

RAVENLOFT MONSTERS

(Source unknown)

4 monsters for your approval. The first 3 are courtesy of Greg Deckler, while the Hunchback comes from a recent mailing of the Dragon's Hoard. All are (c) their creators.

BREATH STEALER

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Various
FREQUENCY: Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Exceptional
TREASURE: Nil
ALIGNMENT: Neutral (Chaotic Evil)

NO. APPEARING: One
ARMOR CLASS: 6
MOVEMENT: 7
HIT DICE: 1-5 HP
THAC0: 20
NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-2/1-2/1-3
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Rear claw rake 1-2/1-2, See Below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See Below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil, 40% at night
SIZE: S
MORALE: Average
XP VALUE: <not in the original document>

This feral beast looks and acts like a normal cat during daylight hours. Although usually black with perhaps a touch of white on their chest, they can be of any size, color, or breed.

COMBAT

During daylight hours, the breath stealer cannot be differentiated from a normal cat. No means of magic detection will reveal anything other than the fact that the beast is a normal, domesticated cat. During this time, the beast fights exactly as an ordinary cat. It is during darkness, that the breath stealer's true powers manifest themselves. During the night, starting at sunset and ending at sunrise, magic that detects alignment will reveal a chaotic evil aura about the beast. The breath stealer becomes incredibly hard to hit for it gains a parry against every attack that would have hit the beast. There is no limit to the number of parries, but it cannot attack if it parries more than three times in a single round. Despite its agility in combat, its most feared attack is late at night when everyone is asleep. The breath stealer will silently place its face within inches of a sleeping person's face and draw the very life breath from their bodies. The body is left dead and soulless, the breath stealer having devoured the very essence of the victim's soul. Within three days the breath stealer will have completely digested the soul and the person will be unresurrectable. If the body is resurrected before that time, subtract one third of the victim's levels for every full day that passes. The victim will always lose at least one level. If no one wakes the sleeper, his only chance lies in waking up. The victim will begin to suffocate and this sometimes wakes the victim up in time.

The breath stealer requires 5 rounds to draw forth a victim's soul. There is a 5% cumulative chance per round of waking. Because elves do not have souls, a breath stealer cannot kill an elf in this way.

HABITAT/SOCIETY

The breath stealer leads a strange and mostly solitary life. It will join up with a household or adventuring party for a time, often acting like a normal cat in all capacities for months. Eventually, it will attack someone during the night, attempting to devour their soul. Some say that the breath stealer is an assassin of the evil gods, others that the beast is sent to punish the unfaithful. Whatever the case, the breath stealer does not seem to be biased by the alignment, race; excepting elves, or gender of its victim's. Many have conducted themselves in such a way as if punishing some specific person, yet others seem to select a victims at random.

ECOLOGY

The breath stealer performs the usual role of a cat. It will eat and drink like a normal cat and so on. The peculiar aspect of this beast makes it a bane to cat lovers everywhere.

COLD ONE

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Artic
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Nil
INTELLIGENCE: Nil
TREASURE: Incidental
ALIGNMENT: Nuetral

NO. APPEARING: One
ARMOR CLASS: 5
MOVEMENT: 8
HIT DICE: 5
THACO: 14
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Paralysis, Frostbite
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to cold attacks
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
SIZE: M (6' tall)
MORALE: Fearless
XP VALUE: <not in the original document>

The cold one is a human, demi-human, or humanoid that has frozen to death in the arctic wastes and been left unburied. A cold one looks like a zombie bundled in furs, blankets and heavy clothing. Its face and hands are ice blue, its eyes black, hollow, and sightless and it is covered with snow. Found only in the arctic and on mountain peaks where there is a perpetual layer of snow, the cold one is a naturally occuring undead if there is such a thing.

COMBAT

Cold ones are usually encountered when they are seemingly dead, frozen to death on the arctic wastes. They appear in the same position that they died. However, if fire is within within a quarter mile of a dormant cold one, it will rise up and unerringly seek out its source, its last wish in life being to keep warm.

The cold one will head directly to the fire, only attacking those near the flames, jealously wanting all the warmth for itself, and those who attempt to block its path. Its touch does 1d6 points of frost damage and will paralyze the appendage touched, no save. The victim must save vs. magical cold also or immediately suffer the effects of frostbite on the effected area. The frostbite will cause one point of damage per round until treated.

Cold ones, because of their incredible will and instinct to get warm and their singular, overpowering objective to reach the flames, cannot be turned by a cleric. Because they are undead, they are immune to fear and mind affecting magic as well as being immune to cold attacks.

If the cold one succeeds in entering the flames, it will raise up its arms and cry out a mournful wail of triumph, the flames rising up into a bonfire around the cold one. A round after entering the flames, the flames will give one last great flare and explode. The explosion causes 6d6 points of damage to all within 30 feet, save for half, and will put out the fire completely. There will be no trace of the cold one, for it is consumed in the explosion.

HABITAT/SOCIETY

Cold ones are only found in perpetual frozen territory. A cold one thawed out by the sun loses its undead status and becomes dead forever. Although almost always solitary, entire adventuring parties and the like have been known to freeze to death and all become cold ones. Also, very unlucky people have been known to build their fires within the range of several different cold ones. Why exactly cold ones occur is a mystery. Only about one third of those who die in the cold become cold ones. Some say it is the work of an evil deity of winter while others proclaim that cold ones are the result of a strong will to survive that lingers even after death.

ECOLOGY

Cold ones are undead and have no place in the world of the living. Scavengers avoid even dormant cold ones, sensing the unnaturalness of the beings.

CORNSTALKER

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Temperate cultivated lands
FREQUENCY: Very rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Night
DIET: Corn
INTELLIGENCE: Average (8-10)
TREASURE: Nil
ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 8 or 0
MOVEMENT: 12 or 8
HIT DICE: 4 (plus 8-15, see below)
THACO: 17
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-8, 2-8, or 2-16, 2-16
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 70% or nil
SIZE: S (3' tall) or L (7'-8' tall)
MORALE: Elite (13) or Champion (15)
XP VALUE: 2,000

The cornstalker is a short, lithe humanoid from an unknown outer plane. The cornstalker's body is completely void of any natural skin, but the uniform matt black of its muscles and bones gives it the appearance of an outer body covering. The cornstalker's wiry arms end in two sickle-like claws that are actually bony extensions of its ulna and radia and an opposable thumb similar in appearance to the claws only smaller. Its spindly legs each end in a foot consisting of two large round toes in front and a small talon behind. The cornstalker's head is sunk down between its shoulders. Two bony ridges protect its tiny, sunken eyes, and a similar ridge surrounds the cornstalker's mouth. Dozens of minute inward-pointing teeth situated inside are used to strip an entire corncob in one efficient motion.

Inhabitants of the prime-material plane rarely, if ever, see this form of the cornstalker; instead, they know the cornstalker as a horrible "shambling mound" of cornstalks. The actual cornstalker is folded up in a fetal position within a thick hide of cornstalks which closely resembles a shambling mound.

Cornstalkers are not violent if approached carefully; however, they have never been known to converse with anyone except some witches and even then it is in some strange, undecipherable tongue.

COMBAT

Immediately after the cornstalker arrives on the prime-material plane, it chooses a cornfield and sets about feeding and magically constructing a protective covering of cornstalks. (Use the alternate statistics when in this form.) This hide is formed of cornstalks magically bonded together and the this covering responds to the commands of the cornstalker. Initially, this protective hid has 8 Hit Dice. One Hit Die is added for each week the cornstalker spends feeding in the cornfield. (A cornstalker will rarely spend two months or more in a cornfield.) While so protected, the cornstalker is 90% undetectable by visual means (including infra-vision) as long as it remains in a cornfield. In addition, the cornstalker can collapse its hide at will, becoming completely undetectable by normal means even if trod underfoot.

Although normally passive, the cornstalker is far from defenseless, and if forced into combat, the cornstalker will attack with two arm-like appendages formed out of the cornstalker's protective covering. Blunt weapons will not harm the hide and edged weapons do the hide only one-half damage. Fire does double damage to the hide as well as igniting it. Of course, the fire may also ignite the entire cornfield.

The cornstalker itself cannot be harmed by weapons and most magic while within its protective hide. It can be attacked directly once its artificial skin is destroyed. When the hide has taken sufficient damage, the remaining layers will collapse to the ground with the cornstalker still hidden inside. The cornstalker is 25% likely to plane-travel back home at this point. Otherwise, it will erupt from the heap 2-5 rounds later, fight its tormentors until seriously wounded, and then plane-travel home. Outside its protective hide of cornstalks, the cornstalker is still a formidable opponent. It is immune to fire and electricity, takes half or no damage from cold and has 70% magic resistance. Additionally, it can only be harmed by magical weapons. None of the defenses just mentioned are transferred to the hide, and the hide should be treated as a separate monster when determining hit points and overall combat effectiveness. Only when the hide is destroyed do the statistics and defenses of the actual cornstalker become relevant.

Plant control and similar spells have no effect on the cornstalker or its hide. A successful dispel magic cast against the hide of the cornstalker (treat against 15th level magic) will disrobe the cornstalker, collapsing the magically bonded corn. Anti-magic and anti-plant shell have also proved effective in acquiring a similar effect.

HABITAT/SOCIETY

Nothing is known about the cornstalker's home plane or its life there. Cornstalkers always appear as solitary creatures when on the prime-material plane. When they do appear on this plane, it is always to feed on the ripe corn of autumn. The first hint that a cornstalker is present is usually an eerie glow of blue-white hue and a

brief flurry of whirling cornstalks originating from the middle of the cornfield. This is the cornstalker forming its protective hide of cornstalks.

Peasants have given the cornstalker an undeserved reputation as an evil and malignant creature. Too often, the oppressed farmer sets off to track down the perpetrator destroying his crop, only to be slain by the cornstalker after the farmer attacks it. Other times, the resting cornstalker awakens to find its potential meal being destroyed by harvesting farmers and becomes quite angry. (Yes, it works both ways.) In its attempt to simply stop the destruction of its food, the cornstalker inadvertently discovers the frailty of the human body.

Quite a legend has grown up (bad pun intended) around the cornstalker. Farmers and sages alike are left to ponder the aftermath of a cornstalker's visit. The usual explanation is that some evil spirit invaded the cornfield in order to create chaos and mischief, although the exact legend will vary from culture to culture or even community to community. Some sages speculate that cornstalkers are the creations of a powerful Ravenloft lord and were once used to beleaguer "his" citizens. These same sages further contend that one or two cornstalkers escaped that realm and now roam the outer planes. Although there is little direct evidence to corroborate this theory, witches, who garner their powers from outer planer creatures, seem to have a strange kinship with cornstalkers. The exact nature of this relationship is unknown -- witches and warlocks are secretive about most things and this is no exception.

ECOLOGY

Cornstalkers are not of this world and have no natural place in it. They are a bane to corn-farmers but normally do not interact with and avoid beings of the prime-material. The cornstalker will strip about 10-15 cornstalks a day from normal feeding.

When a cornstalker departs the prime-material, it leaves behind its protective hide of corn; the magical bonds keeping the cornstalks intact for about a week before it looses its magic and the cornstalks break apart and decompose. These magically bonded "carcasses" are of great value to alchemists and researching mages if they are brought to them fresh and undamaged. Such a "carcass" will bring anywhere from 2,000- 4,000 g.p.

The cornstalker has no known natural enemies -- except the occasional irate farmer.

HUNCHBACK

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any/Urban
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Omniverous
INTELLIGENCE: Low - Avg
TREASURE: K
ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 10
MOVEMENT: 9
HIT DICE: 2
THACO: 20
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-4 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Gaze, Curse
SPECIAL DEFENSES: None
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil

SIZE: M
MORALE: Unsteady
XP VALUE: 80

Horribly deformed, these creatures are sometimes caused by a pregnant woman suffering a terrible shock. Any pregnant woman who fails a horror check while has a 5% chance of giving birth to a hunchback. The creature is terribly deformed, with one eye almost useless, slacking features, long spindly arms and a curved back that gives them their distinctive "hunched" appearance.

Usually abandoned at birth, and widely feared by the community, they are often raised by churches, or other kindly individuals or institutions.

Apart from those listed above, they have one other physical deformity: they are stone deaf. This causes them to be at +2 on surprise rolls, and suffer double the normal penalties if blinded in some manner (-8 to hit etc). However, they are quite agile despite their appearance, with a Climb Walls ability similar to that of a thief of 95%, and can also employ the abilities of the Jumping, Tumbling and Tightrope Walking non-weapon proficiencies as a 10th level character with a DEX of 17.

Hunchbacks usually avoid contacts with others, living hermit lives in towers, cellars, dungeons etc. However, they seem to be strangely attracted to the Vistani, and will risk their own lives to protect one of the gypsies in danger. Similarly, the Vistani do not show the same fear and distrust that the rest of the population seem to show towards hunchbacks, and are not repulsed by their looks. A hunchback will never curse a Vistani.

COMBAT

Hunchbacks fight clumsily, but with great strength. They occasionally employ crude clubs, or other weapons that they may have found or been given.

Once a round, hunchbacks may gaze upon one opponent within 10 feet. If that opponent meets the gaze of the hunchback, s/he must Save vs. Spells or be so struck by the sadness and loneliness in the hunchback's eyes that they are struck with fear (as the spell) and flee. Evil characters Save at +4.

Anyone who behaves particularly cruelly to a hunchback or to anyone who the hunchback cares for (a protected Vistani for example) may be subject to a curse from the creature. These curses are usually of "Troublesome" strength (see the section on Curses in the RAVENLOFT Box Set booklet). This cursing power is also conveyed by the creature's gaze, and is similar to the Evil Eye power of a Vistani elder.

HABITAT/SOCIETY

Because of their nature, hunchbacks are usually solitary creatures, spending their lives apart from the general populous who fear them because of their looks and their possession of the Evil Eye. They usually seek to avoid contact with others, fleeing and hiding from those who invade their normal habitat, but fighting fiercely if cornered or if something that they value is threatened. It is difficult to gain the confidence of a hunchback, but once this has been achieved, they will defend and assist their friends to the best of their abilities, even at the expense of their own life.

ECOLOGY

Because they live apart from others, and scavenge what they can, these creatures make little impact on the Ecosystem. A bone from the foot of a hunchback can be used as an alternative material component for the "jump" spell.