



UNHOLY CHAMPIONS OF THE DEMON LORD

It probably surprises no one that I have a thing for demons. They have been my go-to monsters for more RPG sessions than I can remember, were key components of my favorite deck when *Magic: The Gathering* had its claws in me, and were the subjects I enjoyed writing about most throughout my career, from Green Ronin Publishing's *Book of Fiends* to all the articles I wrote about the demon princes and lords in the online version of *Dungeon* magazine. So when it came time to devise a product that backers would help create, a mini-bestiary of hideous demons seemed the obvious choice.

The following pages contain unspeakable creations of some of the "unholy champions" who pledged to my Kickstarter campaign. Each came up with the concept for a demon, decided how it came into the world, what it looks like, what it wants, and how it goes about getting it. I had a great time working with these talented and creative people, and their support for the campaign helped make *Shadow of the Demon Lord* possible in a huge way.

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shadow of the demon lord

ARCOLINUS, THE JOYOUS ONE

Design by Cliff Karella

Something is hunting the people of Grievings. In this place, the poorest district in the crowded city of Crossings, the constables have neither the numbers nor the will to track down the source of the troubles or the strength to drag it out into the light. So when darkness spreads across the city, the poor and the downtrodden take shelter, hiding in their homes, staying quiet lest the Joyous One find them and transform them into horrors like itself.

The Joyous One, also called Arcolinus, wears the remains of its first victim. What was once the body of a baker stretches across the demon's short, squat body. Since the demon has made no effort to preserve its "garb," the flesh rots, hanging in dripping shreds from its bulky form, and the clothing is now black with old blood, spotted with mold, and dripping with the demon's foul excretions.



Shedding the costume does little to improve the demon's appearance. It is an ugly thing: a bloated body wobbling on two stubby legs, its spindly arms ending in hands with long, delicate fingers, the nails begrimed with feces and gore.

ARCOLINUS, THE JOYOUS ONE DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1/2 horrifying demon

Perception 11 (+1); **truesight**
Defense 16; **Health** 25
Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 16 (+6)
Speed 8

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining **Insanity**; dazed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned

Demonic Shadows Lit areas out to 1 yard around the demon are shadows.

Spell Defense Arcolinus takes half damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist a spell with 1 boon.

A creature attacking the demon with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 bane.

Buttery Trail Arcolinus, when moving, leaves a trail of slippery butter on the ground that remains for 1 round.

A creature that moves across the buttered surface must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or fall prone.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Goopy Finger (melee) +3 with 2 boons (1d6 plus **Stimulating Touch**)

Stimulating Touch A living creature must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become dazed for 1 round. The creature removes the affliction if it takes any damage.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Awaken Greed Arcolinus can use an action or a triggered action on its turn to awaken greed in one living creature within short range. The demon makes a Will attack roll against the target's Will. On a success, the demon moves the target up to its Speed toward an object the demon chooses, and the target then becomes immobilized for 1 round.

Awaken Remorse Arcolinus can use an action or a triggered action on its turn to awaken feelings of guilt and shame in one living creature within short range. The demon makes a Will attack roll against the target's Intellect. On a success, the target becomes full of remorse for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. While the target is subject to this effect, other creatures make attack rolls against it with 1 boon and the target makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Void Step Arcolinus uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to teleport to a space it can see within medium range. Roll a d6. On a roll of 1, Arcolinus cannot use Void Step again for 1 minute.

END OF THE ROUND

Excrete Tasty Treat Arcolinus excretes a tasty treat (see the sidebar) that appears on a flat surface within 1 yard of it. The treat remains for 24 hours or until eaten. Once the demon uses this talent, it cannot do so again for 1d6 x 10 minutes.

TASTY TREAT

A tasty treat is a fragrant and quivering mass of skin, hair, and teeth. A sickly sweet odor wafts from it. A living creature that can see the treat and moves to within short range of it must make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, the creature gains 1d3 Insanity and must take the next available turn to move to the treat and stuff it into its mouth. On a success, the creature becomes immune to the effect of a tasty treat until after it completes a rest.

A creature that eats the treat experiences intense euphoria and likely shares this knowledge with others. As a result of these sensations, the creature takes half damage from all sources, and it cannot gain Insanity. At the end of each minute after eating the treat, the affected creature must make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane.

On a failure, the creature takes a cumulative -1d6 penalty to Health. If the penalty drops the creature's Health to 0, it stops making the challenge rolls and permanently transforms into a copy of Arcolinus under the GM's control. The creature retains none of its statistics and instead uses Arcolinus's statistics, but is Size 1/4, has Health 10, and cannot use Arcolinus's special attacks.

If the creature gets three successes before transforming, upon the third success it vomits the tasty treat onto the ground. The treat then evaporates with a cloud of pink bubbles that dissipates 1 round later. The creature's penalty to Health, if any, disappears, and the creature is no longer subject to the beneficial effects of having eaten a tasty treat. Finally, the creature becomes immune to the effects of a tasty treat until after it completes a rest.

Arcolinus does not venture far from the spot where it entered the mortal world a few weeks ago. Because it is rather dim, the demon does not yet realize the larger world that lies beyond the alleys and sewers it calls home. For now, it preys on Crossings' least affluent citizens, turning them into hideous copies of itself by twisting their minds to make them want to sample its foul excretions.

Mishap dragged the demon from the Void. An ambitious baker in Crossings hoped to increase his business by enlisting the aid of a magician to enchant his ovens so they would produce the finest pastries the city had ever known. Notoriously stingy, the baker sought out a bargain-priced wizard—one with neither the skill nor training to do the task, but who was armed with an incantation lifted from the Brotherhood of Shadows (see *Tales of the Demon Lord* for details).

The magician took his few silver shillings and then read aloud the incantation, which was inscribed on the scalp of a long-dead woman whose hair had been braided with saliva carefully harvested from a boggart. After moments, it became clear that the spell would not have the desired outcome. Rather than enchant the ovens, it turned one of them into an opening to the Void. The visions witnessed in that yawning darkness shattered the baker's mind and sent the would-be magician fleeing into the night. Before the spell expired and the hole snapped shut, the demon slithered out and promptly ended the baker's life in a spectacularly messy fashion.

THE BLOATED DUCHESS

Design by Matt Lively

The sewers under failing Caecras, once capital of the Empire reduced to a burning ruin by the rebelling orcs, are home to many noisome terrors, strange rats with an abundance of eyes, strange tentacled things, their vile noises echoing through the tunnels, but the most dreadful thing at large in the fould dark is the demon called the Bloated Duchess, the Formless Lady.

The Bloated Duchess is a heaving pile of quivering tissue, a mass of bulges and creases, blotted with eyes and torn with ragged mouths from which issue the whistles of its breathing. It moves by dragging its body across the ground, forming doughy limbs to grab the ground and pull the demon toward its prey.



THE BLOATED DUCHESS

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 1 horrifying demon

Perception 14 (+4); truesight

Defense 15; **Health** 150

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 16 (+6)

Speed 8

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; dazed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned; any effect that would change its shape

Demonic Shadows Lit areas out to 2 yards around the demon are shadows.

Powered by Magic Each time a creature attacks the demon with a spell and gets a success on the attack roll, or the demon gets a failure on its challenge roll to resist the spell, the demon increases its Size by 1. While at Size 2 or larger, the demon is subject to the following effects:

- It has a +10 bonus to Health per point of Size greater than 1.
- It makes attack rolls with 1 boon.
- Its weapon attack deals 1d6 extra damage.
- It loses the Demonic Shadows trait.

Spell Vulnerability The Bloated Duchess takes half again as much damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist spells with 1 bane. A creature attacking the Bloated Duchess with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Pseudopod (melee) +4 with 2 boons (2d6 + 2)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Frenzied Attack The Bloated Duchess attacks two different targets with its pseudopods, making each attack roll with 1 bane.

Corrosive Eruption While the Bloated Duchess is Size 2 or larger, it can reduce its Size by 1 to hurl a stream of corrosive primordial afterbirth in an 8-yard-long cone. Everything in the area takes 6d6 + 25 damage. A creature can make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane and takes just half the damage on a success.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Void Step The Bloated Duchess uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to teleport to a space it can see within medium range. Roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the Bloated Duchess cannot use Void Step again for 1 minute.

The dubious honor of releasing the Bloated Duchess goes to Festrus, a magician prodigy who had earned an apprenticeship at the Tower Arcane when he was only twelve. His natural talent baffled his mentors, but his appetite for greater power was obvious to everyone. Fearing that his ambition would undo him, his teachers delayed his instruction, hoping to teach patience and moderation. Withholding information from him only drove him to seek knowledge elsewhere, from forbidden sources whose discovery by his instructors led to his expulsion.

Cast out into the streets of Caecras, friendless and alone, Festrus created an incantation to gain his revenge. He performed dark magic over a desecrated altar, sacrificing

a unicorn that he had gained at great expense, while speaking foul words to curry the Demon Lord's favor and grant him true power. What resulted from his effort was a grisly wound inflicted on the mortal world, and from it escaped the Bloated Duchess: a great, shuddering blob of flesh, teeth, and hair, a writhing and tumescent mess, spouting eyes on stalks and numerous maws from which ran rivers of bloody drool. The demon killed Festrus and is believed to lurk under Caecras still, periodically emerging to satisfy its horrid appetite with whatever it can catch.

CROMETHIUS, DESIRE IN FLESH

Design by Austin Cabrera

Not all demons evoke revulsion. Cromethius, also known as the Desire in Flesh, causes pulses to quicken, throats to grow dry, and desire to build in anyone who lays eyes upon it. People who succumb to the demon's temptation become its slaves, in body and mind.

Cromethius entered the mortal world in eons past, before mankind came crawling out from the caves, when a twisted faerie, consumed by lust for the Faerie Queen, sought the means to bend her to his will. He performed a foul incantation to release a demon and bound it into a cylinder of smooth porphyry, about 9 inches long and 1 inch in diameter, as a means to control the demon and draw from it the magic he would use to make the Queen his thrall. Before he could put the device to use, an apprentice murdered him and disappeared with the stone.

Since its theft, the stone has resurfaced many times, finding its way into the hands of the debased and wicked. The last person to come into possession of the stone was responsible for the demon's release. A foolish inquisitor discovered the object among the remains of an eradicated cult and, sensing the object was one of great and terrible power, destroyed it rather than keeping it. When he did so, the demon escaped its prison, dominated its rescuer, and savored the soul it devoured after extracting it from the inquisitor's bleeding, sweating body.

The demon has learned much about the mortal world and demonstrates great patience and skill at manipulating mortals. Cromethius has gathered a band of devoted worshipers, cultists who have so completely fallen under the demon's sway that there are no depths to which they would not stoop to please their patron. The demon uses them to prepare the way for the time when the Demon Lord comes to claim the world.

CROMETHIUS

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 1 demon

Perception 18 (+8); truesight

Defense 21; **Health** 60

Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 16 (+6), **Intellect** 16 (+6), **Will** 16 (+6)

Speed 18

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; charmed, dazed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned

Spell Defense Cromethius takes half damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist a spell with 1 boon. A creature attacking Cromethius with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 bane.

Two Faces Cromethius has two forms: alluring and horrific. Cromethius can use an action to switch from one form to the other. It can use actions and triggered actions based on the form it wears. It must switch to its horrific form, without using an action, when damage causes it to become injured. It can switch back to its alluring form using an action as usual.

In its alluring form, each creature that sees it must make a Will challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, the creature gains 1d3 Insanity and becomes charmed instead of frightened from gaining the Insanity. On a success, the creature becomes immune to the demon's alluring form until it completes a rest.

In its horrific form, the demon gains the horrifying trait.

ALLURING FORM

ATTACK OPTIONS

Cat-o'-Nine Tails (melee; reach +1) +6 with 3 boons (1d6 plus the target becomes impaired for 1 round)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Gift of Darkness One charmed creature within medium range that can hear Cromethius must either gain 1 Corruption or make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane and gain 1d3 Insanity on a failure. If the creature chooses the Corruption, it can gain one of the following benefits.

- The demon truthfully answers one question put to it by the target.
- The demon grants the target 1 boon on all attack rolls and challenge rolls for 1 hour.
- The target gains a +10 bonus to Health for 1 hour.
- The target gains one casting of a spell it has learned. The casting remains until expended or until the target completes a rest.

Hear Thoughts Cromethius can use an action to hear the thoughts and feel the emotions of creatures within medium range for as long as it concentrates. While affected by the spell, Cromethius makes Perception challenge rolls with 1 bane due to this psychic noise. Its awareness penetrates barriers—up to 1 yard of wood, 1 foot of rock, or 1 inch of metal. Creatures whose thoughts it hears cannot become hidden from the demon.

When Cromethius concentrate on the spell, it can reach into the mind of one creature within medium range. The demon makes an Intellect attack roll against the target's Will. On a success, it learns the foremost thing on the creature's mind, its chief concern, desire, or prevailing emotional state. Each time you get a success on a roll against the same target, you learn additional information you seek, provided that information is in the target's mind.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Vanish When a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against Cromethius, the demon can use a triggered action to become invisible until the end of the round.

MAGIC

Power 4

Curse *hex* (5), *frighten* (2), *hobble* (2), *vulnerability* (2), *weakness* (2), *swine* (1)

Enchantment *bewitch* (5), *mind bondage* (2), *implant suggestion* (1), *allure* (1)

HORRIFIC FORM

Demonic Shadows Lit areas out to 2 yards around Cromethius become shadows.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Claws (melee) +6 with 3 boons (3d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Frenzied Attack Cromethius attacks two different targets with its claws, making each attack roll with 1 bane.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Void Step Cromethius uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to teleport to a space it can see within medium range. Roll a d6. On a roll of 1, Cromethius cannot use Void Step again for 1 minute.



Cromethius has two forms. Its alluring form, the one it prefers, is that of a slender human, androgynous and usually naked or wearing loose, revealing clothing. Cromethius can appear as either gender or both. Although its face is attractive, inspection reveals that the skin around its eyes seems loose, and a scattering of craters and small tears is evident in the skin. When Cromethius switches to its horrific form, it drops what it is holding as all the skin on the body pulls back together from around it to gather in a tight knot at the base of its spine. This transformation leaves raw muscle and sinew exposed, and the demon's hands become skeletal claws that end in razor-sharp nails.

HINNOM, THE UNSLAKED

Design by Matthew Paluch

The people of the Northern Reach tell of a place where the key to immortality might be found. Many have sought it and come back no closer to finding it than when they left. Others returned changed, as if some new darkness gripped their hearts, as evidenced by the malicious glint in their eyes and the cruelty of their acts.

Hidden in the Shield Mountains lies a blighted valley, and within it lurks the demon named Hinnom, the Unslaked, also called Ambition's Foil and the Darkness in all Mortal Hearts. Hinnom scuttles across the rocks of the valley like a roach, using twisted human arms to move instead of insectoid limbs. Its body is a mass of scars and chitinous plates, fused in awful patterns that resemble the faces of weeping children. Its bloated head, looking much like a plum, swivels on a warty neck. Two bulging, multifaceted eyes flank a long, snuffling proboscis that ends in a sharpened, dripping hook, suitable for puncturing armor or flesh.



HINNOM

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 horrifying demon

Perception 13 (+3); truesight

Defense 13; **Health** 30

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 6 (-4), **Will** 15 (+5)
Speed 12

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; charmed, dazed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned

Spell Defense Hinnom takes half damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist a spell with 1 boon. A creature attacking Hinnom with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 bane.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Proboscis (melee) +4 with 2 boons (1d6 plus Nectar of the Damned)

Nectar of the Damned A living creature with a physical body must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 boon or gain 1 Corruption as Hinnom disgorges its foul essence into the wound it has just created. At the end of each round, the creature must repeat the challenge roll. The creature gains 1 Corruption on a failure, and on a success it becomes immune to Nectar of the Damned until it completes a rest.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Submit and Be Judged On Hinnom's turn or when a creature within medium range of Hinnom attacks it, the demon can use a triggered action to assail the mind of one living creature within short range. Hinnom makes a Will attack roll against the target's Will. On a success, the target falls prone and becomes compelled for a number of rounds equal to 1 + its Corruption score. While the target is compelled, the demon forces the target to use an action on each of its turns to attack itself with a weapon. After the demon uses Submit and Be Judged, roll a d6. On an odd number, Hinnom cannot use it again for 1 minute.

END OF THE ROUND

Corruption's Lure Each creature within medium range of the demon must get a success on a Will challenge roll or move up to half its Speed toward the demon. A creature makes the challenge roll with 1 bane for every 2 points of Corruption it has.

Aura of Penitence All creatures within short range of Hinnom that have 1 Corruption or more must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become dazed and slowed for 1 round as feelings of regret for past deeds and moral failures assail them. Each time a creature gets a success on this roll, the creature makes further challenge rolls to resist this effect with 1 boon. These boons disappear after a creature completes a rest.

In the first days of mankind's ascent to dominance in the mortal world, the devils, already cast into the fiery pit of Hell, looked to the world they had left behind. Mortals were the key to extending the devils' existence, because they could provide a steady supply of corruption for the devils to feed on—without which they would fade from the world. So, the devils searched for a way to turn mortals and their flaws to the devils' own advantage. Among the many efforts to turn them, one stands out. Diabolus, lord of Hell, tricked a mortal sorcerer into calling forth a demon from the Void by leading her to believe that doing so would save her from death. The sorcerer, of course, was the first to succumb to the demon's influence, and her soul resides in Hell still, where it remains trapped in Diabolus's ornate codpiece.

The devils bound the demon with foul magic to a monolith in a valley hidden in the Shield Mountains. The demon can move freely throughout the valley, eating whatever it can catch, but it cannot pass beyond its borders. With the demon so contained, the devils lured mortals to the place, offering immortality, wealth, power, or anything else they desired. What these misled fools discover is not what they desire most, but they find instead their greed and lust reflected on their souls, leaving the stain of wickedness that ensures they will tumble into Hell upon death.

The demon feeds on the mortals that happen upon the valley or are lured there by infernal trickery. The demon does not, however, rush its kills. Hinnom toys with its prey, stretching out the torment by cutting off retreat and letting the victims' growing corruption destroy them from within. If mortal seekers stop coming to the valley, the demon might turn its attention to the devils and destroy them next.

NINE SORROWS

Design by Marc Quinn

Not all demons walk, creep, or crawl. Some lie bound, trapped by magic, prevented from carrying out the destructive purpose to which all demons are born. Even if imprisoned in wood or steel, bound demons can have a dire influence on the world. Their existence might spread confusion, sickness, or even death. One such item, a storied relic from ancient times, is *Nine Sorrows*, a suit of plate armor that provides magnificent power and almost certain destruction to anyone who dares to don it.

The armor represents one of many efforts by Diabolus, the dread master of Hell, to corrupt mortals and claim their souls in death. In this case, he reached out to the Void to draw forth a demon and bind the twisting, screeching thing to cold steel, which he forged—at great pain—into the armor's breastplate, greaves, helmet, and other components.

Forging the steel cost the Dark Lord dearly, leaving him scarred and twisted, his body wracked with pain from the iron dust that settled into his skin. For nine years, nine months, nine days, and nine hours, Diabolus labored, and when he finished, he had created the finest suit of plate armor the world has ever seen.

Nine Sorrows functions as a suit of plate armor, forged from white steel, polished to a mirror finish. The armor's appearance belies the demon that lurks within, a demon keenly aware of its imprisonment and its powerlessness to escape the faerie magic binding it. As exquisite as the armor appears, the uncorrupted feel uncomfortable in its presence, experiencing nausea and vertigo.

The armor fuses to the flesh of its wearer and fills her mind with foul temptations that eventually become too great to withstand. Acting on these impulses stains the soul, causing corruption to grow, and as the wearer's darkness spreads, the armor changes form. At first, the gleam

fades and the steel becomes tarnished. Later, it blackens and reeks of filth. Later still, it transforms into a hideous carapace festooned with bony spurs, obscene whorls, and the inverted names of all the gods who ever were and will ever be.

If the wearer dies, her soul falls through Hell until it stops in Diabolus's private torture chambers, where the Dark Lord can devote his attention to delivering the exquisite pains and pleasures only Hell can afford. The wearer's death causes the armor to revert to its polished form and vanish, to reappear somewhere else in the world before claiming its next victim.

The armor cannot be destroyed using normal means. Some of the untested methods put forward include bathing the armor in its maker's blood, flinging the armor into the maw of the Great Dragon, or grinding the armor to powder under the heel of the Earth Lord, a god the gnomes believe to rest at the center of the world and whose groans and grumbles foretell the future. If the armor were to be destroyed, it would release a **huge demon** that would kill as many creatures as it could until it was destroyed.



GAME EFFECT

Magical Plate *Nine Sorrows* counts as heavy armor with no requirements. The armor grants you Defense 20 and it changes size to fit you comfortably.

Inherent Corruption If you are a living creature, you gain 1 Corruption when you put on the armor. You cannot remove the armor until your Corruption score drops to 0 or you die.

Hell Beckons If you have 9 Corruption or more, you must make a Will challenge roll each time you complete a rest. On a failure, you take a -1d6 penalty to Health. The effects of a failure are cumulative and permanent.

Rewards of Darkness The armor grants you benefits based on your Corruption score. You gain the benefit from your score plus the benefits from all lower scores. Each time you use a benefit, roll a d6. On a 1, you gain 1d3 Insanity. On a 6, you gain 1 Corruption.

NINE SORROWS BENEFITS

Corruption Score	Benefit
1	Whenever you make an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to make the roll with 2 boons.
2	You can use an action to turn lit and shadowy areas into darkness for 1 minute. The affected area has a radius in yards equal to twice your Corruption score. You can see into areas obscured by this darkness as if they were lit.
3	You can use an action to cause a compelled tiny demon to appear in an open space within short range. If your Corruption is 5 or more, a small demon appears instead. If your Corruption is 9 or more, a medium demon appears instead.
4	When a creature within short range makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant the creature 6 boons on its roll. If the target accepts the boons, it gains 1 Corruption.
5	You can do one of the following things on your turn: When you would cast a spell, you can cast the spell one time without expending a casting. Or, you can increase the number of actions you can use on your current turn by one. Once you use this benefit, you cannot use it again until after you complete a rest.
6	Whenever you kill a living creature, you can devour its soul and gain a +10 bonus to Health that lasts until you complete a rest.
7	Whenever you take damage from a creature, you can use a triggered action to deal damage to the triggering creature equal to the damage you took.
8	When you or a member of your group kills a creature with 0 Corruption, you can use a triggered action to allow the triggering creature to either regain all expended castings or heal all damage. If the triggering creature is a creature other than you, it also gains 1 Corruption.
9 or more	You can use an action to choose one creature within short range. The target takes damage equal to its Health. Once you use this benefit, you cannot use it again until after you complete a rest.

YG'ZG'ZOR, THE LIVING WRATH

Design by David Christ

It's said that to name a demon is to invite its attention. In no case is this more true than with the demon known as Yg'zg'zor, the Living Wrath, who appears in a puff of smoke and fire whenever it is called.

Yg'zg'zor has blighted the mortal world for centuries. According to legend, the Living Wrath answered a call put to it by a grieving woman, whose only son had been sacrificed by her husband to appease the Horned King. When she forswore her allegiance to the gods and called to the demon, she offered herself up as a vessel. Yg'zg'zor escaped the Void and entered her body. Under its power, the woman castrated her husband while he slept, painted her face in his blood, and went door to door, killing everyone in her community. Her death, which came from exposure, freed the demon to wander the world and offer vengeance to any mortal who wished it by merely speaking aloud the demon's name.



YG'ZG'ZOR

DIFFICULTY 500

Size 2 horrifying demon

Perception 15 (+5); truesight

Defense 15; **Health** 200

Strength 18 (+8), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 17 (+7)
Speed 18

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; charmed, dazed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned

Spell Defense Yg'zg'zor takes half damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist a spell with 1 boon. A creature attacking Yg'zg'zor with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 bane.

Fire and Shadows The area within 2 yards of the demon is partially obscured.

Mindless Wrath Whenever Yg'zg'zor takes damage, each creature affected by Thirst for Vengeance must get a success on a Will challenge roll or use a triggered action to attack a random creature it can reach. If an affected creature cannot use a triggered action or there is no available target, the creature gains 1 Insanity instead.

Infectious Name One creature the demon chooses that gained Insanity from seeing it learns the demon's name. That creature can cause the demon to appear in an open space of the GM's choosing by speaking the name aloud. Once the name is spoken, the memory of it fades from the mind of the person who spoke it and any other creature that heard it spoken.

Thirst for Vengeance Each creature within short range of Yg'zg'zor cannot use actions to concentrate and makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane. An affected creature, however, deals 1d6 extra damage with weapon attacks.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fiery Claws (melee) +8 with 2 boons (4d6 and Yg'zg'zor can attempt to grab the target; the demon can grab just one creature at a time)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Quick Slash Yg'zg'zor can use a triggered action at any time to make an attack with its fiery claws.

Vengeful Step Yg'zg'zor uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to teleport to a space it can see within medium range. If it can see the target of its Dread Pronouncement and that target is within long range, Yg'zg'zor can instead teleport to an open space within 1 yard of that target. Roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the demon cannot use Vengeful Step again for 1 minute.

END OF THE ROUND

Dread Pronouncement Yg'zg'zor roars the name of the creature it has come to kill. If that creature is within extreme range and can hear it, the creature must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1d6 Insanity. Once Yg'zg'zor uses Dread Pronouncement, it cannot use it again until after the death of the creature it has come to kill.

Incinerating Grasp Each creature grabbed by Yg'zg'zor burns and takes 3d6 damage. A creature incapacitated by the damage dies instantly, and its body and everything it wears and carries turns to ash that is dispersed by a fetid wind.

No matter how fervently people have tried to destroy Yg'zg'zor, the demon has always managed to escape a final death. The secret to the demon's eternal nature lies in its name, which holds the power to bring the demon forth from any distance.

Speaking aloud the demon's name calls Yg'zg'zor to appear somewhere in the speaker's presence. Once it appears, the summoner hears the ticking of a clock thundering in his head, a constant, maddening noise that lasts for 66 seconds or until he names a person for the demon to kill. The summoner realizes that he must speak the name of another creature, any creature, or face the demon's wrath. When the summoner does so, the demon vanishes and its name fades from the caller's memory. Failing to give a name in the allotted time results in the demon attacking the caller and planting its name in the mind of the summoner's closest relative.

The demon wears the form of a faceless muscular human of great size and stature with the names of all the souls it has devoured inscribed in fire on its body. Flames and smoke swirl around it at all times, such that others can catch only glimpses of the monster. When it is sent by its summoner to kill, its smooth, featureless visage contorts into a caricature of the creature that called it, recognizable despite the distortions.

Once the demon has been invoked, it erodes goodwill, patience, and virtue in an area spanning 1 mile around it. People under the demon's influence show obvious tension, bristling and arguing over the smallest disputes. More serious confrontations can spill into violence, with murder common enough.

The demon can attack at any time it chooses, but always waits until the victim named is in the presence of another so that it can infect the bystander with its name, and thus be called forth again. When it appears, it pronounces the doom of the person named and announces who had called it to take the life. The sound of its pronouncement carries for miles, so that everyone learns who is to blame for the demon's appearance.

If Yg'zg'zor is slain, it dissipates into a cloud of foul-smelling smoke and ash, but defeat does not rid the world of it. Any creature that speaks aloud the demon's name after it was slain causes it to reappear. The only certain way to rid the world of the demon is to kill the one who knows the name before that person can utter it again (and before the demon is killed). Of course, the Living Wrath's name lurks in many foul tomes and might be revived by incautious research at any time.