorers to find new trading partners across the sea. At least, that's what they claim. And maybe they're being truthful. Regardless, you joined up out of eagerness to learn about the new world. You make agreeable bargains for your goods and have dealt peacefully with everyone you have met. Surely, the worries that some people voice are groundless; you've given no cause for concern. Yet.

As far as you know, everything your people say about the reasons for your voyage across the sea are true. You look a bit like humans, but you cannot help noticing the differences. For one, you have blue skin, a quality shared by few humans. You began your life with dark, midnight blue skin that has steadily lightened. You know that, at the end of your days, you will lose all the blue and appear bone white, as your elders did before they died. You have white hair and blue-on-blue eyes. Your blood is black instead of the red that flows in human veins.

COMMON JANN NAMES: Aazim, Aanisha, Ceesha, Evalane, Laela, Milak, Najor, Omar, Sinar, and Zara.

CASTE SOCIETY

You have not been away from the Four Kingdoms so long that you don't remember them. In your homeland, you had few freedoms, few choices open to you. The circumstances of your birth determined your caste. You had no hope of advancement but ever ran the risk of falling to a lower level. The castes include the following, from highest to lowest: Maridians or Chosen, Magi, Warriors, Artisans, Merchants, Common, and the Unclean. Everyone who made the journey belongs to the Merchant caste, including the sailors, who also engage in commerce.

UNCERTAIN MOTIVES

Without any evidence to suggest malfeasance, you accept what you have been told about the journey to the borderlands and deal with others in good faith. Yet, you have heard the whispers, seen the doubts on the faces of those you meet. Do they know something you do not? Anything is possible. You know the old stories about how the autocracy formed in your homeland—how the victors accomplished their objectives with trickery and magic—but that was long ago. Further, of late the Four Kingdoms has been starved of resources and needs new markets to recover from its recent downturns.

In any case, you have your orders, and your superiors make certain that you deal with humans fairly. Many of your fellows have become fascinated with humans, fixated on their long, tumultuous history, but also their resilience. Humans can overcome bad situations, given the chance, where the janni simply accept the lot they were given. They live out their lives within the boundaries their culture sets for them.

JANN PROFESSIONS

Nearly all janni in the borderlands belong to the Merchant caste just like you. If you play in the Four Kingdoms setting, detailed in the *Lost Lands of Erth* supplement, other castes might be available at the Sage's discretion. Your profession relates to trading (merchant) or moving goods (sailor or laborer).

JANN ADVENTURERS

The focus on trade has prevented the janni from seeing much of the borderlands' interior, but mission leaders have begun to encourage them to befriend locals and explore. As a result, many

janni have joined up with mercenary companies, caravans, and adventuring groups to see what they can find. Those who have not left might set up shop in the coastal cities, selling silks, jewelry, and magical baubles, or take wool- and cotton-laden ships back to the Four Kingdoms. With ships coming and going, the jann population has grown to the point that they begin to blend into these melting pots.

FIGHTER: During the trip to the borderlands, you found yourself fighting to protect the ship from pirates and monsters from the deep. Whether you intended to become a warrior played no part; you were needed and you rose to the challenge.

MAGE: All janni can shift their bodies to manifest certain elemental qualities. Such an ability makes a strong foundation for magic use. During your journey, you could have spent your time exploring your innate magic and developing it into spellcasting acumen.

PRIEST: Human gods interest your people. You come from a place with no religious traditions. Instead, janni believe in elemental spirits with no concern for mortals. Janni coax aid from them by making offerings—burning incense for air spirits, strong drink for those of water. Janni have priests of a sort, who specialize in bargaining with spirits. Traditions associated with the jann spirituality include Aeromancy, Cryomancy, Geomancy, Hydromancy, and Pyromancy.

ROGUE: Maybe you are a spy for the Autocrats back home and know something others do not. Or you could be an opportunist; this new land invites you to break from your people's ways and strike out on your own. The rogue path helps you accomplish this.

JANN TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: Janni

Elemental Affinity (Magical): If you lack the confused, controlled, stunned, and unconscious afflictions, you can use this trait at the start of your turn to gain affinity to air, earth, fire, or water. The effect lasts until you end it, use this trait again, or become confused, controlled, stunned, or unconscious.

- **Air Affinity:** The air moves around you constantly to create light wind in a Size 5 space centered on you. Increase your Speed by 2 and gain the Strider trait. Whenever you get a critical success, you can choose one creature or object within 5 yards. The target makes a Strength roll. On a failure, you push the target up to 5 yards away from you.
- **Earth Affinity:** Dirt and stone crawl up from the ground to encase your body. Increase your natural Defense by 3 and your Health by 5. Whenever you get a critical success, you can choose one creature or object within 5 yards. A target creature makes an Agility roll; on a failure, it falls prone. A target object takes 1d6 damage.
- **Fire Affinity:** Flames envelop you but do no harm to you or your possessions. Your attacks with melee weapons deal an extra 1d6 damage from the flames. Whenever you get a critical success, you can choose one creature or object within 5 yards. The target makes an Agility roll. On a failure, it takes 1d6 damage.
- **Water Affinity:** Water spreads across your body until you become fully enveloped. You can breathe the water as if it were air. You gain the Slippery trait. Whenever you get a critical success, you can choose one creature or unsecured object within 5 yards of you. A target creature makes a

Strength roll. On a failure, or if you target an object, you pull it up to 5 yards toward you.

LEVEL 1 JANN

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 12

Natural Defense: 10, **Health:** 14

Tradition: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Languages: Common, Janni (from trait)

Elemental Augmentation: If you are under the effects of your Elemental Affinity trait, you gain an additional benefit: Roll with 1 boon when you use an attribute associated with your current affinity. The benefit applies to Agility rolls if you chose air, Strength rolls for earth, Intellect for fire, and Will for water.

LEVEL 2 JANN

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Tradition: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Elemental Recovery: You can use an action to heal half your damage total. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest. If you are also under the effects of your Elemental Affinity trait, you gain the following additional benefit.

- **Air Affinity:** You gain the Fly trait until the end of your next turn.
- **Earth Affinity:** You become immune to damage from ordinary sources until the end of your next turn.
- **Fire Affinity:** Flames burst from you to fill a Size 3 space centered on you before dissipating. Each object in the space takes damage equal to twice your level and, if flammable, catches fire. Each creature in the space other than you takes damage equal to your level and makes a luck roll. On a failure, the creature takes extra damage equal to your level and catches fire (luck ends).
- **Water Affinity:** You end the held, impaired, on fire, poisoned, and prone afflictions if you have them. Then you become immune to these afflictions until the end of your next turn.

LEVEL 5 JANN

Health: +4

Spells: One expert

Dual Affinity: When you use your Elemental Affinity trait, you can make two choices and gain the benefits from both elements.



CHILDREN OF THE MIDNIGHT SEA

Weary of mercantile life and thirsting for knowledge, a young Jann yearns to leave the bustling port city for adventure. Armed with innate magic, a short sword, and a worn leather satchel filled with herbs and strange trinkets, he leads a solitary life driven by an insatiable curiosity. Some say he seeks ancient ruins, while others believe he is on a quest to understand the elemental spirits that guide his people.

NAGA

Your people have fallen far since the heady days of empire. Once they sailed through the Void and traveled to distant stars. They conquered entire worlds and subjugated populations to servitude. The merest whisper of the Thonian name caused people to flee in terror. And when their portals opened, others cast down their weapons and fell to their knees, knowing that to do otherwise would mean death or worse.

It's all gone. The Thonian Empire collapsed so long ago that few histories even mention it. Some of your kind survived, but without leaders to guide and educate them, they slid into ignorance and became wild things—little better than the primitive humans your people once conquered. Is it too late for the Thonians to rebuild? Perhaps. Perhaps not....

Outside of the enlightened few, no one calls your kind Thonians. Instead, you are the *naga* or “snake folk” to the simple-minded. You suppose the latter name fits: You look like a human-sized snake but with arms. You have iridescent scales in black, blue, green, and brown—your hide might have a pattern of diamonds, stripes, or bands. You might have a hood like a cobra or a rattle at the tip of your tail. When you hold yourself upright, you stand between 5 1/2 and 7 feet tall. Your body weighs anywhere from 140 to 350 pounds.

COMMON NAGA NAMES: Ashazz, Cth'eth, Ejeze, Hrissa, Hyleth, Iissi, Sasse, Sethet, Soofus, Tethrys, and Yyg.

ALIEN INVADERS

Erth fell to the Thonians a long, long time ago. This victory was just another in a long series of conquests that had spread across realities for thousands of years. The Thonians found Erth infested with faeries and trolls, primitive humans, and other peoples. The faeries would not sacrifice themselves for mortals, and the trolls were licking their wounds in the dark places, so the Thonians crushed whatever resistance they found. They gobbled up territory, enslaved millions, and built an empire. The nagas claim their rule lasted ten thousand years, but historians have not been able to establish exactly where along the timeline they fit.

THE CURSE OF ALL EMPIRES

As with every other empire in the known world, the Thonian Empire ultimately collapsed. With no one to fight, the Thonians grew complacent and decadent. They continued their advancements in science and magic, but the culture produced fewer and fewer individuals interested in taking up the great work. The once-proud Thonians had become nagas: soft, weak-willed, ignorant members of a decaying society. The weakness invited uprisings from the human chattel, to which the empire responded by letting loose their abominations to wipe them out. In response, outrage and hatred drove the rest of humanity to take up arms to kill their masters. In the end, the empire fell as others would. The cities decayed into ruin, only to be scattered by the winds. The surviving nagas fled to islands in the Sea of Fear and made their homes in deep tunnels. The downward slide accelerated; after a few generations, most Thonians had become barbarians—vicious and cruel, driven merely to feed their appetites.

KEEPERS OF ANCIENT LORE

Even though most nagas have become degenerates, hope for a revived nation and reclamation of what was lost remains. The nagas saw the doom that was coming for them. To give them some insurance against their collapsing society, they interred what secrets they could in vaults buried beneath the islands scattered across the Sea of Fear and placed loyal nagas to guard over them. Much lore was lost, but they saved enough to lay the foundation for rebuilding. The descendants of the Thonians watch over these treasures and pore over the writings to keep alive the knowledge left to them. The old impulses to conquer and enslave live on in these elite few, and they plot to spread their influence out from the island onto the continent; a foothold there would enable them to start rebuilding.

HUMANOID SERPENTS

Thanks to their reptile physiology, nagas cannot tolerate cold temperatures—they grow slow and sluggish and cannot concentrate. However, they thrive in warm climes, more tolerant than warm-blooded creatures of higher temperatures. All nagas produce venom and can use their fangs to introduce the toxins into their victims. People exposed to naga venom feel flushed and experience a racing heartbeat.

WEIRD TECHNOLOGY

In addition to their magical knowledge, several of the nagas' technological wonders have somehow survived. Examples include pistols that loose energy rays, lances that crackle with electricity, and portal devices that allow instant transport. Few nagas know how to use these items, but the keepers of the old ways have puzzled out some of the simpler devices and have begun to teach them to their lesser kin.

NAGA ADVENTURERS

Though your kin lack wits, cultivation, or ambitions beyond feeding their base desires, you belong to a small group of nagas who inherited what could be saved from the olden times. For many Thonians, the arrogance and appetite for conquest remains, burning as hot as ever. Others, such as you, see that following the old ways will lead to the same collapse. You seek a different path, a way to salvage what you can of your heritage and to use it for the benefit of everyone in the world. Your views make you unpopular with other Thonians, and you have many enemies from your homeland who would gladly see you ended. It became clear that remaining among your people would not be healthy, so you slipped away to live among those your kind once considered enemies.

FIGHTER: You once led degenerate nagas in the defense of your ruined community. You demonstrated the skill and durability required to follow the fighter path.

MAGE: The Thonian civilization accomplished much with their mastery of magic and much of that knowledge survived its fall. You discovered traditions by examining the old writings and experimenting with what you have learned. Typical traditions include Divination, Eldritch, and Technomancy.

PRIEST: The Thonians of old considered themselves gods and thus had no religious customs. You could have discovered religion during your travels. Urbanus and Abraxus might hold some appeal. Draconus would make a good patron, as that god's portfolio includes scaled creatures like yourself.

ROGUE: Other people have no reason to welcome or trust nagas. Too many stories about their cruelty and wickedness have reached the continent for you to have an easy time integrating into your adopted community. As a result, you might have to use underhanded methods to stay alive. The rogue path offers you talents that can explain how you have succeeded so far.

NAGA TRAITS

Natural Defense: +1

Size: 1, **Speed:** 4 (Slippery)

Bonus Languages: Thonian

Senses: Keen Scent

Natural Weapons: You can use your fangs as a Nimble natural melee weapon that deals 1d6 damage.

Naga Venom: A flesh-and-blood creature that takes damage from your fangs makes a Strength roll. On a failure, the creature becomes poisoned (luck ends).

Cold-Blooded: You make rolls to resist the effects of cold exposure with 2 banes.

Serpentine: You have the lower body of a serpent. You cannot run, and you make rolls to jump or leap with 1 bane. You impose 1 bane on rolls made to move you or knock you prone, and you make rolls to avoid being moved or knocked prone with 1 boon.

LEVEL 1 NAGA

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 11, Intellect 12, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11 (includes the increase from your naga traits), **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Thonian (from trait)

Shapeshift (Magical): At the start of your turn, if you are not injured, confused, controlled, stunned, or unconscious, you can, without using an action to do so, transform into a flesh-and-blood humanoid creature of your Size. You make all decisions about your appearance. You use your normal rules, but you lose the Natural Weapons, Naga Venom, and Serpentine traits. You remain in this form until you become injured, confused, controlled, stunned, or unconscious, or until you use this talent again.

Spit Venom: You can use an action to spit venom from your mouth. Target one creature within 5 yards. Make a Strength roll against the target's Agility. On a success, the target becomes poisoned (luck ends). Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

LEVEL 2 NAGA

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Slithering Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total. You then increase your Speed by 2 until the end of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

Strong Venom: Whenever you cause a creature to become poisoned from your Naga Venom trait or your Spit Venom talent, the target also becomes confused until the poisoned affliction ends.

LEVEL 5 NAGA

Natural Defense: +1, **Health:** +4, **Speed:** +1

Wicked Fangs: When you attack with your fangs, you roll with 1 boon, and your attack deals an extra 1d6 damage. In addition, enemies poisoned by you make luck rolls to end the affliction with 1 bane.



POLLYWOG

One day you were stabbing giant leeches with your spear as you did most days. The next, you found yourself whisked out of your homeland and thrust into the middle of danger, surrounded by “people” you once would have considered food. You never would have believed you would wander the world, hunt for treasure, or fight on behalf of others. You had few ambitions beyond doing what was asked of you. But here you are, out in the world, with *friends*!

Something happened to you that uprooted you from an ordinary life in the muck and placed you on the path to adventure. Generally, pollywogs fear their monarch too much to venture far from the tribe, so you likely didn’t leave voluntarily. Maybe Tchatchanaga came to you in a dream. Perhaps some curious person scooped you out of the pond and raised you from a tadpole, instructing you in manners and civilization. You could also just be a notch braver than the rest and decided to seek adventure.

You look like a bipedal frog. You have soft, glistening skin. The large head that extends out from your torso sports a pair of globular eyes and a wide mouth. You have tiny slits for nostrils. Your skin might be green, brown, or some other color; bright pink, yellow, and blue appear in some tribes. You stand between 4 and 5 feet tall and weigh between 80 and 120 pounds.

COMMON POLLYWOG NAMES: Blooorg, Ciiipet, Durruuuk, Eeevik, Faaarup, Giiiheet, Hooop, Jaaalup, Kkriipt, Loroop, Neeep, Pareep, Rrediiip, and Tirireek.



SWAMPS. GREAT AND DISMAL

By choice, pollywogs live in the wetlands—both in the borderlands and elsewhere in the known world. As such places have limited use to other folk who share their territory, pollywogs have been able to develop their culture and society without much interference. Add to the benefits of isolation their infamous aggression toward outsiders, and pollywogs experience little in the way of competition or contamination from other people.

Pollywog tribes settle in bogs, swamps, fens, and similar terrain. Some live in reed huts standing atop the occasional patch of dry land, but they might also make their homes between the roots of large trees or in cavities at the bottom of ponds. Others reside in dwellings high up in the trees. Comfortable on dry land and in water, they allow custom to determine their living quarters.

Pollywogs don’t like outsiders, especially rival pollywog tribes. Even though they happily devour prisoners, too much fighting erodes their numbers, threatening the integrity of the entire tribe. To preserve their territory, they sometime post Tooovirs at the edges of their claim. A Tooovir is a wooden pole set in the mud on which is mounted a grotesque mask. The tribe paints the mask the colors of the pollywogs to whom the land belongs.

AMPHIBIOUS FOLK

Sharing so many physical qualities with ordinary frogs suggests that pollywogs might have evolved from them or been created from them by magic. Pollywogs have all the physical traits they need to survive underwater; they can breathe water as easily as they do air, and they have membranes between their fingers and toes to help them swim.

Dedicated carnivores, pollywogs subsist on insects, fish, and small mammals. Given their damp habitats, they find it difficult to create fire and thus consume most of their food raw. Pollywogs display adventurousness in their diet, though, and gobble up anything that creeps, crawls, swims, or flies that they can catch. They use nets, darts, and spears to hunt.

If food ever becomes scarce, pollywogs become aggressive and are known to hunt crocodiles and bog beasts. Many bands eat other humanoids, and believe they gain something of their power when they do so.

Pollywogs lay clutches of twenty to thirty eggs in the water, where the entire tribe watches over them until they develop into tadpoles. Once free from their membranous shells, the tadpoles must look after themselves. Birds and snakes deplete their numbers until only a hardy few survive. Pollywog monarchs also eat tadpoles to keep their numbers down.

BACKWARD SOCIETIES

Greater numbers, entrenched beliefs, and an adherence to custom all serve the pollywogs well when it comes to survival, but their isolation and unwillingness to trade outside their communities stunts their social development. Most pollywogs live in the same manner as their ancestors did hundreds of years ago. Such an arrangement benefits the leaders most of all, so there's almost no chance of changing society for the better.

A monarch rules each tribe. This might be a king, queen, or a religious leader, depending on the tribe. The monarch rules with absolute power. They take many mates, claiming first right to any member of their tribe. The lesser pollywogs must give over a portion of their kills, which the monarch might dispense to the tribe or not. Almost all monarchs enjoy the power their rank grants; once they secure their leadership position, they are loathe to leave it.

THE GREAT DEVOURER

Fear of the Great Devourer contributes to the inability for pollywogs to develop much more than they have. All believe they were created by a monstrous deity known as Tchatchanaga, who is said to dwell at the bottom of all pools and devour dead things that sink into his maw. Priests, called god-croakers, construct mythologies about the god that reinforce their own positions and preserve the tribe's customs. God-croakers have the ear of the monarchs and, in some cases, act as the power behind the throne.

GREAT POLLYWOGS

About one in twenty tadpoles grows up to become a great pollywog. Taller, bulkier, and more aggressive than their counterparts, they come of age quickly and balloon in size. Great pollywogs are orange. They often protect the monarch and might terrorize the other members of their tribe.

SIMPLE PROFESSIONS

If you come from a pollywog community, your starting profession describes the chief responsibility you held among your people. Suitable professions include hunter, fisher, and weaver. You could also be an acolyte of the Great Devourer or a Wyyychen, one who consorts with the spirits of the land and wields terrible magic as a result.

POLLYWOG ADVENTURERS

An unlikely adventurer, you have broken with your people's traditions and forged your own path. Mingling with other folk makes you a pariah among your own kind, but the longer you go without their oppressive influence, the better you are for it. Humans and others accustomed to living among people different from themselves might not think twice about you. It's a different story out in the wild, though, especially when and if you approach too close to pollywog territory.

FIGHTER: You were a great hunter or warrior, distinguishing yourself from the other tribe members through your

impressive deeds. Leaving them, you bring with you an aggressive fighting style that incorporates your leaping ability and your sticky tongue.

MAGE: You were, or were apprenticed to, a Wyyychen, strange pollywogs who practice magic. You learned the fundamentals from your teacher but fled after you refused to suffer any more abuse at their hands or after you stole something of value. Typical traditions include Animism, Destruction, and Hydromancy.

PRIEST: You probably worship the Great Devourer. As a priest of this monstrous god, you cover your face with an elaborate mask made from bark and bone, which gives you a strange and unsettling appearance. Traditions associated with this deity include Destruction and Hydromancy.

ROGUE: You patrolled the lands around your tribe's territory, planting the warning poles or hunting birds, lizards, and other prey. The skills you developed in this role pointed you toward the rogue path, where you can exploit your natural traits to great effect.

POLLYWOG TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Amphibious

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5 (Swimmer)

Bonus Languages: Pollywog

Leaper: You can expend 1 yard of movement to jump to a space within 5 yards. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

Sticky Tongue: You can use an action to snatch a creature with your tongue. Target one creature of your Size or smaller within 3 yards. Make a Strength roll against the target's Agility. On a success, you can pull the target up to 3 yards. On a critical success, you can also make a melee attack against the same target, if it is within your reach.

LEVEL 1 POLLYWOG

Attributes: Strength 13, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 15, **Health:** 20

Languages: Common, Pollywog (from Trait)

Rumbling Recovery: You can use an action to heal half your damage total. Until the end of your next turn, your attacks deal an extra 2d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 2 POLLYWOG

Health: +4

Great Croak: You can use an action to issue a tremendous croak. Each creature within 5 yards that is not a pollywog makes a Strength roll. On a failure, the creature takes 3d6 damage and becomes confused until the end of your next turn. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 5 POLLYWOG

Size: +1, **Health:** +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Magnificent Croaker: You make Strength rolls with 1 boon and impose 1 bane on rolls against your Strength. In addition, you can use your Great Croak talent at a range of 10 yards; creatures now take 4d6 damage on a failed Strength roll.

REVENANT

They killed you, but you did not die. They would steal your life. They would rob you of the time allotted to you by the Fates. Yet here you are, still in the land of the living. And where once you might have felt mercy toward your enemies, now there is only rage.

For some reason, death chose not to claim you when you died. Instead, your soul clung to your cooling flesh and, after a time, you snapped back to consciousness, fully aware of what had happened to you. You feel numb all over. You don't have to breathe, but if you would speak, you must draw air into your lungs. When at rest, the silence of your body threatens to swallow all your thoughts—no longer can you hear your heart beating or the rushing of blood through your veins. You are dead, but not. You can still walk, talk, and act in the world.

Time is no friend of yours. You might have been given a second chance, an opportunity to right the wrongs that led to your demise, but still you face decay. Unless you take steps to preserve your body, you will rot on your feet until only bones remain. For now, though, you look much as you did before you died—albeit paler, unhealthy, and somewhat thin. You have the normal height and weight for a human, or, if your Sage agrees, whatever other ancestry you once were.

COMMON REVENANT NAMES: You can use the name you had when you were alive, though some revenants use nicknames or adopt entirely new identities.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

Most people who die stay dead, so the circumstances of a revenant's apparent end must be significant to gain special dispensation from Lord Death to delay their spirit's descent into the Underworld. The dark god might have special affection for a mortal servant and charge them with a holy task, only to see their devotee cut down in battle. True love, a sense of justice, or a secret task all can stay Lord Death's hand. One of the Daughters of Death could raise up a valued champion, even if only to anger her father. The Fates can intervene too—and might if some disaster takes a life before the allotted time has run out. Mortals must die and their souls move on as Lord Death decreed, so only special circumstances can drive a deity to interfere with the natural process.

PURPOSE DRIVEN

The reason behind the transformation of one's corpse into a revenant comes to define their existence. If they were roused for vengeance, revenge crowds out almost all other thoughts. If they came back to protect a loved one, they become obsessed with watching over their charge. At first, the fixation seems minor, a mere quirk.

But the longer they go, the stronger its hold becomes, until they can do nothing other than complete the required task. Toward the end of their efforts, they become so single-minded, they find it impossible to maintain connections to other people.

UNSETTLING PRESENCE

There's nothing normal about revenants. Unless a revenant takes incredible steps to preserve their body against decay, no quantity of cosmetics and perfumes can cover the fact that they are the living dead. Few people can put up with the smell, and not many enjoy hanging around a dead person—even one who can walk and talk. Thus, revenants go it alone or with others who share their goals and understand their special nature. Revenants find no welcome in towns or villages and do well to conceal themselves when moving through any urban area.

PRESERVE THE FLESH

Decay might be an inescapable eventuality, but revenants can take steps to control its rate and delay the worst of its effects. Without them, a revenant rots as any corpse does. In warm climates, bloating, degloving, and the eventual sloughing off of skin and hair can happen in a matter of weeks. Revenants can continue as animated skeletons, but the joint tissue dries up and crumbles away until the bones collapse. At this point, the soul leaves the remains and usually goes wherever it belongs, though it could continue as a tatterdemalion (see page 56).

The best way to preserve oneself is by using gallseen root. (You are assumed to have availed yourself of it before your first quest begins.) An exotic plant found in the Jungle of Za, gallseen root thrives in dead flesh, sustaining itself on the liquids and gases released from the body. Since the plant depends on these substances for its survival, it releases chemicals that preserve the body against the bacteria that would normally cause the breakdown. This enables the body to retain coherency for upwards of a couple years.

Using the root requires a revenant to install it somewhere in their body. Once placed inside, the plant sends out tendrils that spread throughout the interior. Some fine roots might escape through orifices, but they can be clipped without harming the plant. The root does nothing about the smell, though, so revenants might stuff their bodies with fragrant herbs.

Another issue arises from injuries. Revenants have no ability to heal naturally; they must stitch themselves up, reset broken bones and support them, or use magical remedies. You likely acquire a few nasty wounds that contribute to your unseemly appearance.

THE LIFE YOU LOST

You most likely started out as a human and had a life. You can avail yourself of any of the professions normally available to human characters. Your profession might explain how you came to this state. If you were a soldier, you could have died in battle. If you were a farmer, you might have been slain by bandits.



REVENANT ADVENTURERS

Revenants' purposes drive them toward adventure. They don't sit around and wait for their problems to resolve themselves. They go out and do what needs doing.

FIGHTER: The fighter path ought to have great appeal if you aim to get revenge on the people who killed you or those close to you. Taking up weapons and using them to dispatch your enemies serves you well. Since you can spring back from the brink of death, you can focus on fighting with melee weapons without fear.

MAGE: Your unnatural nature could nudge you toward the mage path, especially if you had some magical training before you died. Any traditions can work for you, though you ought to consider Alteration, as its spells give you the ability to heal yourself. Other thematically appropriate traditions include the Dark Arts, Necromancy, and Shadowmancy.

PRIEST: If a god intervened on your behalf, you might serve that deity. Suitable deities include Lord Death, the Daughters of Death, and Sister Moon. Other gods would feel more reluctant to risk a confrontation with Lord Death and thus allow their servants, even favored ones, to expire.

ROGUE: If you want to avoid straight-up confrontations, you can follow the rogue path to achieve your objectives through indirect means. As with the fighter path, anything that helps you eliminate enemies with speed and precision can aid your cause.

REVENANT TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Undead

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Vision

Languages: Common

Immune: poisoned; deprivation, exposure, infection, suffocation

Feign Death: You appear to be a corpse while you are prone or unconscious.

Divine Doom: You make luck rolls with 1 bane.

From the Brink: You can use a reaction when you become incapacitated to heal 3d6 damage. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 1 REVENANT

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 9, Intellect 11, Will 11

Natural Defense: 9, **Health:** 14

Divine Sanction: You lose the Divine Doom trait.



Rising Rage: When you are harmed, you make rolls to attack with 1 boon for a duration of 1 minute. If you already benefit from this talent, increase the number of boons by 1 to a maximum of 3 boons.

LEVEL 2 REVENANT

Health: +4

Vicious Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total. Then, for 1 minute, one attack you make each round deals an extra 1d6 damage. You can use this talent three times and regain expended uses after you rest.

LEVEL 5 REVENANT

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Fighting Style: Choose one fighting style from the options available to fighter.

Relentless Wrath: When you have 3 boons from your Rising Rage talent, your attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage, and you become immune to the held and slowed afflictions.



SHADOWKITH

You knew the moment you crossed over into this place that you didn't belong. This world, so like your own, seems wrong. For one, the sun burns so bright that it hurts you. And the darkness, normally a place of great comfort, feels as it would swallow you up. And then there's the landscape. It looks like your world, but if you pay attention, you notice small details that display a falsity that makes you uncomfortable. The mountains don't match the ones in your memory. There was a forest in this field, and a field where these woods now grow. It's all a bit much, but what choice do you have other than to steel yourself against this place's intensity. One day, maybe, you will find the path back to the Twilight Lands and return to the place where you belong. Until then, you must persevere.

Much as the world you have entered amazes you, the people in it cannot help but take notice of you as well. You look human but pale, washed out. Shadows seem to bend toward you, and you feel cool to the touch. Your height and weight fall within the normal ranges for humans.

COMMON SHADOWKITH NAMES: Azada, Baccaran, Cedmus, Deana, Egdar, Fenowee, Gurion, Isolde, Javan, Kyra, Meila, Nefera, Ontos, Paulinus, Sava, Trent, Uvid, and Zed.

THE TWILIGHT LANDS

Some cosmologists describe reality as like a deck of cards. Each card represents a plane of existence. The mortal world sits atop the spirit world, which itself is placed above the Underworld. Somewhere below lies the Netherworld, and somewhere above one finds Paradise. The "deck" exists inside a vast emptiness known as the Void, where demons originate. So where, then, are the Twilight Lands? Travelers can find it on the backside of the mortal world.

From the perspective of visitors, the Twilight Lands look a bit like a distorted reflection of the mortal world. One finds mountains where mountains stand on the other side, and there's a Sea of Fear, the Jungle of Za, and other places, but these are not exactly as their brighter counterparts. The mountains seem much older, while the Sea of Fear's waters are noticeably darker, black as ink. Made structures might have counterparts, but most do not. It's like an entirely different version of reality lurking just out of reach of the mortal world.

SHADOWKITH IN TWILIGHT

While a multitude of peoples call the mortal world home, most folks in the Twilight Lands belong to a single ancestry known as *shadowkith*. There they live, work, and rest much as their light-dwelling counterparts—but with a few differences. Shadowkith rarely eat other creatures; they derive sustenance from the fungi that grows everywhere in their lands, as well as some plant matter. Ambition, drive, and self-aggrandizement seem alien to most shadowkith; they would much rather pass their time reflecting on their nature, sleeping, and deadening their emotions with substances such as sleep spider and milk of sorrow.

CROSSING OVER

Opportunities for crossing from one side to the other rarely present themselves. A magical mishap, cosmological damage created by tears in the Void, or an act of the gods themselves could create a route. The short time these passages stay open means that explorers have few chances to take advantage of them.

A permanent route does exist, but reaching it requires traveling into the New Lands, across some of its most dangerous territory, and contending with the shades who guard the way. The Nightspire stands 100 feet tall in the Plain of Peril, not far north of the Forbidden City. Solid black, with no windows, doors, or other means of entrance, it looks as if someone sliced away reality here. The shadow the tower

casts from the passage of the sun across the sky opens a passage between the mortal world and the Twilight Lands. One can step into the shadow, turn around three times, widdershins, and step off to either side to enter the Twilight Lands. From there, the tower looks like a glowing column that emits a line of brilliant light. One can cross over to the mortal world using a similar procedure—just turn in the opposite direction.

Though the Nightspire enables passage between these two realities, it reaches through the Twilight Lands, punching through the spirit world and into the Underworld. Spirits can use the structure to escape the shadowy realm of death and return to the mortal world, though doing so risks enraging the lord of the Underworld. The spirits who escape keep their physical form and remain shades, but if they move too far from the Nightspire, they become ghosts, phantoms, or worse. Some believe the fiends built the Nightspire to give them free access to the various other dominions.

A DIM EXISTENCE

The Twilight Lands exact little from the people who live there. If they grow hungry, they merely need to pluck a cap from the ground and be nourished. If they get thirsty, they can dip their cups in the dark water that streams across the realm. Shadowkith don't build cities using hard work but instead gather their imaginations to produce the structures they need. As a result, shadowkith have few opportunities to pursue the careers that people do in the mortal world. If anything, they are artists, such as painters and poets, philosophers, and dreamers.

SHADOWKITH ADVENTURERS

You left the Twilight Lands by choice or happenstance. You might have "climbed" the Nightspire and went wandering or been pulled into the light after some catastrophe wreaked havoc on your homeland. Now that you live in the mortal world, you must decide how you will live, if you would go home, or whether you can make peace with the strangeness around you.

FIGHTER: Many dark and terrible things haunt the Twilight Lands. Some crawl free from the Void to kill and ruin all they can, while fiends and cruel faeries prey on your kind. Following the fighter path could compel a natural evolution of the fighting skills you had to develop to survive.

MAGE: Magic permeates the Twilight Lands but often bears the taint of ill-intention, suggesting that it somehow sinks into your world after being used on the other side. Typical traditions your people discover include the Dark Arts, Destruction, Eldritch, Illusion, and Shadowmancy.

PRIEST: The gods have some influence in the Twilight Lands but lack anything resembling an organized faith. Shadowkith offer up prayers and sacrifices when it suits them and might go weeks or months before they even think of the divine. Priests, then, have a small presence in this place. Such individuals might swear oaths of service to Lord Death or the Daughters of Death.

ROGUE: Perhaps you relied on wit and cunning to see you through hardship, but you might have resorted to underhanded methods to make ends meet after coming into the mortal world. Either way, the rogue path complements your traits.

SHADOWKITH TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Vision

Shadowspawn: You can use this trait at any point during your turn if you are not confused, stunned, or unconscious. You impose 1 bane on rolls against your Defense and Agility, and you gain the Silent and Slippery traits. The effect lasts until the end of your next turn. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it (luck ends).

Shadow to Shadow: If you are in faint light, dim light, or no light, on your turn you can expend 2 yards of movement to teleport to an empty space of your choice within 5 yards that's also in faint light, dim light, or no light. Once you use this trait, you lose access to it for 1 minute.

LEVEL 1 SHADOWKITH

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 11, Intellect 11, Will 11

Natural Defense: 10, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common

Create Shadowstuff (Magical): You gain the Conjure Useful Item talent from the Conjuration tradition, but objects you create using it are made of solidified shadows. If you have the Conjure Useful Item talent already, it now creates things made of solidified shadow, and you should choose a different talent from the Conjuration or Shadowmancy traditions.

Keen Shadows (Magical): When you get a success on a roll to attack a target in dim light, faint light, or no light, the attack deals an extra 1d6 damage. If you get a critical success against a target creature in these conditions, the target becomes impaired in an attribute of your choice until the start of your next turn.

LEVEL 2 SHADOWKITH

Health: +4

Tradition: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Shadow Recovery (Magical): You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and release a billowing cloud of magical darkness that blocks out all ordinary light inside a Size 5 space centered on you until the end of your next turn. You can see normally in this darkness. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 SHADOWKITH

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Shadow Inheritance: You now have unlimited uses of your Shadowspawn trait.

DENIZENS OF THE DARK

A shadowkith adventurer is a creature of mystery and intrigue. With a contemplative nature and a deep connection to the Twilight Lands, they can bring a unique perspective to their adventures. Their journey might be driven by a longing for home, a desire to understand the mortal realm, or a quest to protect their kind from encroaching darkness. Whether they embrace the challenges of the world or seek to escape it, shadowkith are a force to be reckoned with.

SPHINX

You left your homeland behind to find some new place to call home. You crossed untold distances, traveling by land or sea, to enter a realm that resembles what your homeland once was—crowded with unfamiliar people. Though they look strange to you, you can tell by their expressions and the stink of their fear that you too appear strange. The reticence you encounter does little to make you feel welcome, but what choice do you have? There's nowhere else to go.

You and your fellow sphinxes hail from a distant land, somewhere far to the south of the Sea of Fear. Your people's civilization thrived for thousands of years until disaster forced you to look elsewhere for homes. Your nation belonged to you and you alone; you have no experience dealing with people of other ancestries.

If you're like most sphinxes, you stand between 4 1/2 feet and 6 1/2 feet tall and weigh between 80 and 300 pounds. You can walk upright as a biped, but you can also drop to all fours to move as a cat. Your facial features combine those of a lion and human; short, dense, golden-brown fur covers your body, and you have a leonine tail. (Male sphinxes also have manes of darker hair.) A pair of small feathery wings sprouts from your back. Not large enough for flight, they can slow your descent when you jump or fall.

COMMON SPHINX NAMES: Adalmach, Asir, Caledius, Egedia, Faesa, Iona, Mezzan, Ozara, and Yzil.

LEGENDARY PEOPLE

Long before the first sphinxes started to appear in the borderlands, the idea of them had taken root in the Old Country—but instead of a people, legends depicted them as gods and monsters. In some tales, they possessed incredible wisdom, which they would impart in return for undertaking quests on their behalf. But they were also presented as cruel villains who killed and ate people. In one tale, a sphinx named Andromachus offered to give Othracus, a mortal hero, the true name of a vile devil that held the man's true love prisoner, but only if Othracus could solve a riddle that had vexed the sphinx. The hero failed to come up with the answer, so the sphinx devoured him, and his true love was forced to extricate herself from her unfortunate situation.

THE IMMORTAL KINGDOM

All sphinxes hail from Aegon, an ancient kingdom that once spanned an entire continent far to the south of the known world. For thousands of years, the sphinxes ruled those lands in peace and reaped the benefits of their prosperity by developing commerce, new sailing methods, literature, advanced mathematics, and more. The people enjoyed great freedoms, but also protections from their benevolent rulers.

That Aegon could ever fall was unthinkable to the prideful sphinxes, thus they ignored the first warnings of their doom. At the kingdom's edges, the verdant land began to die. The grain withered to dust, carried by the hot, reeking winds that stripped away the topsoil and rained sand across the landscape. And from out of these dead lands marched the living dead: armor-clad skeletons under the banners of Nekron, the dark god of death. The

desert encroached, gobbling up more and more territory. Sphinx armies fought the undead, but no matter how many victories they secured, more undead rose up to replace the fallen. Aegon's doom had come, and the sphinxes had no choice but to quit these lands.

OLD GODS. FEARSOME ASPECTS

The sphinxes offer prayers and sacrifices to a multitude of gods belonging to a pantheon that has watched over them in one form or another since before the founding of their civilization. The Sun God, Aram, rules over a mass of squabbling deities, nearly all of whom have some sort of animal characteristic. Aiding him is his beloved, the night goddess Orisu. The outcast god Nekron hates Aram and the others and plots to overthrow them by extinguishing all life on Erth.

The queen who rules what is still called the Immortal Kingdom of Aegon is the incarnation of Orisu. Every queen to sit upon the Moon Throne bears this name. When one queen dies, she ascends to the heavens and a new star appears in the night sky. The queen keeps many mortal consorts to produce an heir worthy of the goddess's persona. A bureaucratic priesthood supports the queen and oversees every aspect of running the government.



SPHINX TONGUE

People unfamiliar with sphinxes hear their language, sometimes called Aegonese, as incomprehensible growling, snarling, and chirping. Its pictogrammatic script has some ten thousand characters, with more added each year. It takes years for an outsider to master the spoken tongue and decades to be able to read it. The language is filled with complex grammar and syntax, reflecting the sphinxes' advanced intellect and culture. Many scholars believe that Aegonese holds hidden depths of meaning and philosophy, waiting to be uncovered.

ANOTHER WORLD

The priests of Aram teach that death is a door through which all must travel to pass from one existence to another. The souls of the dead descend to the Wastes of Nekron, where they wander until the jackal-headed god finds and judges them. The dark god tears out their hearts and devours them. If Nekron finds the flavor distasteful, the soul rises from the Wastes to take residence in a new body. If he finds the bloody meat to his liking, the soul is destroyed forever.

ADVANCED SOCIETY

Aegon has an advanced civilization, equal to or beyond the Great Kingdom of the Old Country. Any of the professions described in *Shadow of the Weird Wizard* work well for sphinx characters.

SPHINX ADVENTURERS

You left Aegon once you realized there was no hope for your homeland. Even as you packed your bags and found passage away, you saw that others had not yet made this realization. They clung to the hope that Aram would save them. Resolved to your fate, you look ahead to see what the gods have in store for you.

FIGHTER: You could have been a palace guard, a soldier who battled the undead flowing over your cities, or a brawler for the amusement of an audience. You learned how to fight and can bring those skills to bear when you undertake your first quest.

MAGE: Aegon produces many mages with full access to all the known traditions. Stars and the heavens hold some importance culturally, so many sphinx mages discover Astromancy as one of their traditions.

PRIEST: You can worship any god, but if you belong to the priest caste, you likely follow Aram or Orisu. Aram's associated traditions are Astromancy and Order, while Orisu's include Order and Shadowmancy. You might also follow Nekron, whose sinister and wicked cult fosters the Dark Arts and Necromancy.

ROGUE: Many sphinxes would sneer at you for using dishonorable methods—but you have survived and so many of them are doomed to die. You could have been a thief, a scout, or a fraud. Whatever you were, you are now a survivor and have a knack for escaping whatever trouble you find.

SPHINX TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 6 (Strider)

Bonus Languages: Sphinx

Avoidance: You impose 1 bane on rolls against your Defense and Agility. You lose access to this trait while you are injured, confused, stunned, or unconscious.

Glider: If you are not confused, held, stunned, or unconscious when you fall, you suffer no harm from landing. You can land in any empty space directly under you, within a number of yards equal to half the distance you fell.

LEVEL 1 SPHINX

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 12, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Sphinx (from trait)

Sphinx Weapon Training: You ignore the requirements for using melee weapons. When you attack with a Nimble weapon, you roll with 1 boon. Finally, when you get a critical success for an attack you make using a Nimble weapon, the target makes a Strength roll. On a failure, it becomes weakened (luck ends).

Swift Cut: When an enemy within reach attacks you and you wield a melee weapon, you can use a reaction to force the enemy to make a luck roll. If the luck roll results in a failure, the enemy takes 1d6 damage.

LEVEL 2 SPHINX

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Improved Avoidance: You no longer lose access to your Avoidance trait when you are injured or confused.

Swift Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when you are harmed, to heal half your damage total and move up to half your Speed. You have the Slippery trait for this movement. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 SPHINX

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Surest Strike: When you get a failure on a roll to attack with a Nimble weapon, you can turn that failure into a success. You then lose access to this talent for 1 minute.

Whirling Strike: If you wield two melee weapons, one in each hand, you can use an action to make a spinning leap and whirl your weapons around you. Make an Agility roll with 2 boons. Compare the result to the Defense of each enemy within 3 yards. If the result equals or beats an enemy's Defense, the enemy takes 3d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).



SPRIGGAN

Mortals should show more respect to the trees of the land, for any tree could be one of your people at rest—and your folk tend to become hostile when an axe awakens you.

You and your fellow spriggans bestow health and vitality to wooded areas. Grandfather Tree charged you with the responsibility of protecting these groves at the world's start. Thus, you watch over your dominion, mindful of everything that happens there and ready to engage the enemy if one appears. In every wooded area at least one of you resides. Should you be driven out or killed, the forest will sicken and might die.

Although you share an origin with ordinary trees, Grandfather Tree made you in his own image so you could walk the earth as sentient plants when desired or remain almost indistinguishable from trees when you rest. When active, you have a slender humanoid body. Instead of flesh and bone, you have “skin” of bark—either thin and papery or gnarled and thick—plus bones of hardwood, and muscle and connective tissue that resembles cork. Sap flows through your body, and you bleed when cut. In your humanoid form you stand between 5 and 6 feet tall and weigh between 125 and 200 pounds. You might have a crown of branchlike growths or perhaps hair and a beard made from moss.

COMMON SPRIGGAN NAMES: Hush of Winter's Heart, Laughter of the Melting Snow, Morning Dew in the Dawn's Light, Reaching of Limbs to the Sky, and Stillness of Night's Darkest Hours



WOODLAND FOLK

All spriggans inherit the responsibility of protecting a particular grove of trees. Small woods might have one, while large jungles and forests can have many. Spriggans might feel connected to the place they live, but their awareness extends only so far. Thus, they wander under the canopy, looking for damaged trees and tending to their hurts before the wounds can cause lasting harm. Necessity forces spriggans to enlist the aid of other woodland folk, but these infrequent arrangements exist only to benefit the land.

Many young spriggans chafe against their duty and feel called to wander for a time. Their elders understand the need, having themselves felt the same pull, and see the period of wandering as reflective of their maker's own propensity to travel. When youngsters go on Grandfather's Walk, they might take up with other people and quest for a time before settling down to watch the forest that speaks to them.

SEEDS OF GRANDFATHER TREE

Wherever Grandfather Tree went when he walked the early Erth, he left behind seeds of himself. Most took root and grew into the first trees. But Grandfather Tree had work to do other than safeguarding his trees, so he breathed awareness into some of his offspring. They woke, drew themselves from the soil, and swore to serve their maker and protect his children.

AMBULATORY PLANTS

Even though they can walk, run, and speak, spriggans remain plants and derive sustenance from sunlight, water, and the nutrients they draw from the ground. They feed themselves by rooting in place, which they need to do once every couple days for a few hours, though they can take root more frequently without harm.

Also, spriggans respond to the passage of the seasons. Each spring, buds appear all over their bodies, then blossom into bright flowers. By summer, the blooms have blown away, and green leaves unfurl like hair. The leaves change color in autumn, turning gold or red, then fall to the earth in winter.

NATURAL ALLIES

As much as spriggans might prefer to keep the company of themselves and ordinary animals, often they must share their woodland homes with other peoples. Even in primeval forests where humans have dared not travel, spriggans find fauns and woodwoses. And then the faeries prefer to make woodlands the places where their worlds and the mortal world touch, so they usually contend with the impish folk such as sprites, atomies, and the like.

The size of spriggan population determines how they deal with their neighbors. A few spriggans can avoid dealing even with friendly folk and often do. Larger populations have difficulty keeping hidden and work out arrangements with others who demonstrate the same reverence for the woodlands that they themselves do. Spriggans never ally with ruinous folk or monsters; they work to drive them out or kill them. Spriggans have a special hatred for fomorians and attack on sight.



CHILDREN OF NATURE

Their plant physiology, lack of organized society, and infrequent mingling with flesh-and-blood populations make most starting professions unlikely or nonsensical. Instead of a profession, you begin with uncommon professional knowledge about nature and the wilderness. You can identify ordinary flora and fauna, follow tracks, discern information from spoor, and recall details about geography, climate, and nature itself.

SPRIGGAN ADVENTURERS

Many spriggans inherit the disposition of their maker: quiet, reclusive, and inoffensive. They mask their presence in the guise of trees to let passersby go without having to deal with them. The world has many troubles, but few have anything to do with them or their charges—and that's the way the spriggans prefer it.

But spriggans cannot and do not abide cruelty and wastefulness. Monsters, being abominations with no place in the world, offend them, as do alien invaders such as demons and the mechanical reën. Of all possible enemies, they despise orcs most of all. When the soul sickness—the infection responsible for creating orcs—spreads through a community, it takes almost no convincing for the spriggans to march toward war.

You can join a group for any reason you like, but a catastrophe such as a forest fire, a ruinous magical effect, or an infestation of nasty monsters might drive you from your home to seek aid where you can find it.

FIGHTER: You saw the horrors the enemy creates, the atrocities they perform, and have decided to take up arms against them. You set out to avenge the despoiled and prevent any more loss to the natural world.

MAGE: You can cast spells like anyone else, but you discover your traditions through observation. Long stretches of inactivity let you watch the world around you. You sense the magical currents and the spirits of nature, learning from them how to harness this occult power. Consider nature-focused traditions such as Animism or the elemental traditions.

PRIEST: Grandfather Tree calls you to a life of adventure. Who are you to refuse? You leave your homeland and travel where you are needed most. You wield your patron's power to advance the god's aims in the world.

ROGUE: Secretive by nature, you find yourself drawn along the rogue path. You could dabble in magic, but you might also have the favor of your god. You develop talents to help you watch for enemies and to destroy them should they threaten.

SPRIGGAN TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Plant

Natural Defense: +1

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Natural Weapons: You can use your claws as Nimble natural melee weapons that each deal 1d6 damage.

Plant Bond: While you are within 5 yards of any plant, you have the Awareness 5 trait.

Tree Form: On your turn, if you are on a surface made from earth, you can use this trait to reduce your Speed to 0. The effect lasts until you end it (not an action) or become unconscious. While subject to this trait, you ignore any ordinary effect that would move you. To all others, you appear to be a tree of twice your Size.

Flammable: You take double damage from fire. You roll to overcome being on fire with 1 bane.

LEVEL 1 SPRIGGAN

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 9, Intellect 10, Will 12

Natural Defense: 11 (includes the increase from your Spriggan traits), **Health:** 14

Languages: Common and one other language

Tradition: Two

Plant Strike (Magical): You can use this talent when you attack with your natural weapons. You can target a creature on the ground or within reach of an ordinary plant within 5 yards of you. On a critical success, the target becomes held until the start of your next turn.

LEVEL 2 SPRIGGAN

Natural Defense: +1, **Health:** +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Spells: Two novice

Wild Recovery (Magical): You can use an action to heal half your damage total and turn the ground within 5 yards of you into challenging terrain that remains for 1 minute. Any enemy that ends its turn on challenging terrain created by this talent takes 1d6 damage, or 2d6 damage if prone. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 SPRIGGAN

Natural Defense: +1, **Health:** +4

Spells: One expert

Grow the Woods (Magical): You can use an action to cause plants to grow up from the ground all around you. Target up to six Size 1 spaces on the ground within 10 yards: from each space erupts a thorny, grasping plant. Any creature in the target space makes an Agility roll. On a success, the creature is pushed to the nearest empty space of its Size of your choice. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage and becomes held (luck ends). It can overcome this effect with a successful Strength roll. The growth remains until destroyed (Health 10) or until you use this talent again. You can use this talent three times. You regain expended uses after you rest.

SPRITE

When the elves fashioned the magical realms into which they fled after the long-ago war with the trolls, they expected all faeries to follow. The age of the immortal had passed, and the time for younger peoples was at hand. With mortals spreading out in all directions—seizing land, clearing forests, and mining the earth—elves felt the world had grown too small for them. Many faeries followed them, but your people refused.

Never willing to obligate yourselves to anyone, most of your kind saw life in the confines of the elves' realms as too restrictive. Plus, it would make you subject to the elves' authority, and your people bend the knee to no one. You live free and do and say whatever you like. Instead of vanishing into some virtual paradise, your folk remained behind, known to the mortals as the children of the forest.

The moniker fits. At 2 feet tall and two dozen pounds, you could pass for a human child if not for the wide, staring eyes and pointed ears that betray your faerie nature. You can adopt any skin tone you like; sprites encompass all the colors of the rainbow. Also, you might have some quality that reflects the diminutive form you can assume—feathers for hair, sparkles that appear in the air around you when you laugh, or especially grubby skin no matter how often you wash (see “Wee Travel,” page 55).

COMMON SPRITE NAMES: Acorn, Berry, Beryl, Joy, Leaf, Petal, Ribald, Squirrel, Sunflower, and Wix.

FREE SPIRITS

Sprites value freedom above everything else. They would rather tumble into oblivion than owe a debt. They scoff at rules, lacking any real customs or social expectations. They make nothing that lasts and see no point in building anything at all. When they grow weary, they lie down and sleep. When they feel hungry, they snack on the berries, nuts, and roots around them. And when they see something interesting, they take it.

ETERNAL YOUTH

Time has no effect on the children of the forest. It takes just a few years for them to reach adulthood. Their immortal nature proofs them against sickness, and their wounds heal without ever leaving a scar. Cold or warm temperatures never discomfit them; rain or sun, they make themselves comfortable and carry on with their games and activities.

WILD GANGS

Sprites form ragtag communities that impose few, if any, expectations on their members. They can come and go as they choose and have no responsibilities beyond looking after themselves. In larger gangs, two sprites take on leadership roles, though they can surrender them at any time. One becomes a nurturer who looks after the young and helps those in need, while the other takes charge of protecting the rest, leading raids against trespassers and forays to work mischief on people who settle too close to their territory.

Rarely do romantic relationships last for sprites. They pair up for as long as they feel like, and no one has hard feelings when the connection unravels. If they have offspring—and they rarely do—one or both parents look after the child or give it to the gang's nurturer.

STUPID HUMANS

Humanity vexes the children of the forest. In humans, sprites find all the things they detest. They see humans as a joyless lot, clumsy and ignorant about the world around them. Sprites avoid dealing with them when possible and come up with elaborate plans to rid themselves of humans who live too close. They steal everything they can, from horses and pets to valuables and foodstuffs. And if this doesn't work, they turn their attention toward the humans themselves, by tormenting them with magical tricks and leading them into danger.

ANIMAL FRIENDS

Ordinary animals are the sprites' favored companions; the sprite ability to communicate with wildlife creates a rapport with these beasts. Birds and squirrels, bears and great cats hang around their encampments, where sprites treat them as full-fledged members of the community. Sprites consider the act of killing animals for food detestable and hate hunters most of all.

Many sprites bond with the animals they live among. They don't see these connections as an obligation to shrug off, but as a mutual benefit. One might befriend a wolf who acts as their protector, while another might enjoy the company of a squirrel or small bird and take it upon themselves to watch over the critter.

TAUGHT TO SURVIVE

Life in the wilderness has taught all sprites how to get by out-of-doors. Rather than begin with a profession, you start with professional knowledge of survival. You can forage for safe food to eat, identify clean water, make and break down camps, fashion clothing for yourself from leaves and vines, and recognize the various dangers you face while in the wild. If, though, you decide to live among mortals, you can determine your profession using the normal rules; ignore any result that involves the killing of animals.

SPRITE ADVENTURERS

Considering their disdain for humans and, by extension, other mortals, sprites seem unlikely to take up adventuring as a trade. However, sprites are just fickle enough to defeat expectations about them. A group comprising other wild folk, such as fauns and woodwoses, could easily recruit you—especially if they have big plans to do interesting things. You might also take up with a human band, but only if they show proper respect for nature and wild places. You can stick with the group for as long as you like, but you might wrestle with the urge to be on your way all the time.

FIGHTER: Your small size aside, you come from a people who take no pleasure in killing and work to avoid getting blood on their hands. It's unlikely, then, for you to follow the fighter path unless you have a good reason. Maybe enemies wiped out your

gang. The loss of your kin helps you overcome your revulsion to take up arms.

MAGE: Being a magical person means magic comes easily to you. Rather than consign yourself to some dusty academy or a tyrannical instructor, you learn how to tap into the magic inside you. The Chaos, Enchantment, and Illusion traditions best reflect the magic of your people.

PRIEST: As with other faeries, gods have no appeal to you, especially gods who demand you serve them. You're unlikely to even bargain with a god. If you must follow this path, consider a nature deity such as Grandfather Tree.

ROGUE: Your small size, slender body, and mischievous nature should all point you toward the rogue path. The path's talents arise naturally from your nature and capabilities without any necessary training.

SPRITE TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Faerie

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: Sylvan

Senses: Keen Hearing, Keen Vision

Immune: exposure, infection

Wild Speech: You can communicate with ordinary animals such as cats, dogs, pigs, and horses. You can interpret the noises animals make, as well as their body language, to get the gist of what they communicate.

Wee Travel (Magical): You can use this trait at the start of your turn without requiring an action if you lack the confused, controlled, held, stunned, or unconscious afflictions. You transform into a Size 1/16 bird, butterfly, or mote of light and remain in that form until the end of your turn. While subject to this trait's effects, you have the Fly and Slippery traits, but your attacks deal no damage, and you lose the ability to speak.

Wild Escape: When harmed, you can use a reaction to use Wee Travel and then move up to your Speed. When you stop moving, the Wee Travel effect ends.

LEVEL 1 SPRITE

Attributes: Strength 9, Agility 13, Intellect 11, Will 10

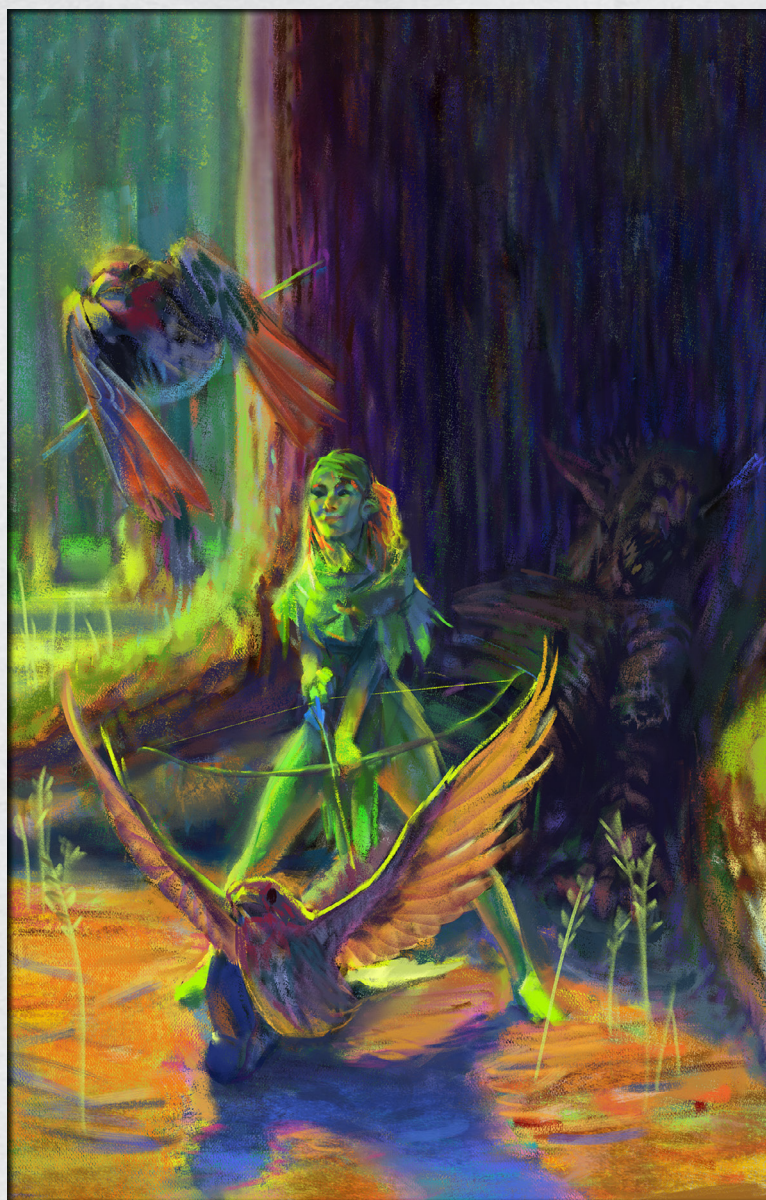
Natural Defense: 15, **Health:** 10

Languages: Common, Sylvan (from trait), and one other language

Tradition: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Wicked Tricks (Magical): You can use an action to play a trick. Target one creature within 10 yards and make an Intellect roll against the target's Intellect. On a success, the target suffers one of the following effects.

- The target takes 1d6 damage, 2d6 at character level 3, 3d6 at level 5, 4d6 at level 7, and 5d6 at level 9.



- The target gains one of the following afflictions (luck ends): frightened of you, weakened, or vulnerable.
- The target falls prone and cannot stand up (luck ends).

You can use this talent a number of times equal to 1 + half your level. You regain expended uses after you rest.

LEVEL 2 SPRITE

Health: +2

Spells: One novice

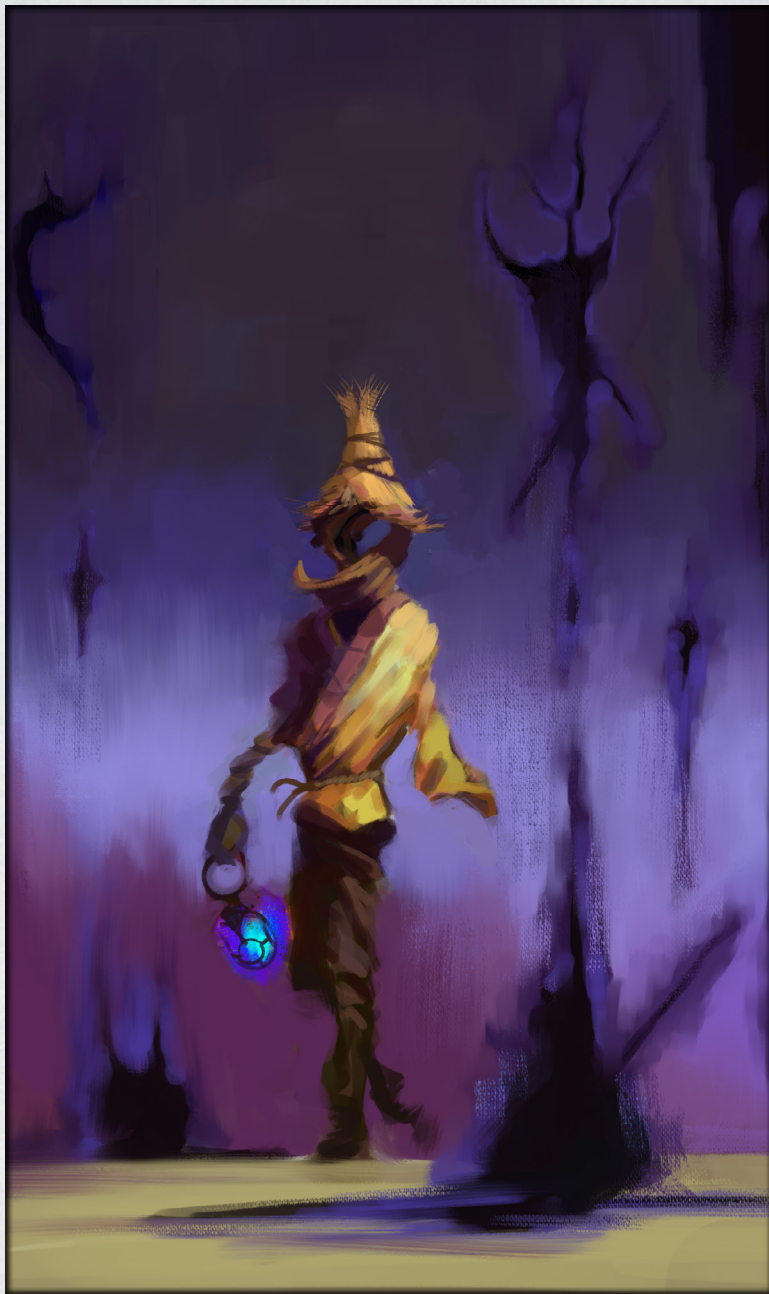
Fleeing Recovery: You can use this talent when you use Wee Travel to also heal half your damage total. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 SPRITE

Health: +2

Spells: One expert

Cunning Travel: When using the Wee Travel trait, you can choose to end its effect at any time during your turn.



TATTERDEMALION

As far as you can tell, you have always been a pile of clothes. You have no memory of what came before you realized that your hands were gloves, your torso a shirt, and that under all the clothes you wear there's nothing at all. While not exactly memories, you do have flashes of *something* in your mind's eye—disjointed and chaotic experiences. You know how to practice a trade or recall information about a particular subject, but beyond that, nothing.

You're dead. That's why you can't remember anything of import, such as your name, your background, or, really, any other details from your past. Who you were, how you lived, who mattered to you, and the circumstances of your death all escape you. For now. What you do know is that you have a body made from bits of clothing—maybe a shirt, possibly a hat—but the rest of you is rags, knotted together in the semblance of a humanoid shape. You replace your pieces all the time, snatching up useful material and incorporating it into your form.

Your cloth body stands about 3 feet tall and weighs no more than a few pounds. You decide what kind of clothes make up your form. If you have armor components, the armor protects you as if you were made of flesh and blood. During your existence as a tatterdemalion, you will change out your physical components many times.

COMMON TATTERDEMALION NAMES: You cannot recall your name, so you have one given to you. Common nicknames include Chuckles, Hob, Rags, Haunt, and Tatters.

RECALLING YOUR LOST LIFE

It takes no time at all to figure out that you are dead, though the circumstances of your end and why you are still here remain a mystery for now. Memories return, little by little, over time, helping you rebuild the identity you lost. Advancement in your paths represents the progress you make toward restoring your memories, so that by the end of your final quest, you can be sure you will have earned the rest that is to be your reward.

Each time your level increases, you learn a bit more about who you were. You can come up with this information on your own, but you might find it rewarding to have your fellow players reveal something each time instead. The Sage might step in to knit the information together so that it fits into the campaign.

UNWILLING TO MOVE ON

Ignorance of your past in no way diminishes your eagerness to remain in the mortal world. Something keeps you here—something important that needs doing. This responsibility anchors you when you feel the Underworld's pull.

Your existence defies the natural order, and reality aims to correct an obvious violation of the rules. You feel something tugging at you all the time, though the sensation in no way discomfits or limits you. It just reminds you that you should not be among the living. The sensation worsens as you sustain injury: Black spots appear in the distance, yawning holes that offer glimpses of the shadowy kingdom of Lord Death. You even hear faint moans of those consigned to oblivion.

UNNATURAL NATURE

As much as you might miss the flavor of a good meal or the relief of a cool drink, you can take in no sustenance, nor do you need it. You can benefit from magical substances, such as potions and the like, by soaking the material constituting your body with the liquid. Sleep never comes over you, but you do find it useful and restorative to have extended periods of downtime.

Your senses change too. You have no ability to smell or taste; such things have no meaning for you. You can feel things through the body you assemble and “hear” by feeling the vibrations in your clothing. You see, sort of, but your vision goes beyond what you had when you were alive. Your vision enables you to see people and objects, but also spirits, invisible things, and recognize visual illusions for what they are.

A LITTLE UPSETTING

When people see a pile of clothes wandering around, they act as you might expect them to act, with a little fear, perhaps some loathing too. Luckily, you are small and can squeeze through tight places. When needed, you can stay out of view. You must be mindful of those who hunt spirits, for such people consider you an abomination.

FIRST GLIMPSES

The first thing you remember is how to do whatever it was that you did when you were alive. Your profession can offer clues about how you died. If you were an academic, perhaps you discovered something dangerous during your research. Enemies of your faith could have claimed you if you had a religious calling, while battle might have snuffed out your life if you were in the military. Rather than choose a profession, allow the dice to decide to spark your creativity.

TATTERDEMALION ADVENTURERS

You survived death for a reason. Finding that reason and then resolving it become the focus of your quests. You could avenge the death of a loved one, undo some terrible damage you created with magic, or recover a relic for which you were responsible. You need people to help you complete your mission, so it behooves you to join up with other talented individuals. With their aid, you will find the peace you crave.

FIGHTER: You have strong feelings of anger, bordering on hatred. You feel driven to take up arms and smite the people who wronged you. You likely inhabit a suit of armor—perhaps the same armor you wore when you died—and have a weapon at the ready.

MAGE: You woke with knowledge of magic, though how you acquired it remains to be discovered. Your unusual circumstances make certain traditions less useful for you, so you should avoid Alteration, Primal, and any other tradition that would affect your body.

PRIEST: The gods fear Lord Death enough to be cautious about permitting the souls of their servants to linger in the mortal world. If you follow the priest path, consider following Lord Death or one of his daughters.

ROGUE: Your traits make the rogue path an optimal choice. Not only are you small and good at sneaking around, but you can also fit through tight places, enabling you to thwart locks, traps, and defenses. Your choice of rogue path could help you explain how you outwitted and outran death when it came for you.

TATTERDEMALION TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Spirit

Size: 1/2, **Speed:** 5 (Silent, Slippery, Squeeze 1 inch, Strider)

Trait: True Vision

Immune: asleep, blinded, deafened, poisoned, slowed; exposure, deprivation, infection, suffocation

Cloth Body: Your body consists of bits and scraps of cloth all knotted together. You ignore any effect that would transform you or change your shape. When you take damage from fire, you take an extra 1d6 damage.

Spiritual Existence: When you become incapacitated, the cloth making up your body falls to the ground at your space, and you are stunned instead of unconscious. If you heal any damage, you flow into the nearest pile of cloth within 20 yards and inhabit it. If no such pile exists, you remain stunned until one comes within this range. If you die from being incapacitated, your spirit descends to the Underworld, and nothing short of divine intervention can restore you to your previous form.

LEVEL 1 TATTERDEMALION

Attributes: Strength 10, Agility 10, Intellect 10, Will 13

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 10

Languages: Common

Spectral Touch (Magical): You can use an action to extend a spectral appendage from your body. Target one creature within reach. Make an Agility roll against the target's Strength. On a success, the target takes 1d6 damage, and becomes weakened (luck ends).

Superior Reflexes: You make Agility rolls with 1 boon, and you impose 1 bane on rolls against your Agility.

LEVEL 2 TATTERDEMALION

Health: +2

Tradition: One, **Spells:** Two novice

Spiritual Recovery (Magical): While using an action to use Spectral Touch, you make your Agility roll with 1 boon; on a success, the target takes 2d6 damage. In addition, you use this talent to heal half your damage total and, for 1 minute, you make Will rolls with 1 boon and impose 1 bane on rolls against your Will. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 TATTERDEMALION

Health: +2

Spells: One expert

Hijack Apparel: You can use an action to move from the clothing making up your body to the clothing worn by another. Target one creature within 5 yards that wears clothing of any kind. Make a Will roll against the target's Agility. On a success, you control the target (luck ends). On a failure, you lose access to this talent for 1 minute. You can use this talent a number of times equal to half your level and regain expended uses after a rest.

While you control a target, you occupy its space and move with it when it moves. If the target sustains damage, it takes half of it, and you take the rest. You use actions normally; however, the target you have controlled can make use only of actions normally available to all creatures such as attack, defend, etc.

Spectral Strike (Magical): While using an action to use Spectral Touch, you make your Agility roll with 1 boon; on a success, the target takes 5d6 damage.

TRITON

The devils of the sea, scions of the Kraken, terrors of the deep: sailors know your people by many names. They have a healthy respect for your customs and keep clear of your waters. Too many cogs and caravels have made the mistake of angering your kind and found themselves dragged to the depths with hulls breached and bodies torn to feed the sharks. When not waylaying ships, your folk terrorized coastal dwellers with raids that saw people, goods, and anything that wasn't nailed down dragged off to vanish into the sea.

The tentative peace seafarers now enjoy with you came only recently. Thanks to careful diplomacy between maritime nations, hostilities have abated somewhat. Knowing of the troubles that blight the Old Country has softened your kind's stance toward land-dwellers, but the threat of renewed bloodshed remains.

Your people make their home beneath the waves. Those who fear you call you "sea devils" or "deep ones," but most know you as the tritons. Your people have tall, willowy bodies, with skin covered in a mesh of fine silver-blue scales. Your height ranges from 6 to 7 feet and weight starts around 160 pounds and can go up to double that for the largest among you. Although humanoid, you possess numerous features that enable you to live underwater. You have large, globular eyes equipped with special membranes that can snap over them to protect them from silt and grit. You lack a nose, but your nostrils can close shut when you swim, and serrated teeth crowd your small mouth. You use the gills on your chest to breathe while swimming.

COMMON TRITON NAMES: Festooth, Malabrath, Ooshala, Shesh, Thurith, Weesha, and Yaah.

MURKY BEGINNINGS

A few stories explain the tritons' origin—not even they have a clear understanding of it. Part of the trouble comes from the lack of written records. Tritons use hand signals rather than words to communicate ideas. The script they use, which matches those gestures, is drawn in the sand, silt, or with detritus from the sea. Currents erase these messages, so the sea-dwelling folk have never had much in the way of a written history.

Ask any triton about their people's beginnings, and they might shrug off the question as nonsensical; they have always been. Some might claim they were hatched from eggs left by Oceanus at the dawn of creation or swam to these waters from the Endless Ocean, a mythical, paradisaical place to which tritons believe they return when they pass from this world.

Some scholars of prehistory suggest the tritons are offshoots of the aquatic elemental people known as the undines (see *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, Chapter 3). Regardless, the two groups have some deep enmity: Tritons and undines go to war over the least provocation. The ancient *Book of Trials*—believed to have been written by the elf scholar, Gilganganus—puts forward a different story. The gods made the tritons in their image as their servants, condemning them to a life of toil and hardship. When the tritons revolted against their makers, the heavenly realm tumbled into the sea, carrying with it the gods and their creations. The tritons feared divine retribution, so rather than emerge from the seas to establish settlements on land, they chose to hide themselves in the depths.

DEEP CURRENT

Tritons spread throughout all the world's many oceans and have settlements on the seafloor as small as an outpost and as large as city. Deep Current stands closest to the borderlands and commands a view of a great trench that runs northwest to southeast under the Sea of Fear. Living coral forms into spires that corkscrew toward the surface. Sunken vessels and other debris littering the sand form a haphazard community on the edges. Aside from the ten thousand tritons who live here, one can also find all manner of sea life, from schools of fish, restless sharks, seals, and the occasional whale. Queen Reethra rules over Deep Current and has a reputation for being a serious, dour monarch with no love for surface dwellers. Despite her animosity, she sees no reason to break the peace.

DENIZENS OF THE DEPTHS

Under the waves, tritons truly feel free. They swim with speed and grace, able to keep pace with the fleetest fish in the sea. When needs demand, they can walk out of the waters and live on dry land. Their lungs let them breathe air as easily as water. However, too long in the air dries them out, so most tritons moisten their scaly skin frequently and might even sleep in water—fresh or salt-water—if given the opportunity. For extended forays on the surface, they might don special dry suits to make them more comfortable. A dry suit has a globular helmet made from glass and bronze, and a flexible body covering, hermetically sealed to hold water inside. Tongue mollusks help tritons communicate while wearing a dry suit. These bizarre creatures can "hear" the thoughts of sentient beings they touch and broadcast them aloud. Some training is required to filter one's thoughts so that the mollusk doesn't just chatter endlessly and vocalize embarrassments.

RIVAL SEA FOLK

Tritons have a long history of warring against rival peoples. When not fighting against the air-breathers, they battle for territory against the merrows and undines. The conflict with the undines goes back to the dawn of time; the undines see themselves as masters of the depths and consider the tritons trespassers. As for the merrow (see *Secrets of the Weird Wizard*, Chapter 3), these aquatic faeries have a taste for triton flesh and hunt them mercilessly. Tritons scour the edges of their territory for signs of these foes. If they discover them, they mobilize at once to attack.

TRITON ADVENTURERS

Peace, even a tenuous one, keeps tritons from raiding ships and coastal settlements. The tritons keep to their waters and the people on dry land stay there. What opportunities tritons have to mingle with air-breathers come when ships pass overhead in legal sea lanes or when tritons come out of the sea to trade. Such an event could give you the chance you need to get acquainted with the air-breathers. Maybe you rescued a drowning sailor or made a friend when you brought fish, shells, and treasures from the deep for trade.

FIGHTER: Survival in the depths requires tritons to defend themselves from attacks by the undines, merrows, and other denizens of the deep. You could follow the fighter path after participating in several battles in your people's defense or based on your experience raiding ships and settlements.

MAGE: Since being submerged in water renders speech impossible, tritons have limited magic-using institutions or customs. Individuals with magical talent start by discovering the Psychomancy tradition and might branch out to other traditions if they spend time on the surface.

PRIEST: Of all the gods, Oceanus has the greatest following among the tritons. In fact, tritons native to the depths worship none of the other major gods, though they do include minor deities in their prayers. These lesser gods include Balu, Prince of Coral; Sequees, Lady of Kelp; and Sahu the Shark God.

ROGUE: You could have learned the rogue's underhanded techniques by infiltrating seaside communities and ships to steal their valuables. Or, you might have been a scout charged with patrolling the edges of your territory.

TRITON TRAITS

Additional Descriptor: Amphibious

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5 (Swimmer)

Bonus Languages: Triton

Senses: Keen Vision

Fluid Evasion: When you dodge, you gain the Slippery trait and impose 1 bane on rolls against your Defense and Agility until the end of your next turn.

LEVEL 1 TRITON

Attributes: Strength 11, Agility 12, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common, Triton (from trait)

Combat Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when harmed, to heal half your damage total and impose 1 bane on rolls to attack you until the start of your next turn. You can use this talent once. You regain the use of this talent after you rest.

Triton Weapon Training: You ignore the requirements for using melee weapons. In your hands, the javelin and spear have the Nimble and Piercing traits, while the bident and trident have the Piercing and Thrown 5 traits.

LEVEL 2 TRITON

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1 d6

Blood Rage: You roll to attack injured flesh-and-blood targets with 1 boon. When you get a critical success against an injured target, the target takes an extra 1 d6 damage.

Pinning Attack: You can perform a special attack option when you wield a bident, spear, or trident. If you get a success on a roll to attack, and your roll equals or exceeds the target's Strength + 5, the target becomes held. This effect lasts until the end of your next turn or until you drop your weapon, move to a position where you can no longer reach the target, or attack a different target with the same weapon.

LEVEL 5 TRITON

Natural Defense: +2, **Health:** +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1 d6

Improved Combat Recovery: You can use your Combat Recovery talent twice before resting instead of once.

Tsunami Attack: You can use an action to move up to your Speed, or twice your Speed if you are swimming. At any one point during this movement, you can make a vicious attack against any number of creatures in your reach. For each target, make a roll to attack using a weapon you are wielding. Rather than expend Bonus Damage dice, each successful attack deals your weapon damage plus half your supply of Bonus Damage dice. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.



WARG

A howl splits the air, a mournful cry that's soon joined by others: you would sow terror in your victims. Like the wolves you resemble, you go wherever you please, killing for food and melting away into the shadows when you have gorged on your prey's hot flesh. Unlike wolves, however, you can shed your furred forms to stand upright, appearing just as human as your ancestors who fled persecution in the Old Country. Your human qualities might temper your bestial ways, but many of your kind embrace their wild natures and have become a menace throughout the borderlands.

As a warg, you have two forms. You can change freely from human to wolf without discomfort. Both forms feel natural to you; you can stay in either shape as long as you wish. In your human shape, no unusual features betray your true nature—people see you as a human being. You might look a little grubby or hairy, but you blend in. Your other shape is a bit larger than a standard wolf, with a more muscular frame and an appearance some find sinister. Your fur might be golden brown, gray, black, white, or any other color you like.

COMMON WARG NAMES: Balan, Calden, Ema, Frath, Gesh, Medderek, Needrak, and Sead.



ACCURSED ORIGINS

Long ago, when the followers of the High One gathered in secret to perform their rites and rituals, lycanthropy expanded across the Old Country. This virulent, magical disease spread through saliva, transforming the afflicted into wild animals when the moon shone full. The two-natured would run amok biting and tearing to feed their hunger. Some of their victims survived—as carriers of the disease. The next full moon saw them transform, too, to join the other wild things running through the woods.

The nascent Church of the High One gained attention by taking a stand against the diseased. The Church had the best intentions: stopping the plague would save lives. However, many priests described lycanthropy as a divine curse on those who had been touched by the Adversary. Since anyone could be a lycanthrope, fear spread as people began suspecting their neighbors of harboring the diabolical curse. The Church's solution was to round up the lycanthropes, along with anyone suspected of carrying the disease, and purify them with fire.

Although many diseased and healthy people lost their lives to the purges, many more escaped the Old Country and crossed the Salt Barrens to live out their lives in peace in the borderlands. The survivors learned to control themselves and use their transformation as a gift rather than a curse. Their descendants became the wargs found today in the borderlands and New Lands.

PERSECUTION MANIA

Considering the way their ancestors were hunted, captured, and killed, one can understand the hostility wargs show to those outside their clans. In the centuries they have lived in the borderlands, warg clans have clashed with just about every other people in the region. They fought a bitter war against the centaurs, skirmished with faeries, and fought fomorians. But the most violent conflict—and the one that brought them to the brink of extinction—was their longstanding argument with the Weird Wizard.

The wargs saw the eccentric mage as a tyrant. Rather than submit to his rule, they tried to drive him from the New Lands. The wargs hunted down and killed the monsters he created. They laid traps for and ambushed the clockwork sentinels who patrolled the lands around the Forbidden City. The Weird Wizard, in response, created three new warriors for every one the wargs killed. In the end, the wargs could not stand against the Wizard's forces and fell back to the borderlands, where they have remained ever since.

BELLICOSE CLANS

Most wargs belong to one of the dozen or so clans living in the borderlands. Warg clans generally see the refugees as intruders; they raid their farms, plunder their settlements, and wreak havoc. Some of the most violent clans include Three Moons, Blood Howl, Yellow Fang, Shadow Runners, and the Moon Swallowers. These clans see the settlers as threatening their way of life and want to drive them from the borderlands altogether. The Blood Howl clan, though, has been contaminated by demonic influence; they have been known to eat the people they kill.

Other clans seek peaceful coexistence. The Silver Fangs, in particular, trade with settlers, offering furs and meat in return for steel weapons and armor. So profitable are these interactions that the Silver Fangs have been known to fight other warg clans to protect innocent lives. The Silver Fangs loathe the Blood Howl clan and attack them on sight.

LIFE IN THE WILDERNESS

If you were raised in a town or village, any of the professions available to characters can work for you. Most likely, though, you grew up in the wilderness. There you learned to hunt, forage, find clean water and shelter, identify various plants, and other necessary survival skills.

WARG ADVENTURERS

Since no one can really tell what you are by looking at you in your human form, you can freely enter human communities without arousing any more than the usual amount of suspicion. You might have been dealing with humans for some time, now, and have gained a few friendships as a result. Maybe you were orphaned and raised by humans. Or you might have been taken prisoner and learned in captivity that the people you had been fighting were not the enemies you imagined them to be. Few wargs take up questing if they have strong ties to their clans, so something must have happened to separate you from them and take up with outsiders.

FIGHTER: The ability to adopt a wolf form and your experience fighting in groups prepares you well for the fighter path. You honed your fighting skills through raiding and pillaging, battling the Weird Wizard's minions, and defending your people from deadly monsters.

MAGE: Few wargs can study magic in a formal setting, so what magic they learn tends to be by happenstance or through some innate talent. Life in the wilderness suggests nature magic such as Animism, Primal, and the elemental traditions.

PRIEST: Given their history with the Church of the High One, few wargs would ever choose that faith for their own. Instead, wargs follow the old gods, specifically the Horned Lord and the Wild Woman, though some especially violent clans favor Hate, the goddess of war.

ROGUE: You can also excel by following the rogue path, which lets you use your wits to augment your fighting techniques. As a rogue, you probably benefit most from the Skirmisher technique, but any can serve you well.

WARG TRAITS

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Senses: Keen Scent

Wolf Form: You can use an action to transform yourself and everything you wear and carry into a wolf. When you complete the transformation, you can also make a melee attack. You remain in your wolf form until you become unconscious, or you use an action to end this effect. You use your normal rules, modified as follows.

- Increase your natural Defense by 1.
- Increase your Speed by 1 and gain the Strider trait.
- Gain the Keen Vision trait.
- You can use your teeth as a natural weapon that deals 1d6 damage.
- Your melee attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage to prone, stunned, or unconscious targets.
- You lose the ability to speak.

Pack Tactics: When you attack a target that has already been attacked during the same round, you roll with 1 boon.

LEVEL 1 WARG

Attributes: Strength 12, Agility 11, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 11, **Health:** 14

Languages: Common

Knock Down: When you get a critical success on a roll to attack while under the effects of your Wolf Form trait, a creature that was the target of your attack makes a Strength roll. On a failure, the target falls prone.

Savage Wolf: When you use your Wolf Form trait, your attacks with your teeth deal an extra 1d6 damage, and they count as Piercing.

LEVEL 2 WARG

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Vicious Recovery: You can use an action, or a reaction when harmed, to heal half your damage total. Then, for 1 minute, you roll to attack with 1 boon. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 5 WARG

Health: +4, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Rampage: You can use this talent at the end of the round. You go into a rampage that lasts until the end of the next round. Until the effect ends, you increase your Speed by 3, you roll to attack with 2 boons, and your attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it (luck ends).

MOONLIT SOUL

Raised in the shadow of ancient trees, Kaelan's world was one of primal instincts and shadowed rites. Hunting, training, and the lore of his kin filled his days. Yet, a yearning for something more stirs within him, a hunger for the unknown. Legends of distant lands, filled with magic and mystery, have ignited a spark of rebellion. Torn between the wild heart of a wolf and the curious mind of a man, Kaelan yearns to step into the wider world, seeking purpose and adventure.

WOODWOSE

The days when your people would terrorize the countryside to appease your dark masters have all but faded from memory. Once, you tore your enemies apart, swept them aside, and destroyed everything in your path, for that was the purpose given to you by the trolls who made you. You targeted the faeries—the trolls' enemies—and butchered as many as you could.

Until you realized you could do it no longer. The blood, the death, the carnage: these things had begun to sicken you. You threw down your weapons and fled into the wilderness to dwell in self-imposed exile. Some of your kind sought extinction by restricting yourselves to your hermitages, but others felt moved to make right all the harm you had caused. These kin became nature's protectors, defending the most pristine lands from exploitation and ruin.

You have yet to meet another humanoid who matches your size or stature. Even the largest of them come only to the middle of your chest. You stand between 7 and 9 feet tall and weigh as much as 500 pounds. Your profuse fur in black, red, brown, or gray conceals a thick body with muscles cording your limbs and spreading across your torso. You have a pair of horns that curl out from the sides of your head and end in sharp points. Your broad facial features include small, deep-set eyes, a pug nose, and a wide mouth filled with sharp teeth. You have big hands and bigger feet, with thick nails protecting the tips of each.

COMMON WOODWOSE NAMES: Alobar, Bisten, Coora, Danwyth, Krunk, Odof, Pugh, Tenten, and Uben.

WOODLAND GUARDIANS

People who venture into the forests hoping to find one of the reclusive woodwoses can count themselves lucky to happen upon spoor, let alone concrete evidence that woodwoses even exist. The gigantic, hairy humanoids let themselves be found only when they choose, and the guilt they carry—inherited from their ancestors—burdens them with enough shame to want to avoid encountering anyone. Make no mistake: Woodwoses have nothing to fear from outsiders. They simply want nothing to do with the world that once exploited them.

To keep their distance from outsiders, woodwoses live in caves hidden inside large woodlands. They conceal entrances to their homes with deadwood, leaves, grasses, and stones, and have the skill to make these places seem just part of the natural environment. Never sloppy, they cover their tracks and move in such a way as to break no branches and disturb no stones. They are, effectively, invisible in their home territory.

SPILL NO BLOOD

Even though no woodwose alive today was around when their ancestors fought for the trolls, the spilling of blood makes them nervous, even sick. No woodwose would willingly eat the flesh of animals; they survive by foraging and eating what they grow in their hidden gardens. Rather than kill interlopers, they use their skill at woodcraft or magic to lead them astray. They turn intruders around, so they wander off toward the forest edge, then remove all sign of their passage so it seems as though they had never been

there. Generations of peaceful existence in the forest also enable woodwoses to deal with wild beasts in nonviolent ways. In fact, woodwoses cooperate with wildlife and depend on their relationships with animals to ensure their own survival.

SMALL SOCIETIES

Although some woodwoses live in isolation, most belong to tiny communities with just a few members. These groups can consist of other woodwoses exclusively, but they might include faeries, such as sprites and hobgoblins, and other wilderness-dwelling folk—fauns, wild humans, and others.

FOREST FACES

The only sign woodwoses leave of their presence takes the form of faces shaped in trees. These visages peer out from the trunks to express sorrow, rage, and suspicion—warning trespassers to turn back. Woodwoses use ancient techniques to shape the wood without harming the tree. No blade breaks the bark; the woodwose forms the face with the tree's cooperation.

WILD SELF-RELIANCE

Not in all the years the woodwoses have lived in the world have they ever founded a town or any other kind of community. From the beginning, their troll overseers separated them from one another, preventing bonds from forming. Unless you came of age in some other settlement, perhaps adopted by the people living there, you have had to look after yourself from the time your parent deemed you fit to be on your own. What your parent didn't teach you about surviving in the wild, you had to learn on your own. Now you can forage, identify water that's safe to drink, find shelter, handle ordinary animals, and complete a variety of other tasks suited to your background. If, however, you grew up in a town, you instead gain a profession suited to your place there.

ENDING THE PEACE

If you have lived in isolation and peace, only the most incredible circumstances can dislodge you from this life. A natural disaster such as a forest fire or earthquake could make staying in place impossible. Wicked creatures such as fomorians, mutants, or orcs despoil the lands they inhabit, ruining them for other beings to live. If such a people entered your forest, you might have no choice but to take up arms to protect the land. You could also be moved by some larger threat, some dread happening that will doom the entire borderlands and beyond unless stopped. These and similar reasons can compel you to take up the adventurer's life. But you must come to terms with the hurt you inflict and find a way to justify your actions, even if only to yourself.

WOODWOSE ADVENTURERS

Whether you take up adventure as a way of life by choice or by circumstance, you have many natural advantages over others that make you an invaluable member of your group.

FIGHTER: Size, durability, and might make the fighter path an obvious choice for you. If you follow this path, you have some kind of combat training to prepare you for the challenges ahead. You might have learned basic techniques in the fighting pits of one of the city-states, but insights could come from the experiences you had fighting to protect your homeland.

MAGE: Few woodwoses follow the mage path. Although there's nothing to prevent them from doing so, most woodwoses who use magic derive it from the gods they serve. If you become a mage, you could learn your magic from nature spirits or from some ancient faerie treasure you discovered. Typical traditions include Animism, Primal, and Protection.

PRIEST: Life in the wilderness makes the various nature gods obvious choices for priests. Woodwoses who leave seclusion follow the Horned Lord, who gives them strength in battle. But they also can serve Grandfather Tree, Revel, and the Wild Woman.

ROGUE: An unsuited people, woodwoses rarely find success as rogues. Those who do follow it dabble in magic or have the favor of a god.

WOODWOSE TRAITS

Health: +12

Size: 1, **Speed:** 5

Bonus Languages: Runic

Great Reach: You increase your reach by 1.

Hulking: You make Strength rolls with 1 boon and impose 1 bane on rolls made against your Strength.

Easy Target: You grant 1 boon on rolls against your Defense.

LEVEL 1 WOODWOSE

Attributes: Strength 15, Agility 8, Intellect 10, Will 10

Natural Defense: 8, **Health:** 26 (includes the increase from your Woodwose traits)

Languages: Common, Runic (from trait)

Brutal Strikes: When you attack with a Brutal weapon, you roll with 1 boon.

Woodwose Recovery: You can use an action to heal your entire damage total. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it until after you rest.

LEVEL 2 WOODWOSE

Health: +8,
Bonus Damage: +1d6

Incredible Thews: Your unarmed strikes count as Brutal. When you make an unarmed attack, you roll with 1 boon.

Overpowering Strike: When you get a critical success for a melee attack against a target of your Size + 1 or smaller, the target makes a Strength roll. On a failure, you either knock the target prone or push the target up to 5 yards.

LEVEL 5 WOODWOSE

Health: +8, **Bonus Damage:** +1d6

Improved Brutal Strikes: When you get a critical success with an attack made using a Brutal weapon, the target makes a luck roll. On a failure, the target becomes vulnerable until the end of your next turn.

Wrath of the Woodwose: You can use this talent when you are harmed. For 1 minute, you roll to attack with 1 boon, and your attacks deal an extra 1d6 damage. Once you use this talent, you lose access to it for 1 minute.



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