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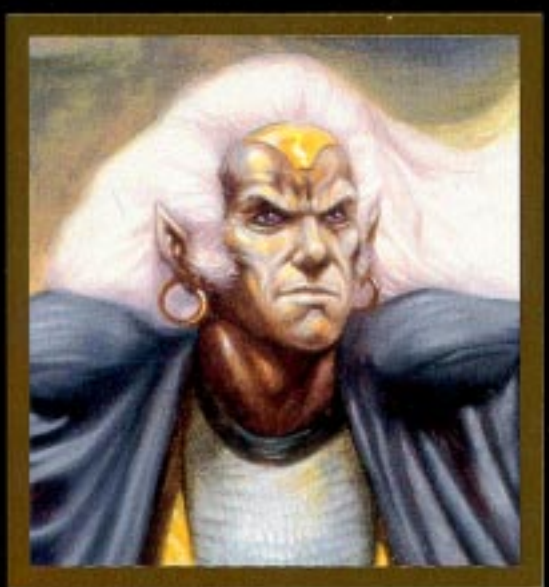
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FORGOTTEN REALMS®

Official Game Accessory

THE DROW OF THE UNDERDARK

By Ed Greenwood



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons 2nd Edition

FORGOTTEN REALMS

Official Game Accessory

THE DROW OF THE UNDERDARK

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Dedication

To Gary Gygax, for our first dark look at the drow.

To Roger Moore, for glimpses of drow, dwarves, and a campaign of warfare between them.

To Eric Oppen, for the dark elven point of view.

To C.E. Misso, for a look at the unfortunate driders.

To Ann Dupuis and to Erol Otus, for a little magic.

To James Jacobs, for two names and more fun.

To Jim Lowder, for finding drow in the Realms.

To Karen Boomgarden: Eilistraee is for you, with love and respect.

Most of all, to Bob Salvatore, for bringing the drow to life in the Realms — and spinning tales of the Realms to warm many a fireside, down the passing years!

Greater indeed are pleasures that are shared.
— Drizzt Do'Urden, *Exile*

Introduction: Drow in the Realms



Drow. The Dark Elves. Those Who Have Turned to Evil. In elven tongues, they are referred to by several names: "tirl aukhbhet-ess," "tuer lothnil," and "duiss aszbhar." All of these translate to "The Accursed." The elegant, dark and deadly drow are a hated and feared race.

In the dangerous caverns of the Underdark dwell many horrible monsters, including the drow. Obsidian-skinned kin to elves, this fell race has won mastery of magic—and a cruel reputation. Small children of Faerun hear whispered tales even before they are officially warned of Those Below.

As everyone knows, drow come by night, sporadically raiding the surface realms with their twisted magic and their near-invulnerability to the magic art of most wizards. They are masters of subtle treachery, and cannot be trusted even by their fellows.

"Were they not divided into warring factions, they'd no doubt have overcome a realm or two before this—and mayhap (quietly, now; they've spies everywhere) even *have already,* on the sly, here on the very sunlit surface of Faerun! Eh—smile not! Have ye not heard of strange magic and doings, and this an' that going short, that never ran out before? Well—'tis going *below,* mark ye—to *them.*"

So much I heard from a dozen hire-swords and caravan-guards in the taverns of Waterdeep when I asked about drow (a subject best avoided, they gave me to know). Armed with the ever-accurate lore of the average sword in the street, I used a secret gate I knew, and in a single step was flung from the City of Splendors. Half a world away I flew, to the old green trees of Shadowdale; between two old and gnarled forest giants, actually, just across the high road from the unheralded flagstone path that leads to Elminster's Tower.

What did The Old Sage, among the greatest (and almost certainly the most widely-experienced) living mages of Faerun, know of drow? I quickened my steps as I framed the question half a dozen ways, thinking on how best to approach His Crustiness.

Hearing a familiar chuckle from off to the left, I took the side-path that led down to Elminster's Pool. Perhaps he was doing dishes or laundry (or rather, sitting and talking, smoking his infernal pipe, while Lhaeo did the actual work), or maybe he was —I stopped dead.

Elminster was sitting, yes, smoking, definitely—but he was also chuckling at the low, murmured words of a visitor. Words that ceased abruptly at my arrival, changing to silent hand-movements, head-shifts, arched brows, and a complex shifting of expressions.

Elminster laid a level gaze upon me, nodded in a "wait-and-bide-quiet" manner, and turned his attention to his guest. His hands, shoulders, and what could be seen of his face above the beard also moved, in a silent, high-speed gesture-talk that seemed concerned with the safety of my presence, and what I might reveal. I forgot to wait and bide quiet in the approved inscrutable manner; I was too busy staring.

Before me, shoulder-deep in the pool, was a very beautiful elven woman. Her head and shoulders were framed by a cascade of fine, snow-white hair, which pooled in the water around her in an impressive nimbus. Ruby-red eyes, set in a delicately-featured obsidian face, darted from Elminster to me like licking flames in the gathering twilight.

The drow lady—I could only call her a



lady— held a swirled-crystal wineglass clear of the water. Green, spiced drow wine sparkled within its depths. A similar draught occupied a matching glass on a rock beside The Old Mage.

Elminster smiled, and turned to me. "Well met," he said. "May I present —no closer, please; she's rather apprehensive, and for reasons of modesty won't come out of the water just now—my onetime apprentice, Susprina Arkhenneld."

He held my eyes almost challengingly. I remembered that one knelt on one knee to ladies of esteem (even when they're bathing in a pond), and did so. Elminster smiled. "Aye, she's drow. Mystra minded not. Have ye become so expert in the ways of Faerun that ye must stand as dumbfounded as a local? Ye came to ask me something?"

I took a deep breath, and tried a smile on the angry-looking Susprina. This wasn't going to be easy. . . .

It definitely wasn't easy, but you now hold the end result: a sourcebook exploring the fascinating, often deadly culture of the drow in (or rather, under) Faerun. Elminster helped, as did Susprina, but they both warn that much here is incomplete: adventurers may well learn more at their peril. Moreover, in the other worlds where they are found, drow may vary in customs and details from the information given herein. As The Old Mage says (all too often, it seems): Ye Have Been Warned.

CHAPTER 1

The Nature of Dark Elves

The drow, or dark elves, are a fearsome and mysterious race to most surface dwellers in the Realms. Their essential characteristics, statistics, and game-related details are given in Volume 2 of the *Monstrous Compendium,* under the heading "Elf, Drow."

This chapter augments the information given there, as the essential first step toward the goal of this work: bringing the drow of the Realms to life, for easy DM reference and ready use in play.

Drow Build

Drow vary in shape, features, and hair color as greatly as humans do. The only exception to this rule is their uniformly jet-black skin (the few exceptions tend to be bone-white albinos).

The majority of drow have snow-white hair from birth, yellowing (if female) or graying (if male) and thinning with great age. Rare drow have naturally silver or copper-hued hair, although there are those who deliberately dye their hair silver (see the chapter on Drow Religion, under "Eilistraee").

Most drow have red eyes. Others have green, brown, or black. Various shades of gray, even amber and rose-hued eyes are not unknown. All drow eyes tend to grow redder when they are angry or upset. Yellow eyes usually denote illness, disease, poisoning, or the presence of certain detrimental magics.

Blue and purple (and all the tints thereof) are the most unusual eye colors, and usually denote human or surface-elven blood somewhere in the drow's ancestry.

Drow teeth may be black, white, or purple, and their gums, tongues, and throats pink, red, or purple.

Drow females tend to be bigger and stronger than males. Both sexes tend to be lithe, slim, and graceful in build, features, and movements, much as other elves appear to human eyes.

Drow Intelligence

Drow are also very alert and inquisitive, simply as survival traits in their twisted society. This mental readiness gives them an intellectual advantage over most creatures. When creating drow characters, DMs may elect to add +1 to Intelligence score rolls, and +1 or +2 to Dexterity scores, to a maximum of 18. Note that while drow Intelligence is augmented, drow Wisdom is not— the all-pervasive teachings of Lolth, and the limited exposure to other societies, beings, and surroundings, are not conducive to a wide and reasoned experience of the world.

Drow are rarely surprised. DMs should add the "expecting attack" +2 modifier to all drow surprise rolls. This is because drow *always* expect attack, whether in the "wild" Underdark or surface world, in their own cities (where rival drow may strike with a dagger, dart, or spell at any time), or even at home (where rival family members may seize an unguarded moment to "prune the family tree").

To reflect the true deadliness of drow in combat, DMs are urged to have them use shrewd strategies, be alert and responsive to PC foes preparing spells and other dangers to come, and so on. Typical drow tactics include arranging ambushes where known dangers can be used, such as loose rocks that can be knocked down atop intruders. Anti-personnel traps, such as strategically-placed phycomids, and glass bulbs filled with ascomoid spores, are also not uncommon in the



Underdark. Drow who fall in combat are customarily animated as zombies (so long as their lower limbs are usable) by drow clerics, not left for others to plunder. Such zombies are often commanded to carry less-mobile dead and wounded, and are also useful as "shock troops."

Drow Senses

Drow eyes can see heat patterns in air and rock thanks to their 120' range infravision. Against a dim gray "cold" stone backdrop, progressively warmer hues show as subtle blue, purple, red, and warm yellow. The warmth comes from hot springs, magma, seeping water, and fissure-breezes.

Drow learn to use the "shadows" of these varying hues for concealment when stalking, in much the same way as a surface creature uses the shadows produced by the sun, moon, and other light sources. Like surface dwellers, drow must learn to "read" heat-hues; the meanings of various shades and patterns become known to drow only through teaching or experience "in the field."

Near areas of drow habitation in the Underdark, the varying heat-hues of the natural Underdark are blurred by the higher ambient heat of many gathered, living beings and their activities. Drow cities also sport magical glows, a few actual lights (notably the sharp, foreign-to-most-drow radiances of the candles of studying wizards and important rituals to Lolth), and the far more common *continual faerie fire* glows that highlight drow sculpture.

Drow are proud of the beauty of their designs, and usually outline the most impressive works with this spell.

Drow hearing is highly developed. In the Underdark, one learns to find water by timing the echoes of dripping or running water, and to detect coming rock shifts or collapses by listening for the natural grating and groaning sounds of unshaped rock.

Drow have long, slender, sensitive fingers, and a highly-developed tactile sense. In addition to their silent language of gestures, stances, and expressions, they are able to read subtle, braille-like "secret signs" left on rock walls, message stones, and other places by fellow drow.

The drow sense of smell, however, is not so acute. The all-pervasive smell of the rock and damp air all around, tainted by ever-present mold and fungus spores and the scent of drow and slave bodies, is a strong background. Most drow have been exposed to strong incense and offering-burnings since infancy, which further serves to dull the olfactory sense. Drow still enjoy perfume, incense, and the like, but their smell is only about as acute as that of most humans— far less than that of many native inhabitants of the Underdark.

Personal Magic

All civilized drow receive training in wizardly magic (discussed in the next chapter), both to test their aptitude for casting spells and to train them in the mental concentration necessary for control of their natural spell-like abilities. (DM NOTE: SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES FADE WITH TIME ON THE SURFACE WORLD. BY THE TIME A PC IS OF ADVENTURING AGE, THEY WILL HAVE FADED AWAY.)

These innate "base powers," so-called because all drow are born with them, and with practice can learn to use them without formal tutelage, are the abilities



to evoke *dancing lights, faerie fire,* and *darkness.* These powers vary slightly from place to place according to lineage, natural differences between individuals, differences in the prolonged favor of drow deities, and variations in the local intensity of the natural radiation of the Underdark. Drow control over them varies with mental state, sickness, age and training, and other conditions. A dying drow may knowingly pour his or her lifeforce into the exercise of these powers, doubling or even trebling their area of effect, duration, and/or damage, if the DM desires. DM NOTE: CONCENTRATION IS NOT NECESSARY FOR DROW TO CONTROL BASE POWER EFFECTS.

In general terms, these powers may all be used only once every 24 hours (144 turns). For example, a drow who *levitates* may not re-awaken that natural power until 144 full turns have elapsed from the instant *levitation* ceased. Any natural spell-like power can be used continuously for 1 round per level of the drow, plus a round. It can be ended prematurely by certain hostile magical effects (such as *dispel magic),* by the will of the drow employing them, or by the undertaking of spellcasting or the use of another base power by the same drow (drow must concentrate to maintain their spell-like powers, and can only use one at a time).

The base powers create effects independent of a drow's person; once unleashed, they can be moved about by the creating drow (at a base MV of 16) by effort of will.

Except as noted in this chapter, all of these effects function as the spells of the same names, detailed in the *Player's Handbook.* The areas of effect of the last two spells increase by 10 square feet, or in a globe, 2' of additional radius (DM's choice of which, according to the situation) per level of the creating drow, above (not including) 4th level. The number of light sources created by the *dancing lights* effect also increases by one for every two levels of the creator beyond 4th: that is, one additional at 6th, another at 8th, and so on. Range and control also increase by 10'/level beyond 4th. A creating drow who has received even rudimentary training can always create an effect of lesser size, range, and efficacy than the maximum possible (e.g. a 5'-radius sphere of *darkness* around a foe's head, rather than a 20'-radius sphere cloaking the foe and four companions).

The *darkness* cast by the natural power of drow is globe-shaped. Its "base" size (the maximum usable by drow of 4th level or less) is a sphere of 20' radius. Like the *darkness* created by a priests' spell, it is impervious to both infravision and normal sight. *True seeing* and the vision of certain creatures (such as extra-planar beings and inherently magical or created creatures such as gargoyles, golems, and homunculi) can penetrate drow darkness. Certain magical devices are also effective against it: for example, a *gem of seeing* sees through it, noting its presence only as a dark tint over a distinct area, and the "pale light" property of a *gem of brightness* dispels it. (Use these references as a guide in judging the results of drow-darkness contacts with other magic.)

Drow of above fourth level gain "mature powers" of *levitate, know alignment,* and *detect magic.*

Drow priests and priestesses also gain additional spell-like powers (in addition to their spells) through divine favor. These include *clairvoyance, detect lie, suggestion,* and *dispel magic.* At the



DM's option, these can extend to such abilities as *detect undead, ESP* (other drow only, 20' maximum range), and *invisibility to undead.* (DM NOTE: It is suggested that a clerical drow have a 20% chance of improving an existing power, and a 10% chance of gaining a new power, for each new level attained; augment these chances to simulate deities rewarding truly exceptional service.)

Drow of noble blood or name typically gain the ability to use all of their base and mature powers more than once a day. An additional daily use is granted at the end of each decade of life; senior noble drow have practically unlimited use of their powers.

All drow with intelligence scores of 16 or higher, and of 6th or greater level, can wield a natural spell-like power and a spell simultaneously (e.g. casting a spell while *levitating),* or employ a maximum of two natural spell-like powers simultaneously (e.g. *levitating* while launching *darkness* to enshroud the head of an opponent).

The presence of strong light hampers drow concentration. Common and untrained drow typically lose the ability to cast any spells or use any base powers (though they can maintain already-active ones) in any light equal to or greater than normal sunlight.

Noble drow must make a saving throw versus spell to launch any spell or spell-like power (already-active ones are automatically retained), and all drow are reduced to the use of one spell or spell-like power at a time; no combinations are possible. The creation of light in any meeting with drow typically brings instant drow attack, and the launching of *hand of darkness* spells against the light source.

Drow also possess an incredibly high natural magic resistance. Newborn babies and infants have weak, fluctuating magic resistances (continuously varying from 02-40%; roll 2d20 to determine the resistance on a given round). To protect endangered young, drow alchemists devised a *potion of magic resistance,* whose use in battle has spread among the race. (It is detailed in the chapter on Drow Magical Items.) This resistance grows and stabilizes as drow mature. A drow youth has 40% magic resistance, and by adolescence, it has reached a stable 50%. Magic resistance increases from this 50% base by 2% for every level of advancement gained by a drow individual, above 1st. (Multi-classed drow gain this bonus only from the class in which they have the highest level, not from both classes.) All drow receive a +2 bonus to all magical attack saving throws—that is, both against spells that overcome their natural resistance, and against the effects of magical items wielded against them.

Dark Elven Wizards

The most dangerous of drow, and those most likely to be encountered alone outside of their Underdark communities (as opposed to fighting bands) are wizards. Drow wizards, especially males, are often driven into exile out of fear at the treatment they expect from those of rival Houses, jealous priestesses, and the angered authority of Lolth.

Dark elven wizards often become or accompany merchants, dealing with the surface world where their magic serves to protect and disguise them. Their endless need for more magical knowledge and spell components drives them into lots of adventuring, or the frequent hiring of



professional explorers.

Drow wizards can become quite powerful (see the section which follows). Elsewhere in this sourcebook, the spells and magical items they can craft and/or use are detailed.

Some unusual familiars can appear in the company of these folk. Drow wizards favor watchspiders and hunting spiders (both detailed under "Spider, Subterranean" in this sourcebook) as familiars, but more often must employ snakes, spitting crawlers, pedipalpi, solifugids, and all manner of spiders, instead. The really fortunate ones acquire the companionship of an azmyth. (All of the aforementioned creatures are detailed in the "Monsters" section of this book.)

Level Advancement and Exceptional Drow

Drow without exceptional prime requisites (not counting PCs, and noble NPCs) cannot advance beyond certain limits in their experience levels.

Drow are considered as elves, as far as level restrictions under Table 7 on page 15 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

The limits as priests and wizards, however, do not apply: drow are limited in advancement as priests only by the will of their gods (who typically end such advancement by destruction or elevation to demigod servant-status around 22nd level), and as wizards only by the availability of new spells to learn, tutors, and magical items or components to study and experiment with. Simply put, DROW WIZARDS HAVE NO LEVEL RESTRICTIONS. Those who have a taste for adventure are effectively unlimited in level advancement; those who are "stay-at-home-studiers" are typically slowed in advancement to a halt between 17th to 19th level due to simple lack of experiences and materials.

Driders — Misfit Drow

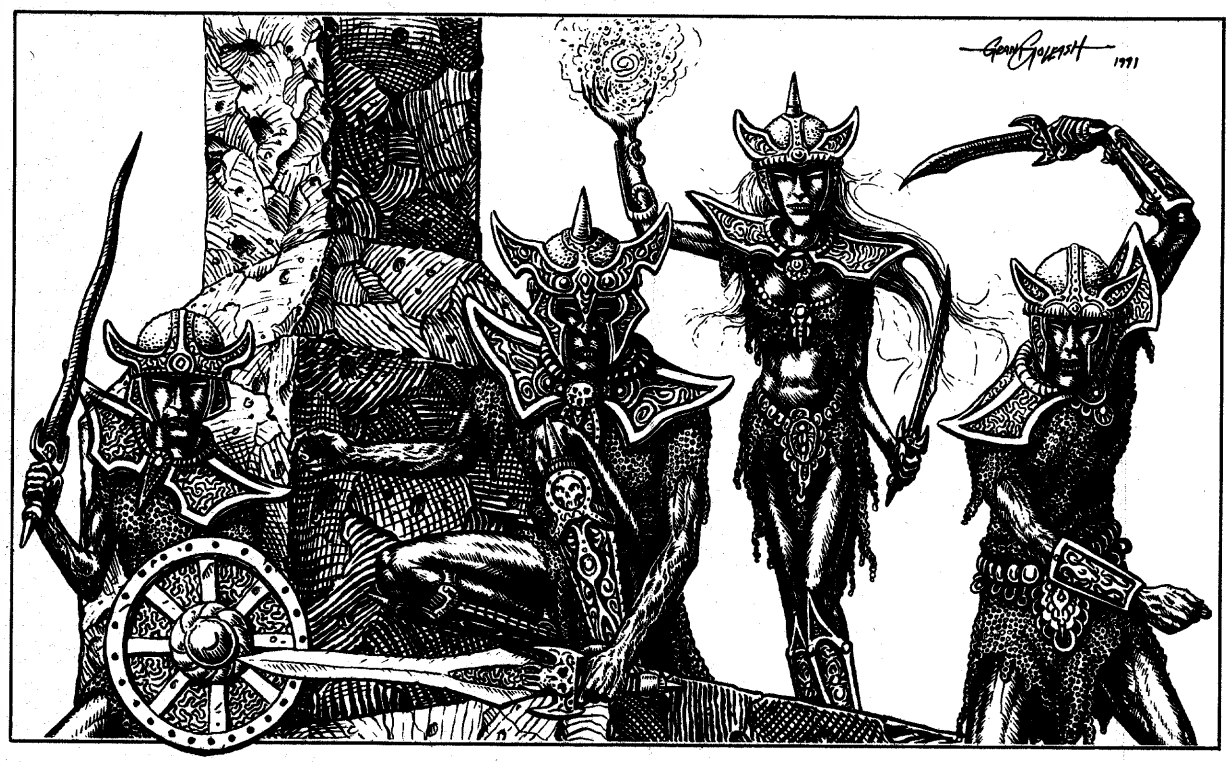
In the dangerous societies of Lolth-worshipping drow, there are a few individuals who openly defy the Spider Queen, or whose actions show a possible disregard for her will, aims, and the safety of her clergy and the drow community. These "suspect" drow usually perish through their own actions, or are driven into exile, where they die at the hands of some predator of the Underdark.

A few, however, manage to escape the wrath of their betters. These drow are a danger to Lolth — particularly if they show signs of wanting to defy clerical authority, or change the balance of power and wreck the community (by ending House rivalries, for example, or allowing tolerance of the other drow faiths). All drow wizards are considered potential hazards, and must undergo The Test to determine their loyalty both to the nobility and the Spider Queen.

The Test

The abduction of wizards at about the time they reach 6th level, and conducting a test of their loyalties is a paramount duty of the priestesses of Lolth. (Loyalty, of course, varies from being to being, at the will—some say whim—of the Queen of Spiders.)

Testing always involves a thorough magical mind-reaming, so that no deception is possible. In rare cases, the individual must be magically transported to Abyssal layers controlled by Lolth, for her personal attention. Some die during The



Test, or must be destroyed, but it is the intent of Lolth not to waste the energies of the "unfaithful."

Drow who fail the test are transformed by the will of Lolth into driders. In Faerun, the transformation involves a magical ceremony performed by a priestess and overseen by yochlol (see "Monsters" for description). The power for and control of the transformation comes from Lolth herself, through the yochlol. Permanent alteration of a drow into a drider cannot be done independently by the drow.

The Transformation

Driders are fully described in Volume 2 of the *Monstrous Compendium,* under "Elf, Drow." Briefly, they are magically altered—in a process of incredible agony—into the form of a spider, retaining their own bodies from the waist up.

In their transformation, driders lose 8 points from their former charisma, to a minimum of 1, but gain a +2 strength bonus (to a maximum of 18). Their dexterity always becomes 18. Other ability scores are unchanged.

Driders retain the memories, personalities, and abilities of their previous form. Needless to say, these abilities are formidable (60% being priests of levels 6-7, and the rest being wizards of levels 6-8). Driders fight as 7th level monsters with whatever weapons they can find (usually swords, axes, daggers, and bows).

They soon learn to bite down on their internal poison sacs, and spit their venom onto all the weapons they use (each application dries into a sticky covering, and is effective for 3 strikes of the weapon). Drider venom forces a saving throw vs. poison at -2; those who fail are



paralyzed for 1-2 turns. It is normally delivered by the drider's 1d4-damage bite.

In their transformation driders become immune to all poisons, but lose most of their magic resistance (down to 15%) from over 60%). Drow can use two weapons in battle (two strikes per round, normal hit probability), as long as one weapon is the size of a long sword or smaller.

There is a 50% chance that a drider will gain the ability to spin webs in its transformation. These webs can be spun 10 times per day. Each one covers a 10'-square area, and acts as a *rope of entanglement* (detailed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide).* Only the drider that created such a web can use it; it is a danger to all other creatures.

Driders can wear armor for their upper bodies if they can find it, but the bulk of their bodies remains unprotected anyway. Driders with access to helms and shields may employ these when they know they must face flaming oil or other missiles. When they close for battle, they often hurl protective gear at their opponents, as missile attacks (typical damage 1d4 + 1, ranges S1/M2/L3).

Drider Life

Embittered by their fate, driders are driven out of drow communities, or penned in sealed-off or guarded areas of the Underdark to fend for themselves (and slay intruders who might otherwise go on to penetrate the drow community). Many are driven by the desire to die, preferably in battle with drow. All are driven by a spider-like thirst for blood; they must consume blood at least once every 4 days, or lose 1d6 hit points per day. This loss is cumulative, continuing until a live creature's blood is ingested. Hit points are restored at the rate of 1d6 points per hit die or level of the meal.

This death wish, coupled with the rage and hopelessness most driders feel, results in a near-berserker fury in combat(save versus *fear* at +4, and no morale check).

Driders are violent, aggressive, tireless hunters, governed by shame, hatred, and fear, who delight in nothing more than slaying drow. They rarely associate with drow or other driders, though occasionally other outcasts or even drow communities will come to some task-for-reward agreement with a drider or two. Such agreements usually seem to end with the death of the drider, due to treachery or the impossibility of the task. A surprising number of driders take precautions that carry one or more drow down to death with them in these instances.

Most driders hunt alone, or in the company of 2d6 huge spiders (10% chance). They are tireless stalkers, for hunting is all that is left to most, to give purpose to their lives. Their blood-thirst and desire to do the maximum harm (especially to drow) leads most driders to arrange many traps, missile-caches (such as boulders that can be dislodged from ledges), and ambush sites around their habitual lairs. These are to discourage drow hunting bands (drow youths often try to prove themselves, or enjoy a little sport, by drider-baiting or -beheading).

A lone drider can surprise opponents half the time (any roll of 1-5 on a d10), by moving as silently as possible. Its hearing, smell, and sight are improved, and it can flawlessly climb walls (although it is too heavy to cling to ceilings).



All elves take a dim view of driders. For drow, fear is paramount; in most elves of surface races, disgust predominates. Peaceful dealings with drow are therefore rare and precarious, at best.

Driders retain the power of speech, and all linguistic knowledge. They lose the ability to communicate 60% of the drow "silent tongue" through their transformation (although they still understand it perfectly). Driders who work with other driders often work out additional "code" signals, unknown to drow, for use when dealing with drow and other dangerous foes.

Driders are sexless; Lolth wants their existence to be a series of torments, not to create a race of enemies to the drow.

A *wish* or more powerful spell is the only way to escape drider-form. Lesser magics can neither put a being into drider form for more than 2d4 rounds (regardless of usual spell performance), or shift a drider into another form for even an instant.

Certain driders roam many places and planes (and even the deep reaches of space, aboard pirate ships), searching for magic powerful enough to overcome Lolth's transformation. Having nothing to lose, they are truly dangerous foes.



CHAPTER 2

Dark Elven Society

Few surface dwellers know the true nature of drow society. Legends speak of huge, nightmare-inducing underground cities, strong magic and an effete, proud culture far beyond those of surface elves.

Held as more reliable are the beliefs that drow society is run by females, and that drow have an affinity for spiders, living with and perhaps worshipping them. Drow are generally thought to be cruel, treacherous slavers. What then can be learned beyond this, with the aid of a drow archmagistress and Elminster's prying? Let's find out, shall we?

Station and Rank

Drow society is strongly matriarchal, with females holding all positions of power and responsibility in government, the military, and in the home. Males are effective fighters, and can become priests and wizards of minor power. Outside drow communities, they are rarely encountered without female commanders.

Male-commanded drow groups are generally either *streeakh,* "suicide squads," or are *dobluth* (outcasts) who have rejected the traditional authority-structure of the drow.

Social station is the most important thing in the world of the drow. Ascension to greater power is the ultimate goal in drow society. Assassination is the preferred tool in this job. It must be used discreetly in the city setting, for to openly murder or wage war (on a rival House) brings down the merciless might of drow justice (not because of the act itself, simply as punishment for the boorish act of fighting in public).

Outside the patrol-range of cities, however, might is right, and Houses and merchant clans often battle each other openly in the wild Underdark.

Spiders and the Drow

Drow have a strong affinity for arachnids. Most of them worship the spider goddess, Lolth, whose priestesses dominate drow society—and whose ritual Test is forced on many drow of 6th level or higher. The Test, as mentioned earlier, is an examination of loyalty and skills, and is thought to be infallible. Failure carries its own horrible price.

Those who pass are rewarded with increased status in their community, usually with immediate promotion within the priesthood. Others are sent on a *quest* set by the goddess. This usually involves a dangerous mission against specific targets in the surface world.

Even among drow who do not worship Lolth, an affinity for arachnids is strong. Spiders and similar creatures often dwell among drow communities, and are prominent in drow sculpture, art, and fashion. Drow door-carvings and frames, for example, are apt to sport a motif of repeating crawling spiders. Drow homes are often decorated by translucent, draped grey hangings that emulate spiderwebs.

Even games of tag, especially the courting games of hide-and-seek played at festival-times by young drow, are known as "spider hunts," and any battle or endeavor in which a drow dies fighting is known as his "last bite."

Social Organization

There are two major social groupings among the drow. These are the relatively unimportant (according to priestesses of Lolth) *merchant* clans, and the staid, monolithic *noble houses.* In truth, both



establishments are vital to the survival of the drow.

Merchant clans vary in organization. They are usually headed by an "inner ring" or council of the most experienced and/or wealthy merchant members, and hence are usually led by males (the "demeaning" and dangerous occupation of trading with outsiders is an almost exclusively male one).

The membership of the inner ring of a given merchant clan consists primarily of male wizards who have either passed or evaded The Test. Removed as they are from drow society at large, the merchant clans have no compunction about dealing with the surface world. In fact, a great number of the "second ring", or managers, are non-drow of various races.

The lowest rank in the merchant clan, the "assets", are nearly all non-drow. These are the laborers and soldiery of the merchant house. Together, the merchant clans form the trade links with the outside world that enable the Noble Houses to survive.

Noble Houses are led by a matron mother, the senior female priestess. In Lolth-worshipping drow communities, her rule is absolute, enforced by the priestesses beneath her (usually her daughters). All females of the mother's blood, in order of their age, follow in rank, although they wield no authority until they are trained and of age (past puberty).

Below the daughters come the male officers of the House: the weapons master (leader of the fighters), (chief) House wizard, and the patron (current consort of the matron mother). These ranks may be combined, and even held by the traditional next rank down in the hierarchy: the male heirs of the House.

Male heirs are also ranked by age: elderboy, secondboy, thirdboy, and so on. They are not allowed to look at the faces of other drow, or speak unless spoken to or bidden. This treatment teaches them their subordinate place in drow society.

Below them come the "war-leaders" of the House (veteran warriors, who lead House patrols, attack squads, and guards, under the command of the weapons master), and the House mages (under the command of the House wizard).

Beneath these "blood" members and officials of the House rank its common warriors, its craftspeople, its servants, and its slaves. All ranks are decreed, and can be changed at the whim of, the matron mother. Her position changes at death—often at the hands of her eldest daughter.

In a Lolth-worshipping drow community, it is a deadly thing to slay a matron mother who holds Lolth's favor, so mothers may reign for hundreds and even thousands of years, kept alive by the magic of Lolth and the diligent service they perform to get and keep it. The assassination of a matron mother is often a punishment for losing Lolth's good will, and marks either a new direction for the House, or—if it is weak, and has strong rivals—the beginning of its extinction.

If one House of a city openly wars on another, and fails to eradicate it entirely in a single attack, the survivors of the ruined House can call down the city's justice on the attacking House. When this occurs, all Houses combine forces to wipe out the offending House. Houses who send assassins and saboteurs against each other for years will be forced into an open battle by the city's ruling council, with the same results as above. This type of no-win scenario allows the internal strife of drow to be strictly controlled, so



that drow communities are not torn apart by continual, bloody warfare.

Most internal combat therefore takes the form of eternal manoeuvering for small advantages. Underhanded intrigue, poisoned knives in dark alleys, vicious trade rivalries, and dirty dealings are all a part of normal drow life.

Dark Elven Dealings

Drow trust no other creatures, including (or especially) other drow. The relations of such a paranoid race with others is uneasy, to say the least.

Possible equals (the drow admit no race as their superior) such as illithids and duergar are dealt with by a mixture of armed truces, hard bargaining, subtle threats, magic, and mutual-gain pacts. Only exceptional drow individuals come to trust another being fully (and live to tell the tale!) in the cities of Lolth-worshippers. Trusting drow are more common among the worshippers of Eilistraee, but even theirs is hard to gain.

The drow are the most widespread and powerful of the known Underdark cultures of Faerun. Strife among themselves, and a lust for personal power and commercial gain, always prevents drow from gathering in any concerted effort against foes. This is probably the only thing that keeps many kuo-toa, jermlaine, and disir communities intact; the drow could easily wipe out weaker neighbors if they took up arms in earnest.

Oddly enough, rule over all other subterranean races (even to the powerful mind flayers and aboleth) is the ultimate goal of drow—"the First Part of the Destiny of the People," as priests of Lolth put it. The Second Part is the extermination of all other elven races, including the seizing of their surface lands and holdings. Lolth and her clergy do not, however, advocate any sort of "holy war." Lolth sees her People best served by the competitive striving of individuals, cabals and factions among drow society and her priesthood, and by the efforts of individual drow communities. In this way, the race grows stronger without breeding in decadence, weakness, and laziness (unlike, say, the kuo-toa).

Drow even practice cannibalism when their numbers grow too great for a given hold or community. Only the aged are used as food, as the survival of the young is seen as the future of the People. Population pressures like this result because sending out expeditions to found new holds is thought too likely to provoke war with powerful neighbors.

Plans to further drow rule and influence are supported with the greatest enthusiasm by drow whose present social position is good, if they are not threatened by the plan. Drow of low class are most likely to support plans that involve open warfare, or strife among drow.

If drow are treacherous among themselves, they are even more so in their dealings with others. Drow will readily "negotiate" with other races over matters of boundaries, trade, and peace. They will break any such agreements and treaties the moment that terms no longer seem advantageous (bargains with "lesser races" are not considered binding). Most races have learned to be cautious and alert when dealing with drow, and to have several tricks up one's sleeve to deal with the treachery when—not if—it comes.

Above all others, deep gnomes hate the drow. Conversely, in all the Underdark, there is no creature a dark elf enjoys slaying more than a svirfneblin. Other traditional drow foes include dwarves,



humans, and other elves of all sorts. Duergar, illithids, and lesser races of the Underdark are traded with, but never trusted or befriended, except by the most worldly and experienced drow merchants.

This is not to say that drow are an unruly, unpredictable mob of violent berserkers, engaged in a sort of endless civil war. ("Actually", says Elminster, "a more apt description would be that they are a decadent, status-obsessed nest of vipers engaged in an endless controlled civil war.") They strive always for personal ascendancy, yes, but their striving is governed by rules and by group-loyalties.

Even if freed from the authority of an established House, ruler, or realm, drow instinctively band together in groups. Survival, to these warlike folk (so often at swords' points among themselves) is often a matter of numbers, trusted battle-companions, and tactics.

Slaves

Certain surface-dwellers know the rumors of drow slave-dealing to be true. Some human slavers (particularly in Calimshan, Thay, and in The Plain of Horses in the Eastern Realms) and orc slavers (throughout the North) trade with the drow—and have learned not to trust them. Drow place far less value on a slave's welfare than do surface dwellers. To most surface slavers, a slave is a valuable trade-good, not to be damaged more than is necessary, for fear of driving down its value. To most drow, a slave is but a pair of hands, without limits that need be thought of; if it is killed, there are a million replacements to be had.

Slaves must give way to drow nobles, and are not allowed to look any drow in the eye. Slaves may only bear weapons when a drow noble allows them (usually only in gladiatorial "entertainment" fights, or to defend a House under attack).

Slaves encountered in drow society are usually of the goblin races: goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, and the like. Kobolds and jermlaine are too small, agile, and independent to make good slaves (in the minds of most drow), and such creatures as trolls and giants are too large and powerful. Drow only enslave other drow captured in battle, particularly debtors and noble drow whose families do not pay ransoms for their return. Some drow communities don't enslave drow at all, sacrificing or merely killing captives and dangerous criminals.

Humans are valued slaves, but are considered dangerous unless they have no fighting or magical skill; human craftsmen are the most valued slaves, but seldom thrive for long in the dark, cruel drow settlements.

Drow Customs

Limited space prohibits any outline of the long, twisted High History of the Drow here, from the Dawning Days (that long-ago time before the Descent, when drow dwelt in The Lands of Terrible Light) to their present widespread control of the Underdark, great wealth, and mastery of magic.

Instead, a handful of customs useful to DMs in play are given here. For instance, a drow gesture of surrender is dropping to one knee, letting fall any weapons, before the being one submits to (usually performed by male drow, to female drow).

Drow like to give and receive massages—long, skilled massages involving scented oils, hot water and steam. This is close to ultimate luxury for them.



Drow enjoy magic, and exult in wielding its unleashed power. They are fascinated by new spells and effects.

Drow love beauty—the beauty of sculpture and made items (especially weapons) and the beauty of the body. Drow of both sexes are proud of displaying their physiques—and all children exhibiting any physical deficiency are slain.

Dark elven communities celebrate several annual festivals. There is always a wild feast when wizards, fighters and priestesses graduate from their decade-long training (during which they taste all three branches of drow expertise: wizardry, clerical teachings, and weapons training), involving the worship of Lolth and the summoning of denizens who serve her.

Many drow communities also observe "The Blooding," a rite of passage into adulthood for both sexes, during which the young participants must kill an intelligent or dangerous surface creature of some sort (e.g. a human warrior or wizard). If the community is not near the surface, merchant clans provide captives (for high fees) who are let loose with weapons for the young drow to hunt.

Drow communities near links to the surface world usually hold "The Running" instead: a hunt and revel on the surface in which all who can walk participate, once a year. (Understand that what the drow call a "hunt and revel", the surface dwellers refer to as "looting and killing".) The blades of many drow rivals seem to accidentally find each other during the raids on surface communities. Young drow participating in their first Running are expected to carry out The Blooding (as described above). Drow communities tend to vary the timing of this annual event slightly, to prevent surface communities from hiring and readying strong guard contingents to await them.

It should be noted that drow can, through training, experience, and repeated exposure, become accustomed to light, and use both normal and infravision. This process takes about ten years. The only encountered drow likely to be immune to the detrimental effects of light (given in the *Monstrous Compendium* drow entry) are veteran surface-raiders and wizards (who traditionally study by candlelight).

Marriage and Family Life

Among Lolth-worshipping drow nobles, females can choose and discard mates freely (sometimes merely leaving them, but usually by slaying them). Among drow commoners and drow of other faiths, marriage is still a transient thing. Marriages usually last from summer to summer, or for a decade, always with the possibility of renewal.

In drow merchant clans, security demands that mates be of the same clan, or that an outsider be taken into the clan, if a relationship develops. This clan induction is forever; death usually comes if the outsider decides to leave. In noble families, the honor of the house demands the family name be given (if only temporarily) to mates of other families, or of common blood.

Child-rearing is the responsibility of the whole family (House, or clan), not merely of the direct parents. A long-lived female drow, choosing to have children only after an active career, normally gives birth to ten children before her fertility wanes.

Drow rarely live past their seventh century, and 94% of them die of natural



causes before age 800. Rare individuals (usually those who are subjected to the least hardship, such as the matron mothers of powerful Houses) may live more than a thousand years, becoming withered and worn. Drow do not show their age until after their six hundredth year.

Clothing and House Insignia

Most drow wear a magical, shielding cloak, called a "piwafwi." Under its collar, most drow wear a neck-purse. In it, noble drow carry their *house insignia.* Commoners will carry a black metal medallion denoting the house they serve, or the merchant clan they belong to.

In the streets of a drow city, *house insignia* are usually displayed openly (as cloak pins or sewn-on cloak or tunic adornments) only by the members and servants of the "First House" (most dominant family) of the city. *Insignia* of lesser houses can be seen on the walls or gates of their strongholds, and are often worn openly inside such strongholds.

The house insignia of nobles take the form of distinctive sculpted images, often equipped for use as brooches. All carry several magical powers—minor abilities known in detail only to members of the House.

The *insignia* of House Do'Urden (the family whence came the hero Drizzt), for example, has the shape of a spider wielding various weapons in each of its eight legs, its abdomen emblazoned with the letters "DN," for "Daermon N'a'shezbaernon," the ancient and formal name of House Do'Urden.

Drow Structures and Settlements

Drow often emulate spiderwebs in the layout of buildings and passages. Traps and falling walls force intruders toward the radial center of the "web," where the drow of most power will be found.

Even a simple villa usually sports traps to discouraging intruders, such as "spring-guns" (crossbows fired by someone tripping fine, dark trigger-lines of spider-silk or waxed cord).

Common drow live in small caves, or in circular, walled houses, with dug-out cellars and adobe-like construction. These are always as beautiful as possible, and increase in size and grandeur with the wealth of the owner, until they become the grand villas of wealthy merchants, merchant clans, and noble Houses.

To get an idea of larger drow cities, consider a typical one: Menzoberranzan, the birthplace of Drizzt Do' Urden (one of the few drow known in the surface world). It fills a cavern two miles wide and a thousand feet high, and is home to 20,006 drow. It is not a big city by drow standards, but typifies the well-armed, organized cruelty of drow culture. Menzoberranzan was founded over 5,000 years ago. Its "First House," House Baenre, has existed since then. Its compound is the grandest of the noble palaces, and dominates the raised, mushroom-cloaked southern plateau where the nobles live. House Baenre encompasses 20 stalagmite pillars and 10 gigantic stalactites, ornately carved. Almost every inch of its surfaces glows with *faerie fire,* blue at the outlying towers and brilliant purple at the huge central dome.

The rest of the city's structures are less grand than this, but not a stone in the city has been left in its natural shape; successive generations of drow craftsmen (and slaves under their command) have



striven for perfection of form, producing row upon row of carved castles lined with the quiet glow of magic.

The city is home to drow soldiers and other commoners, under the harsh rule of sixty-seven recognized drow families (the noble Houses), who number approximately 1,000, and strive ever among themselves for more power and influence. Each House is ruled by a matron mother, a high priestess of Lolth. The honorary Ruling Council of the city consists of the matron mothers of the eight foremost Houses. Through their decrees, intrigues, and rivalries, Lolth's twisted rule holds sway over the city.

The east end of Menzoberranzan's cavem is the city's produce section, where no drow live. A hundred orc and goblin slaves herd rothe there, to feed the city (variety is brought to the city's tables by deep-passage hunting, and by trade, principally with duergar). The rothe are kept on a moss-covered isle in the small pond of Donigarten.

The entrance to Menzoberranzan (into Tier Breche, its northernmost side-cavem) is a sculpted archway, lit by a soft blue magical glow. Inside the arch wait two gigantic, 15'-high spider statues. They animate if an intruder passes, and the magic that enables them to move is linked to lesser spells that sound alarms all over the city. (For more details of these defenders, refer to the "Drow Magical Items" chapter).

Tier Breche is the highest part of Menzoberranzan, affording a splendid view over the rest of the city. Reached by a broad stair, it is reserved for the staff and students of the Drow School.

The school consists of three branches, each with its own large structure. First and greatest is Arach-Tinilith, the spider-shaped school of Lolth. Second in importance and impressiveness is the gracefully-curving, many-spired Academy of Wizardry, Sorcere. Last and plainest of the structures is pyramidal Melee-Magthere, where male fighters are taught.

The entrance to Sorcere is guarded by wizards (normally senior student mages), who challenge intruders. The customary posture of a master of the Academy is standing with arms out before him and bent at the elbows, his hands tight together, one on top of another in front of his chest. ("This posture promotes undue arm and back strain," says Elminster, "and is a prime reason for the drow disposition.")

The city's sole time clock is the huge, central natural stone pillar called Narbondel. At the end of each day, the city's appointed Archmage casts magical fire into the base of the pillar.

The spell's cycle equals a full day on the surface world. The fire rises up the pillar as time passes (glowing bright red to infared eyes), peaks, and then dies down again. The pillar cools to darkness ("the black death of Narbondel") at midnight, when the Archmage casts another fire-spell.

Some drow cities have ways of telling time not related to surface time-counts. These may involve lighting ritual day-candles, or daily killings of slaves and battle-captives, collecting the heads in an ever-growing array to count the days.

Many details of drow life and daily strife in Menzoberranzan can be found in the novel *Homeland,* by Bob Salvatore. Drizzt's musings on drow thought and nature are of special interest to roleplayers seeking to truly bring drow characters to life.

CHAPTER 3

Drow Religion

The religious practices of drow remain a source of much mystery, legend, and misinformation on several worlds. Only drow faiths of the Underdark beneath the Realms are detailed here. The secrecy, long history, and continual change of drow religion make this overview necessarily incomplete.

The majority of drow worship Lolth, the cruel, capricious Spider Queen. She is called "Lloth" by some drow, including those who dwell in the cities of Menzoberranzan and Uluitur. In ancient times, Lolth was known as Araushnee, to drow who inhabited the vanished cities of Clorlyth'na'tsheen and Obbolor ("Spiderhome").

Drow who worship Lolth do not generally speak of or recognize drow who don't. The other faiths held by drow include worshippers of Eilistraee, the goddess of song; Ghaunadaur, the "Elder Elemental God;" and Vhaeraun, the god of thievery and the furthering of drow power in the surface world, mostly worshipped by males. Exceptional drow, particularly adventurer-hero NPCs, may be of any faith and alignment; several who dwell in Waterdeep are known to worship (surface) elven and even human deities.

This chapter uses the format used in the *Legends & Lore* sourcebook, with additional lore on everyday doings and details of the clergy. "AL" means alignment; "WAL" is worshippers' alignment; "AoC" is Area of Control (the portfolio of the deity); and "SY" is the symbol(s) commonly used by the deity, or more often, by the deity's clergy.

Under the Clergy Requirements heading, "AB" denotes attribute scores required to become a priest ("standard" means those given in the *Player's Handbook);* "AL" is allowable alignment(s); "WP" means weapons allowed to clergy.

"AR" denotes armor restrictions for priests of the faith. Under "AR," the codes used are:

a (any armor allowed)
b (May only wear non-metal armor)
c (May only wear metal armor)
d (May not wear any magical armor)
e (May only wear magical armor)
f (May wear only armor made by priests of the same faith)
g (May not wear any armor).

"SP" denotes spheres of clerical spells that a deity grants worshipping clergy access to. An asterisk denotes minor access only is allowed. "PW" means special powers granted to priests by the deity, usable once per day unless otherwise noted—if accompanied by a number in parentheses, usable upon reaching the level denoted by the number. "TU" notes the ability to turn or command undead.

Some drow have searched for other deities to guide and lead them (usually among the denizens of the Outer Planes). Elminster's library contains mentions of drow "dark cults" fighting against worshippers of Lolth, some sixteen thousand winters ago—and several times since. Some drow who dwell in (or at least raid) surface lands in the South are known to worship the "human" deity Shar. Here follow descriptions of the four major drow deities, accompanied by information that Elminster and Lady Susprina could confirm.

EILISTRAEE (lesser goddess)

Eilistraee, the "Dark Maiden," is the goddess of the good drow—those rare dark elves who yearn for a return to life in the surface Realms, an existence akin to



that enjoyed by elves of the woodlands, left behind by the drow long ago.

Eilistraee (pronounced "eel-ISS-tray-ee") is a goddess of song and beauty, worshipped through song and dance—preferably in the surface world, under the stars of a moonlit night.

Eilistraee aids her faithful in hunting and swordcraft, and worship of her is usually accompanied by feasting. Eilistraee has worshippers of human, elven, and in particular half-elven stock (particularly around Silverymoon), and looks kindly upon the Harpers. She is usually seen only from afar, but her song (of unearthly beauty, driving many to tears) is heard whenever she appears.

Roleplaying Notes: Eilistraee is a melancholy, moody drow female, a lover of beauty and peace. The evil of most drow banks a burning anger within her, and when her faithful are harmed, that anger is apt to spill out into wild action. It is not her way to act openly, but she often aids creatures she favors (whether they worship her or not) in small, immediately practical ways.

Eilistraee is happiest when she looks on bards singing or composing, craftsmen at work, lovers, or acts of kindness.

Statistics: AL cg; WAL any good; AoC song, dance, swordwork, hunting; SY a silver long sword outlined against a silver moon, with silvery filaments (Eilistraee's hair) around all, in a nimbus.

Eilistraee's Avatar (fighter 9, priest 11, bard 16)

Eilistraee's avatar takes the form of a glossy-skinned female drow, nine feet in



height and with ankle-length, sweeping hair of glowing silver. Her hair and wandering silvery radiances cloak her body in a smooth, continuously-moving array of beauty. She can call on all spheres of magic.

Str 17	Dex 18	Con 14
Int 19	Wis 20	Cha 20
MV 19 f	SZ 9'	MR 20%
AC -2	HD 12	HP 96
#AT 1	THAC0 9	Dmg by weapon or spell

Special Att/Def: The avatar of Eilistraee has *true seeing* (continuous, otherwise as the priest spell), and can unleash nine silvery *magic missiles* per round. These unerringly do 2d4 damage each to all creatures except evil beings and undead, who suffer 4d4 damage per missile.

Once per turn, Eilistraee's avatar can employ *spell turning* as the ring, but effective against all magic directed against her in that round. This replaces her *magic missile* attack for the round. Once per turn, the avatar can also *regenerate* damage to herself, restoring even lost limbs without a system shock roll, and regaining 1d4+1 lost hit points per round. (This process can continue for four continuous rounds, and precludes spellcasting, but not other activities or combat.)

At will, the Dark Maiden's avatar can create a silvery *light* or *dancing lights;* cause music to sound—a harp, horn (a far-off horn is her "sign"), or a flute; and sing. At will, her song can affect undead and evil creatures of 3 hit dice or less as a *repulsion* spell; can *stun* any one being (saving throw vs. spell at -2 to avoid) for one round; or can act as a *knock* spell (as if cast by an 11th level wizard). She can use any of these powers in addition to her attacks, sight, and *levitation* (self only, horizontal move of up to 160'/round).

Eilistraee's Manifestations

The Dark Maiden seldom takes a direct hand in the affairs of mortals, but will sometimes appear in the midst of a dance in her honor, leaping amid the flames of the feast unharmed. She also appears, radiance dimmed and clad in a plain, cowled cloak, at the campfires of wayfarers in the woodlands by night, to test their kindness.

Most worshippers see Eilistraee only from afar, perched on a hillock or battlement, silver hair streaming out behind her. She appears to show her favor or blessing, and will often rally or hearten creatures by causing a high, far-off hunting horn-call to be heard. (On several occasions, this has frightened off brigands or orc raiders, who thought aid for their quarry was on the way.)

Eilistraee's most used manifestations are a silvery radiance, sometimes accompanied by wordless song, or a few echoing harp notes. If the radiance surrounds an item (almost always a sword or other bladed weapon), that item typically gains the following powers, for 6 rounds:

- full possible damage (maximum roll, plus all bonuses)
- immunity to breakage or other damage (automatic success of all item saving throws)

Eilistraee's favor typically gives any or all of the following aids to affected beings, for 4 rounds:

- the ability to strike first in any round
- an increase in Armor Class of 2 points



- a bonus of +4 to all attack rolls, including the ability to strike creatures normally affected only by magical weapons of a +2 or greater bonus

Eiltstraee has also been known to aid her worshippers by providing a faint silvery radiance when they need to find something dropped or in darkness, or follow an unknown trail by night through dark woods, or when childbirth occurs in darkness.

Duties of the Priesthood

All clergy of Eilistraee are females of any intelligent race. They must nurture beauty, music, the craft of making musical instruments, and song wherever they find it, assist hunters and hunting, and help others in acts of kindness whenever they see ways to do so.

Priestesses must be skilled in the playing of at least one of the Dark Maiden's favored instruments—horn, flute, or harp. They must be adequate singers and fit, graceful dancers. They must gather songs and musical knowledge constantly, and acquire training in the use of the sword when they can.

Whenever and wherever possible, the faithful of Eilistraee must encourage drow to return to the surface world, and work to promote harmony between drow and surface-dwelling races, to establish drow as rightful, non-evil inhabitants of Faerun.

Requirements: AB Dex 16 +, otherwise standard; AL, any good; WP any (swords preferred); AR e; SP all, animal*, charm*, combat, creation, divination*, elemental, guardian, healing, necromantic, plant*, protection, summoning*, sun, weather; PW 4) *magic missile* twice per day (four missiles per spell), 6) *enchanted weapon* thrice per day, by touch, on bladed weapons only, which glow with a silvery radiance and a +2 bonus for 7 rounds, regardless of how many attacks they land or how many *dispel magics* are launched against them, 9) *spell turning;* TU turn.

Aims, Credo, and Ethos: Aid the weak, strong, grateful, and churlish alike; be always kind, save in battle with evil.

Encourage happiness everywhere; lift hearts with kind words, jests, songs, and merriment. Learn how to cook game, and how best to hunt it. Learn new songs; dances, ways with weapons, spices, and recipes, and pass this learning on whenever possible. Learn to play, make, and repair musical instruments. Practice music and swordwork. Defend and aid all folk, promoting harmony between races.

Strangers are your friends. The homeless must be given shelter from storms, under your own roof if need be. Repay rudeness with kindness. Repay violence with swift violence, that the fewest may be hurt, and danger fast removed from the land. This is the credo of the Dark Maiden.

Rituals: The customary worship of the Dark Maiden is a hunt, followed by a feast and dancing, and a "Circle of Song," in which the worshippers sit and dance by turns in a circle, each one in succession leading a song. If possible, this is done out of doors, in a wooded area, on a moonlit night.

Daily prayers are sung whenever possible, and priestesses try to lead others in a song or two every evening, even if no formal ritual is held.

"The High Hunt" is celebrated once in each of the four seasons. This involves a



night-time hunt of a dangerous beast or monster, led by priestesses of Eilistraee. By tradition, the hunters may use any bladed weapons, and wear anything—except the priestesses, who go without armor, carrying only a single sword. If the quarry is slain, a chanted prayer and circle-dance to the goddess is held.

Whenever a sword is finished or first taken into use by a worshipper of the Dark Maiden, a priestess will try to call down the blessing of the goddess upon it. This is done by planting the blade point-down in the ground, out of doors and by night, and dancing. If successful (45% chance, per night attempted), the blade glows with a silvery radiance. For three months, the sword will be immune to breakage or rust, and though lacking a bonus or dweomer, can strike creatures normally hit only by magical weapons. If the sword is a drow weapon, it is also made immune to sun and removal-from-radiation damage for the same period.

At least once a year, priestesses of Eilistraee undertake a "Run." Those who are not drow blacken their bodies with natural dyes and oils. All priestesses, drow or not, boil certain leaves and berries to make their hair silvery, and go wandering (on the surface world). (Hostile drow say their silver hair indicates that the brains within the head are addled, though many drow who don't worship Eilistraee have silver hair.)

Trusting to their music, kind ways, and sword-skills to keep them from being slain as drow, priestesses of the Dark Maiden go where they are strangers, making an effort to seek out elven communities, and bring them game, kindness, and helping hands. They try to learn new songs, music, and sword-ways, and do not come to preach their faith or make a mark for themselves.

In the end, all priestesses who do not die in battle hold their greatest ritual: the "Last Dance." In old age, Eilistraee's priestesses will hear the goddess singing to them, by night, calling them to her. When the song feels right, they will go out under the moonlit sky and dance—never to be seen again.

Those who have observed such dances say that the goddess comes and sings overhead, and the aged priestess begins to dance more effortlessly, looking younger and younger. Her hair begins to glow with the same radiance as the Dark Maiden's, and then she becomes slowly translucent, fading away as the dance goes on. In the end, only a silvery radiance remains, with *two* voices raised together in melancholy, tender song.

Customs, Rules, & Taboos: Worshippers of Eilistraee try to let out all of the gathered emotions of the day with an "evensong," which is a personal thing, often wordless and done in private. Priestesses of the Dark Maiden who have the coins to do so are required to hire any strange minstrel or bard they meet for a song or two; lay worshippers are encouraged to do so.

Faithful must aid drow who are in distress. If the distressed are fighting with other drow, the combat is to be stopped with as little bloodshed as possible. So long as drow met with are not working evil on others, they are to be aided, and given the message of Eilistraee: "A rightful place awaits you in The Realms Above, in The Land of the Great Light. Come in peace, and live beneath the sun again, where trees and flowers grow."

Whenever possible, priestesses of the



Dark Maiden must use swords in battle. If no swords are to hand but other bladed weapons are available, they must be used in preference to other weapons.

When faithful and allies of a priestess fall in battle, any priestess present must, if possible, provide burial, a funeral song, and comfort to the bereaved.

Any hungry travelers met with, who offer no threats, are to be fed by the faithful of Eilistraee. Priestesses are to carry food with them for this purpose at all times, while traveling. Where food cannot be purchased or received, it must be gathered or hunted for.

Faithful of Eilistraee are to set aside food, and give it as often as possible to strangers in need, particularly outcasts and those of other races. If food yet remains, it is to be given to the priestesses of Eilistraee, that they may do the same, for none shall go hungry. In times of plenty, food is stored for lean times ahead. In harsh winters, the lands about the priestesses' strongholds are patrolled to find and take in the lost, the hurt, and those caught in the teeth of the cold.

Whenever possible, food is eaten with the accompaniment of song. Except for properly sad occasions, feasts are accompanied by merriment; the faithful of the Dark Maiden are commanded to promote happiness and gaiety whenever possible.

Equipment, Garb, & Offerings: Priestesses of Eilistraee wear their hair long, and dress practically for whatever they're currently doing. For rituals, they wear as little as possible. Otherwise, they tend to wear soft leathers for hunting, aprons while cooking, and—when battle is expected — armor. If armor not of drow make is worn, it must be magical.

Priestesses of the goddess are allowed to keep and accumulate monies given them as offerings—with the understanding this wealth will be used to buy food, musical instruments, and other tools (such as good swords) to serve the will of the goddess. Priestesses of Eilistraee are allowed to go adventuring, so long as they feed, aid, and defend the needy along the way. They are encouraged to aid adventuring parties, with the price of their aid to be provision of some sort of beneficial magical armor they can use (or failing that, an enchanted sword of some sort).

Faithful of Eilistraee are encouraged to give food to others in need, with a prayer to the goddess, to act with kindness, and to give food and money they can spare to the priestesses.

Priestesses are to feed themselves as much as possible by their own gardening and hunting skills, and to try to convert at least one stranger per moon to the worship of Eilistraee. Leading a convert in a prayer to the Dark Maiden is itself an offering to the goddess, who often (68%) manifests as a sign to the convert. When priestesses of the goddess must fight evil, they are to burn the bodies of the evil creatures they slay as an offering to the goddess —unless such creatures are edible, and there are hungry folk near.

Specialty Magic: Clergy of Eilistraee widely employ at least two spells unique to the faith. The use of these magics has given them the name "spellsingers" in the North (there are also, Elminster warns, spellsinger wizards, who cast spells in the same way, but who worship Mystra and other gods, with other aims).



Fourth-Level Spell

Lesser Spellsong (Evocation, Alteration)

Sphere:	Creation
Range:	Variable
Components:	V,S
Duration:	Variable
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	Variable
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables the caster, by song and supplication, to cause an effect equivalent to any desired clerical spell of 3rd level or less to occur (in effect, casting the spell with normal effects, range; duration, saving throws, and so on, but without the usual gestures or material components).

The caster must be able to move (hands and shoulders at least) and sing, free of magical silencing. If any such silencing occurs before spellcasting ends, the DM may allow partial spell effects to occur, or the spell may be wasted. Priestesses of Eilistraee are trained to sing when in pain, and may sing while dodging about in combat (but not launching physical attacks of their own).

Sixth-Level Spell

Spellsong (Evocation, Alteration)

Sphere:	Creation
Range:	Variable
Components:	V,S
Duration:	Variable
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	Variable
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables the caster, by song and supplication to the goddess, to cause an effect equivalent to that of any desired clerical spell of 5th level or less to occur (in effect, casting the spell with normal effects, range, duration, saving throws, and so on, but without the usual gestures or material components).

Alternatively, a *spellsong* may be used to recall to memory (and the immediate ability to cast) any one spell cast by the *spellsong* - caster earlier in the last 48 hours. It can also, with different wording, restore a level lost in the last 24 hours to any creature embraced during the song (the caster can work this upon herself). A differently-worded *spellsong* can heal 1d4 + 1 lost hp to the caster or to any creature touched.

If a *spellsong* is cast when more than one priestess of Eilistraee is present, the other priestess(es) can join in the song without using a spell themselves. Each additional singing priestess who touches the injured creature while the *song* continues heals 1d4 more hp. This choral addition can be used only for hit-point healing, not in other uses of the spell.

If seven or more priestesses of Eilistraee are present, they can work a *cure blindness, slow poison* or *cure disease* instead of hit-point healing, if they will it so, and sing together. If nine or more priestesses are present, a *dispel magic, remove curse,* or *neutralize poison* can be worked. If twelve or more priestesses are present, a *regeneration* or *spell immunity* (only for spells known to at least one of the singers, by casting or by the experience of having it cast on or against them) can be worked instead.

Choral work involves a circular dance, around the person to be aided, a fire, or other focal point (failing anything else, a



longsword driven point-down into the ground, or a tripod of sticks surmounted by the holy symbol of the caster).

The caster (and additional choral participants, as noted above) must be able to move about freely (to dance) and sing, without magical silencing of any sort. If silencing occurs before the end of spell-casting, the DM may allow partial spell effects to occur, or the spell may be wasted..

GHAUNADAUR (lesser god)

Legend whispers that the largest slimes, jellies, oozes, slugs, and other crawling things are intelligent, and worship their own gods. These tales go further: once, all such beings worshipped one god, who struck most of them mad in a fit of fury at some transgression. The deity's revenge stole their intellect. Consequently, many of its worshippers, and most of its power, ceased to exist.

A few of the intelligent dwellers below remain—enough to continue and spread worship of this fell deity. It still lurks somewhere in the Elemental Planes (perhaps on the planes of Earth, Ooze, or Smoke).

This amorphous, dark purple blob with many tentacles is called Ghaunadaur (pronounced "GONE-ah-door"), That Which Lurks. Ghaunadaur and its giant roper servants have been worshipped for eons by various creatures of the Underdark, particularly lone or sub-intelligent "monsters" (whom it occasionally aids, in return for adulation). Evil beings seeking an alternative to established deities— including drow dissatisfied with the rule of Lolth—have also begun to worship That Which Lurks. Most humans find the worship of Ghaunadaur (also known as "The Elder Elemental God," "The Elder Eye," or "Gormauth Souldrinker") disgusting, but there are secret, subterranean altars and cults to the Eye all over Toril, particularly in the older and more degenerate lands of the Sword Coast South, Thay, and Kara-Tur.

Roleplaying Notes: Ghaunadaur is unpredictable by human standards. It may aid worshippers who merely pay "lip service" to its rituals, even expending great power to grant permanent magical boons—but may also devour or maim them, without warning. Ghaunadaur enjoys watching the hunting and devouring activities of large, horrible monsters, and the suffering they cause.

Ghaunadaur is silent and terrible when outside the Inner Planes, but old records tell of jibbering, bestial "language" spoken in the deity's great "court" of mingled mud and gelatin pools.

Ghaunadaur can communicate telepathically with all beings within 90' of his avatar, when present in Faerun. He can understand and contemplate complex emotions, schemes, and reasoning, but keeps his end of such communications blunt and simple (e.g. "Approve;" "No, Not;" "Slay;" "Come To Me;" "Go To (mental picture of desired place)," and so on).

Statistics: AL ce; WAL any neutral or evil (especially "monsters," outcasts); AoC oozes, slimes, jellies, outcasts, rebels, all things subterranean; SY purple circle, outlined with an inner ring of violet, and an outer ring of black with a single black-rimmed, violet-on-mauve eye in the center of the circle; or (older symbol) an inverted triangle of amber on a purple background, with amber lines inside it forming an upside-down "Y" shape whose



arms end by bisecting the sides of the triangle.

Ghaunadaur's Avatar (priest 18, wizard 16)

The avatar of the Elder Elemental God appears as a reddish-purple giant slug, but at will it can alter its form into an amorphous, free-flowing shape like a jelly, or rear up into a giant roper with up to ten long, purple tentacles. It creeps along silently, and can cloak itself at will in mauve or violet mists which eddy and flow, foiling vision-related attacks, including spells such as *magic missile,* and increase the avatar's armor class to the value given in parentheses below. The mists foil heat-related detections of all sorts, but can be pierced by *true seeing* magic.

Ghaunadaur's avatar can use spells of all spheres and schools. Elemental magic wielded by it always has the maximum possible effect.

Str 24	Dex 19	Con 22
Int 18	Wis 18	Cha 7
MV 9	SZ 26'	MR 40%
AC 6 (4)	HD 20	HP 160
#AT 10 x 10	THAC0 1 or by spell	Dmg 2-12

Special Att/Def: Any being within the Ghaunadaur's mists must save vs. breath weapon every round, or be *slowed* on the round that follows. The Elder Eye can emit its violet and mauve mists once every third round, to maintain a cloud surrounding it in a 5' radius. Once per turn, it can jet thick purple mist, with the same effects, that will extend the cloud outward to 20' radius, for 2 rounds (thereafter it dissipates entirely, and cannot be renewed until another round has passed). Ghaunadaur has *true seeing,* even through its own mists.

Once per day, Ghaunadaur can cause *blindness* in creatures that it desires to affect, within a 20' radius. Targets must save vs. spell at -3 or be affected, their condition lasting until a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* is applied (rest and *cure* spells will not suffice). Blinded creatures attack at -4, and their opponents strike at them at +4.

Ghaunadaur's normal attack is to lash out with four to six tentacles. Each tentacle can extend 30', and is studded with barbed hollow teeth. When a tentacle hits a target, it grips with Ghaunadaur's full strength. The target suffers 2d6 damage as corrosive fluids well out from the teeth, and its movement is halted. Victims are dragged 6' closer to the avatar each round, but take no further damage until they reach the avatar's mouth. Ghaunadaur's saw-toothed maw does 3d4 damage to creatures dragged to it. Ghaunadaur never employs two tentacles against the same creature; they will be held in reserve for other foes. The tentacles are AC6, and have 14 hp each.

Victims (and those who aid them) must make a successful Strength check to avoid being dragged toward the avatar. On any round in which the target Strength total equals or exceeds the avatar's, the target can try to tear free from the tentacle by making a successful Dexterity Check. Tearing free does the target 1d4 + 1 hp of further damage. Lost tentacles are reabsorbed by the avatar.

Ghaunadaur's avatar is immune to all acids, drugs, and poisons. It can employ one spell each round while attacking with its tentacles.



Ghaunadaur's Manifestations

Ghaunadaur usually manifests to aid priests or worshippers who call on it (10% chance), always in the same way. One to three rounds after a supplication (1-2 if the worshipper has just drawn blood from another creature), a roiling purple mist appears, which grows in size to a cloud 4' to 6' across. From the center of this cloud comes a 12-inch diameter golden eye, which opens its lids to bathe the favored creature in a fiery orange light. It gradually fades to a deep red, then a dark purple. The entire cloud darkens to black, and shrinks away to nothingness. This typically takes 8 rounds.

Ghaunadaur's manifestation grants the following aids to favored beings:
—an increase in Strength (with attack and damage bonuses) of 6 points for 1-10 rounds
—the ability to deal double damage with every strike for 1-8 rounds
—a one-time *healing* (which occurs in the first round of its gaze), restoring 3d4 lost hit points. It also *regenerates* severed limbs, lost faculties, and permanently negates any diseases and poison present in the creature.

When altars dedicated to its worship are present, Ghaunadaur can manifest its eye within them, and create up to three tentacles from each altar. They have all the powers of Ghaunadaur's avatar-tentacles, and the eye has all manifestation abilities, plus some additional powers detailed under "Equipment, Garb, & Offerings," on page 31.

Duties of the Priesthood

Priests of Ghaunadaur have simple duties: they are to ensure, by force or threat, that a ready supply of sacrifices reaches Ghaunadaur's altars. The god supplies them with spells and *tentacle rods* (detailed in the Drow Magical Items chapter) to ensure success in this.

Most of all, Ghaunadaur delights in creatures that offer themselves to him without resistance (regardless of whether these sacrifices have been *charmed* or otherwise coerced by its clergy). Priests who can bring such offerings to the Eye's altars often are highly valued and favored by the god.

Requirements: AB any (devotion is valued over ability, even oozes and jellies are accepted); AL any evil; WP any; AR a; SP all, animal, charm*, combat, creation*, divination*, elemental, guardian, healing, necromantic, protection*, summoning*; PW 3) immunity to all poisons, 5) immunity to all acids, corrosive fluids and substances, 9) immunity to all breath weapons, 13) immunity to all elemental-sphere spells and related magics; TU command.

Aims, Credo, and Ethos: All creatures have their place, and all are fit to wield power. Those who hunt weed out the weak and strengthen the stock of all. Those who rebel or who walk apart find new ways and try new things, and do most to advance their races.

Creatures of power best house the energy of life, which Ghaunadaur reveres and represents.

Faithful of Ghaunadaur are to make sacrifices to the Eye, persuade others to sacrifice themselves to Ghaunadaur or in service of the Eye, further knowledge and fear of Ghaunadaur, and in the end give themselves to Ghaunadaur in unresisting self-sacrifice.



Priests of Ghaunadaur are to convert all beings they can to the worship of Ghaunadaur. They must slay all clergy of other faiths, plundering their temples and holdings for wealth to better their own lot and to further the worship of Ghaunadaur.

Rituals: Ghaunadaur expects a prayer of adulation and praise, accompanied by a sacrifice, at least once a day. If live sacrifices cannot be procured that often, the Elder Eye will accept offerings of bones and food, burned in oil, as braziers of perfumed incense are also burned.

If a priest is unable to procure such offerings, the priest must pray while holding one hand in an open flame. The priest's hand must be covered with any magical oil or potion. (Oils or potions of *fire resistance* are instantly converted to lamp oil, with the appropriate results.) If the prayer is good (55% chance), the hand is restored. If not. . .

Priests of Ghaunadaur are to do whatever pleases Ghaunadaur best, and serve the Eye absolutely.

Customs, Rules, & Taboos: No thief, or priest of another faith, is to enter a temple of Ghaunadaur, leave again, and live for more than eight days thereafter (unless conversion to the worship of Ghaunadaur occurs). All such blasphemers must be destroyed, preferably as sacrifices on the altar.

No creature who receives the aid of Ghaunadaur is to allow eight days to pass thereafter without praying and making offerings to the Eye.

Priests of Ghaunadaur must not knowingly befriend or consort with priests of any other faith. If such a relationship arises out of ignorance, the unbeliever must either perform at least one task for Ghaunadaur (and preferably to enter the service of the Eye), or sacrifice to Ghaunadaur. Failing that, the offending priest of the Eye must sacrifice himself in the unbeliever's stead.

Equipment, Garb, & Offerings: In any place of worship to Ghaunadaur, all cloth furnishings and garments worn by priests are to be of hues pleasing to Ghaunadaur's eye. Accepted colors are: copper, amber, flame-orange, russet, gold, dark red, plum, purple, amethyst, violet, heliotrope, mauve, lilac, lavender, black, and silver.

Smoke and flame are to be a part of all sacrifices to Ghaunadaur. No creature is to speak out against the will of Ghaunadaur in the presence of the Eye, its avatar, or its manifestation. If such defiance occurs, a sacrifice of appeasement is to be performed (preferably involving the creature who defied the Elder Eye).

Priests of Ghaunadaur are encouraged to become familiar with the use and manufacture of acids, poisons (including gases and incenses), and flaming oils of all sorts. (Temples and priestly abodes are typically well-supplied with such weapons, in a ready state.)

Temples to the Elder Eye are typically lit by purple, mauve, and lavender rays of light, radiances, and drifting, eddying luminous mists. These temples are usually located underground but sometimes can be found concealed in remote ruins. The walls are decorated with mosaics depicting beings of all races crawling in self-sacrifice to be eaten by "vaguely-squid-like creatures, each with ten hairy tentacles." The devouring creatures (Ghaunadaur's long-unseen "bodyguard" ropers) are purple, violet, and mottled



mauve in hue.

Temples to the Eye always have well-polished floors, usually of porphryry, obsidian, red and black hornblende, or black marble. Where black and purple materials are not available, carpets and tapestries of these hues should be used.

The altar chamber sports ceiling support pillars of polished obsidian, malachite or serpentine, graven with runes and the symbols of Ghaunadaur. When possible, these pillars are imbued with magical effects (created by priests of the Eye; Ghaunadaur itself, if summoned with the proper prayers, endows these magical effects with *permanency).*

Pillar enchantments radiate magical fields of effect. These typically include 5' radius unease and insecurity affecting all beings who do not worship Ghaunadaur; creatures of 4 Intelligence or less automatically retreat and avoid the area. Other pillars radiate a 2' radius *fear,* 10' radius *know alignment* and *detect lie* fields that reveal intruders' auras only to priests of the Eye. (All spell effects are subject to save vs. spell.)

At least one pillar in each temple has a *teleport* rune, known only to the priests. If the rune is touched, the priest is transported to a prearranged sanctuary or a city location. Some of these runes are traps: if a command word is whispered, they go to a "safe" destination; if no word is uttered, they transport the activator instead into a monster lair or other dangerous area.

These magically-charged pillars can discharge electrical arcs when living beings pass between them. These arcs strike for 3d6 hp of electrical damage. Priests familiar with the pillar enchantments can avoid the areas of danger, or concentrate on the secret mental words of



deactivation and activation, to turn the pillar magics "on" and "off."

Temples to Ghaunadaur typically have a pillared approach area, leading to the altar in three ascending tiers. The first tier contains drums and a rack of tubular silver chimes, used in summoning Ghaunadaur. The second tier contains a huge, rectangular block: an altar of dull, porous-looking, rusty black stone.

The altar stone is flanked by bronze braziers. Three triple-branched candelabra, arranged in a triangle, stand beside each brazier. Each candelabrum holds three fat black candles. They burn with a flame of leaping lavender, surrounded by a purple glow, but unless removed from the temple, are never consumed in their burning.

The third tier is empty, but at chest-height above it hang a blackened adamantium (pure forged adamantite, well-nigh invulnerable) triangle and cylinder, on chains of the same material. (The cylinder is obviously intended as a striker for the triangle.)

If the altar-block is struck with force, or touched by living flesh, its rusty black hue slowly fades, becoming a translucent amethyst color in 3 rounds. This block remains rock-hard, and a black, amorphous center "floats" in its depths.

Any creature touching the altar with bare flesh must save vs. breath weapon at -3 or be paralyzed for 5d4 turns. (A being using a weapon or gloved hand to touch will feel a tingling, and must save vs. paralysis or be held immobile for 1d4 + 1 rounds.)

If the drum is beaten, the chimes rung, or the triangle struck while the altar is in this translucent state, the altar emits a pulse of golden light. If all three noise-makers are struck, a glowing golden eye materializes from the stone's roiling, dark center. Roll 1d12 to determine the fate of each creature seeing the eye:

Roll	Effect
1	Death (or catatonia*, at the DM's option)
2	Insanity* (gibbering, drooling feeblemindedness, broken by periods of incoherent frantic activity
3	Rage* (attack companions until disabled or all have fallen—physical attacks only)
4	Fright and weakness* strength loss, with probable need to discard armor, large weapons, and heavy treasure)
5	Fall unconscious for 1d4 + 12 turns; during this time visibly age 2d12 years
6-12	No effect (looked away in time)

* = Curable by application of a *remove curse* spell

If the braziers are lit when the eye appears, and the highest-ranking priest of the temple is present, more occurs: a portion of Ghaunadaur is *summoned* to the Prime Material Plane, usually to consume a sacrifice.

The altar lightens to a heliotrope hue, and begins to glow. The dark mass at its center grows larger and shows swollen purple veins. The eye becomes a fiery red-orange color, staring hungrily and angrily around the chamber.

Anything on the altar as it transforms sinks into the altar, to be absorbed forever (including adventurers!). The altar stone becomes flesh-like and warm, and its outline shifts suddenly as a



tentacle suddenly erupts from it to grab the nearest living creature! The tentacle is identical to those of Ghaunadaur's avatar. If it manages to draw a being into the stone that being (and its gear) is forever lost. This process takes two rounds after the actual contact, and during this time the victim suffers 1d12 corrosive damage per round. The altar is AC7, and can be cut and burned readily; dealing it more than 26 points of damage during any one round will cause it to expel the victim, and dealing it 40 or more points of damage in the two rounds will destroy the altar completely.

If any living creature is absorbed by the altar, it returns to its dead state. Atop it will be an item most wished for by the most powerful non-good being in the chamber (the ranking priest of Ghaunadaur, or if none is present, the character with the highest Intelligence + Wisdom + level total). This can include any magic item earlier offered on an altar of Ghaunadaur (that is, any magical item that a DM wishes to introduce into the campaign).

If no living creature is absorbed by the altar, but other sacrifices or offerings are taken by it, the altar returns to its stony state.

If a priest of any other faith touches the altar, two spells will be offered; if these are accepted, the priest becomes chaotic evil, and subverted to the service of Ghaunadaur. (This is not outwardly apparent, but if detected later, can be reversed by a process of *atonement* and absolution left up to the DM.)

If a second summoning of Ghaunadaur is attempted in the same day, the same alterations to the altar will occur, but the result will be as follows:

Roll	Effect
1	Tentacles emerge to seize and devour 1-4 creatures (nothing is granted or left on the altar)
2	Everyone present hit with *cause blindness* spell (see "Ghaunadaur's avatar", above) and no desires are granted
3	Take no sacrifice, but permanently raise a random ability score of each being present by 1
4-12	Eye looks out of altar. Use earlier table for effects.

In any encounter, Ghaunadaur telepathically identifies itself, and asks all present to worship it. If they refuse, it promises to bring about their deaths; if they agree, but subsequently do nothing, the characters will hear Ghaunadaur's voice in their heads once a day, demanding a sacrifice—or their deaths. If they avoid adventuring (i.e. avoid the monsters Ghaunadaur can send), the voice continues daily, gradually becoming audible to others, and speaking at the most inopportune times— during a tender love scene, perhaps, or an audience with a local ruler or lawkeeper. A *remove curse* or stronger spell can end this effect, but it must be cast by a being of 9th or greater level to be effective.

Specialty Magic: Priests of the Eye have few unique spells. The most notable of their special magics follows:

Seventh-Level Spell

Wall of Tentacles
(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere: Elemental
Range: 0



Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 day/level
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	wall-shaped area (freestanding, if desired), 6 inches thick, and with a surface area on one side of up to 10 square feet/level
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell enables the caster to create a special sort of quasi-living elemental barrier. On the safe, or "inner" side, it appears as a shadowed section of wall. On the "outside," it initially appears as rough, purple-brown stone. The caster and priests of the same faith can freely move through the *wall* as though it does not exist. If any non-priest of Ghaunadaur (except when in physical contact with a living, mobile priest of the Eye) touches this "plain wall," four tentacles emerge to grasp the being, and begin a loud hissing and champing noise to alert clergy to the presence of an intruder.

The *wall* can extrude twenty 16'-long tentacles, and two beaks. These can shift about its surface, but a maximum of four attacks per round can be made on any single opponent. The beaks are saved for a second stage of continued attack or resistance (see below); only the tentacles attack initially. Each tentacle strike does physical damage, and forces the victim to save vs. spell or be *held.* Affected beings get a saving throw to break free of the *hold* effect (only one save, regardless of how many tentacle strikes are suffered). While *held,* victims are attacked by other tentacles at +2 to hit, and dragged 4' closer to the *wall* per round. Severing a tentacle (by doing it more than 12 hp damage in a single round, causing it to vanish) automatically breaks its *hold.*

The *wall of tentacles* is AC-2; HD 10; 200 hp; THAC0 11; #AT 22 (4 per target); Dmg 1-20 (x 20 tentacles); 1-10 (x 2 beaks); SA poison beaks; SD *darkness, 15' radius,* immunity to non-magical weapon attacks, and to all spells except *dispel magic* (strips it of 50 hp), *disintegrate* (destroys 100 hp), or *symbol of persuasion* (allows all beings of the same alignment as the caster—and others whom they escort, while touching—to pass through the wall unharmed).

The poison of the beaks is debilitative (see page 73 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide),* and takes effect in 2d4 rounds. Its effects last until *neutralize poison* ends them, or until 3d4 days have passed.

If the *wall* is attacked by any spell or spell-like effect, or is reduced to 99 or fewer hit points, it creates *darkness 15' radius* outward from its "outside" surface, and bites any victims it can reach.

The material component of this spell is any sort of snake, living or dead, and the beak from an octopus or any avian.

LOLTH (minor goddess)

Lolth is a cruel, capricious goddess, thought by many to be insane. She delights in setting her worshippers at each other's throats, so that the strongest, most devious and cruel will survive to serve her. Lolth roams the Realms often, appearing in answer to the rituals of drow priestesses; and working whatever harm she can to the enemies of drow. She secretly wants to be worshipped by humans and elves of the surface Realms, and sometimes journeys among their



communities, whispering of the power Lolth can bring.

Roleplaying Notes: Lolth is malicious in her dealings, and coldly vicious in a fight. She enjoys causing death, destruction, and painful torture.

Even more, Lolth enjoys corrupting elves and humans to her service. In drow form, her direct physical embrace can act as a *charm person* (save at -4) on a human or demi-human of either sex. She customarily leaves a poisonous spider to aid, guard, and keep watch on those who personally serve her, and gives them any one magical item that she possesses or can seize.

Lolth can appear kind, rendering aid to those she fancies—but she really cares only for herself; her favor and aid can never be relied on.

Statistics: AL ce; WAL any evil (96% ce drow); AoC drow, spiders, evil and darkness; SY black spider with female drow head (head is always at bottom of figure).

Lolth's Avatar (priest 16, wizard 14)

Lolth's avatar appears in the Realms as a giant black widow spider, but prefers to change into the form of a human-sized, exquisitely beautiful female drow. She can also combine the two forms, appearing as a giant spider with a coldly beautiful female drow head. This is believed to be her 'true' form.

Statistics for Lolth's spider and combined spider/drow form are identical, and are given in parentheses below. Changeing from one form to another takes an entire round, during which Lolth can take no other action. During transformation Lolth is AC 0, and cannot use any spell-like powers.

Lolth can call on any school of magic for her spells, and is not harmed or discomfited by light. She enjoys the company of spiders of all sorts; when in drow form, she often clothes herself entirely in clinging spiders.

When summoned to the Realms, Lolth likes to roam the Underdark, basking in the terrified worship of the drow. She customarily takes any magical items they offer to her (or that strike her fancy). When encountered, she typically has 1d4 such items, of the DM's choice. She can employ these in any form, regardless of class limitations.

Str 21	Dex 21	Con 21
Int 21	Wis 16	Cha 23 (3)
MV 15 (1, Wb 9)	SZ M: 6' (L: 12' dia.)	MR 70% AC -2 (-4)
HD 16	HP 128	#AT 1 (2)
THAC0 5	Dmg by weapon +9 or spell (4-16 + poison + webs)	

Special Att/Def: In any form, Lolth's avatar can be struck only by magical weapons. She is immune to all poisons. Cold and electrical attacks do only half damage, but Lolth takes triple damage from holy water (each vial does 3d6 +3 damage from a direct hit, and 6 points of damage from a splash). She can *heal* herself thrice per day, at will (this prevents the use of spells or other spell-like abilities in the same round). She also has 120'-range infravision and 90'-range *telepathy*.

Lolth can always *summon spiders* (01-20%: 1d8+8 large spiders; 21-50%: 1d6+6 huge spiders; 51-90%: 2d4 giant



spiders; 91-00%: 1d4 phase spiders) and *command any arachnid* within 90' (consider this a spiders-only *charm monster* with no saving throw; intelligent beings who have magically assumed spider-form save at -5). She can use *ESP* on any drow within 60', one target per round (affecting drow only).

In spider form, Lolth can cast 30'-long web strands from her abdominal spinnerets. These webs are equal in effects to a *web* spell, and are covered with a flesh-corrosive secretion: 1-4 points of damage per round of contact (unless a save vs. poison is made). Lolth can swivel her spinnerets to fire in all directions (except through her own body), and can cast 2 strands per round, as well as biting or using a spell-like power.

Lolth's bite does 4-16 damage, and the victim must save vs. poison at -4 or die (after 1-2 rounds of twitching agony). In spider form, Lolth can use any one of the following powers in a round, at will: *comprehend languages, confusion* (creature looked at only; the victim need not meet Lolth's gaze to be affected, but gets a saving throw versus paralyzation to avoid the effects), *darkness 15' radius, dispel magic, dimension door, tongues, true seeing,* and twice per day use *phase door* and *read magic.*

In drow-spider form, Lolth can use the powers already given, plus (once per day): *clairvoyance, change self, domination, mind blank* and an effect equal to *Evard's black tentacles.*

In all forms, Lolth can create drow armor for herself. She can also employ powers available to her in her human-headed arachnid form, but not the spell-like powers of her giant black widow spider form. She can use spells as a 16th level priestess or 14th level wizard.

Lolth's Manifestations

Lolth rarely aids her worshippers directly, preferring to watch and enjoy their sufferings and struggles. If she wants someone to know that she is watching, Lolth causes a smirking pair of sensuous female lips to appear on any spider present. The spider is always outlined in a flickering purple *faerie fire.* If no spider is present, Lolth will create a smiling, spider-shaped "shadow" of giant size.

More rarely, Lolth acts directly. In such cases, her power may be seen as a flickering black, mauve-edged radiance around a person or object temporarily imbued with her power.

The Spider Queen's power typically gives any or all of the following aids to affected things:

- double damage (triple to giant-type creatures)
- immunity to breakage or other damage (automatic success of all item saving throws)

It typically gives any or all of the following aids to affected beings for 1 turn:

- the ability to strike first in any combat round
- a 4-point improvement in Armor Class
- a 3-level improvement in fighting ability ('phantom' hit points gained —all damage taken is subtracted from these points first; when phantom points disappear at the end of the turn, only excess damage is actually suffered by the character)

Lolth's Laughter—soft, cruel feminine chuckling—is often heard by drow who have lost her favor or who have gone mad. It is also heard by foes of the drow, especially when beings of these sorts are alone and/or fleeing in the endless cav-



ems and passages of the Underdark. Beings of less than 2 hit dice flee uncontrollably, as if affected by a *fear* spell, until they die, are knocked unconscious, or can hear her laughter no more.

Duties of the Priesthood

Priestesses of Lolth are the rulers, police forces, judges, juries, and executioners of drow society. They wield power daily, and most do so in a manner in keeping with the cruel and capricious nature of Lolth herself.

As one long-ago priestess, Elvanshalee, put it, "Love? What is love, or respect? Bah! Soft, useless feelings that none can lean on. Fear, now—fear is as strong as steel, and can be leaned upon. I want to be feared."

Elvanshalee's words have become one of the temple credos of Lolth's clergy. Most of them carry snake-headed whips (detailed under "Drow Magical Items"), and delight in using them often.

Priestesses of Lolth strive to act as Lolth wishes, and to manipulate (often by brutal force) their fellow drow to do so, too. The ultimate aim of every priestess is to achieve and keep the Favor of Lolth. The spirits of priestesses who die in her favor are believed to go to the Abyss, where they become yochlol and other servant creatures. Those who die in Lolth's disfavor are thought to pass into torment on another plane, perhaps to someday return to the Realms as a snake or spider (drow beliefs are confused on such matters, and often change with time and location).

The duties of a good priestess, then, are to do whatever is necessary to gain and keep the Spider Queen's favor. Although treachery and cruelty are often rewarded, Lolth does not look kindly on those who let personal grudges and revenge-taking bring defeat or shame to their House, clan, city, or band.

Requirements: AB standard; AL ce; WP any; AR a; SP all, animal, charm*, combat, creation*, divination*, elemental, guardian, healing, necromantic, protection, summoning, weather; PW 8) immunity to all spider venoms, 9) *spiderform* (as spell; detailed below); TU command.

Aims, Credo, and Ethos: All drow who do not worship Lolth are to be converted or destroyed. All weak and rebellious drow are to be weeded out. All who impugn the faith must perish.

Males who act independently of Lolth's dictates (and those of her priestesses) are to be sacrificed to Lolth. Those "faithful" whose loyalty is weak must be eliminated. Children are to be raised as loyal worshippers of Lolth—and let each family produce at least one priestess who will serve the Spider Queen better than her parents.

Such are the commands of Lolth—but the priestess who follows them blindly is on a slippery path leading to swift death. Success in the service of Lolth lies with those who are attentive to the ever-changing, often contradictory will of Lolth.

Rituals: Rituals to Lolth are customarily practiced in female-only company, in a sacred room or area. Rituals requiring extraordinary power or a public display may be celebrated in the open, and in mixed company.

Lolth requires homage —submission in prayer, plus offerings—regularly from her priestesses.

When Lolth's aid is required, sacrifices



must be made. These sacrifices are traditionally faithful drow and/or captured foes, killed with a spider-shaped knife whose eight descending legs are blades(2d6 hp damage). In other cases, gems or other precious objects may be burned in braziers, as prayers of offering are chanted. The most powerful rituals to Lolth defy detailed description, and are seldom seen by non-drow.

Lolth enters the Prime Material Plane only when it pleases her to do so. Otherwise, Lolth's servant yochlol (fully detailed elsewhere in this sourcebook) are reached by means of ritual.

Such contact rituals require the use of a brazier of burning oils, coals or incense—burned in a vessel fashioned of a valuable black material (such as onyx, obsidian, or a golden bowl whose interior is studded with black pearls). The flames provide material which the magic transforms into an interplanar *gate* temporarily linking a certain layer of the Abyss with the Prime Material Plane. Through this link, the yochlol appear, using flame material to fashion semblances of themselves.

If called with sufficient force, a yochlol can emerge fully from its *gate*. Lolth usually orders her handmaidens to remain in the Prime Material Plane only so long as the flames that brought them remain—the dying of the summoning flame then allows a yochlol the safety of being sucked instantly back to the Abyss.

Yochlol who are summoned can keep the *gate* that brought them open while they communicate with Lolth and others in the Abyss. (Such communication demands their full attention, causing their Prime Material forms to go momentarily "blankfaced" and unhearing.)

They can also send one creature of the Abyss into the Prime Material Plane, loose of all control and against the wishes of the summoner. This act causes the destruction of the *gate* and the disappearance of the yochlol. Such "sendings" are usually myrlochar (monsters of the Abyss, described in this book).

In large, important rituals, priestesses of Lolth customarily use eight braziers, to provide additional flame material and in homage to Lolth (the flames represent her eight legs).

Customs, Rules, & Taboos: Lolth's capricious nature makes rules few, and uncertainty great. Of course, questioning Lolth's motives or wisdom is a sin. Aiding non-drow against drow is a great sin, as is ignoring the Spider Queen's commands in favor of love (Lolth often tests her priestesses, by ordering the sacrifice of a favored male consort). There are male priests of Lolth, but the Spider Queen very rarely allows them to rise above 7th level of experience.

Drow who lose the favor of Lolth are always given a single chance—usually a dangerous or difficult mission, though Lolth may test certain individuals by setting no task at all, and observing what they do—to redeem themselves. Those who willfully fail are destroyed; Lolth commands other worshippers to do this (in turn, testing *them).* Those who fail through mischance or poor planning or execution are usually transformed into driders (described in Chapter 1, and under "Elf, Drow" in volume Two of the *Monstrous Compendium).*

Lolth often plays favorites among her drow worshippers—but those who ride high one season are warned that Lolth can turn her dark face upon them without warning—and undoubtedly will, sometime soon.



Equipment, Garb, & Offerings: When participating in rituals, priestesses of Lolth wear robes (black, trimmed with dark red and purple—or, for lesser or novitiate priestesses, dark purple or red trimmed with black). Statuettes of the Spider Queen, usually worked of black stone, are present in all temple chambers. Marble and obsidian are favored materials for statuary and temple furniture. There are always large, ornately-carved braziers, and at least one altar of black stone.

Noble Houses have their own private temples, and every drow city has at least one large, open public octagon for large rituals, calls to war, and the like. Most cities also have a grand temple to the Spider Queen, used for training priestesses.

In every temple, despite large differences in size, opulence, and importance, certain constants apply. Inner chambers are reserved for the worship and business of Lolth, including most spellcasting. These chambers are always shrouded in darkness, except for the radiances involved in spellcasting and rituals. Antechambers are set aside for war-councils, and most business wherein priestesses meet with drow males and outsiders.

Most temples have guardian spiders, often hidden, and occasionally magical in nature (such as *jade spiders,* detailed in the "Drow Magical Items" chapter). In the event of an attack, even the harmless sorts of spiders can be equipped with armor-sheaths that bear House defense runes. In the case of intelligent, *charmed* spiders, *house insignia* with active magic powers may be wielded. (These devices are also described in the chapter dealing with magical items.)

Rituals to Lolth involve the burning of precious oils and incense, live offerings, and riches of all sorts, particularly gems. These are customarily placed in a bowl-shaped depression in a black altar (or burning brazier). These offerings are always consumed in the flames of Lolth at some point in the ritual. If Lolth is particularly displeased, or impostors are present, the black-and-red flames that leap from the braziers to consume the offerings may also arc to consume other valuables present, such as magical items, jewelry, and clothing. Typically, Lolth's flames do little more than humiliate a burned priestess, destroying her garments and dealing her 1d4 hp of damage, but an impostor or intruder receives a searing flame attack that does 6d6 damage (half if a save vs. spells, at -2, succeeds). If this occurs, every priestess of Lolth present in the chamber receives a "free" *darkfire* spell (detailed in the "Drow Spells" chapter) to wield, even if they are carrying a "full load" of spells or have other *darkfire* spells memorized. The spell comes with the strong command to blast the interloper who would so insult Lolth.

Specialty Magic: Many spells developed by clergy of Lolth have passed into general use by the drow. A few remain the exclusive property of priestesses of Lolth. Two of the most common and important such spells are detailed here.



Fifth-Level Spell

Spiderform (Alteration, Necromancy)

Sphere:	Animal, Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	4 rounds + 1 round/ level
Casting Time:	2 per target
Area of Effect:	One creature/level
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables a priest to turn one or more normal-sized mammals or arachnids into giant spiders (AC 4; MV 3, Wb 12 (can leap up to 6 horizontally, and 12 or more vertically, to pounce on prey); 4+4 HD; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (bite), akin to those described in Volume 1 of the *Monstrous Compendium.*

The bite of spiders created by this spell is not fatal; instead, the bite forces a save vs. spell, with failure resulting in the victim being *stunned* for one round, and *slowed* for the duration of this spell. If the particular spider causing the *slow* is destroyed, the effect is immediately ended.

Creatures to be transformed must be alive and relatively unharmed. Their numbers limit the number of giant spiders a high-level priest can create.

If a spider or other arachnid is transformed by this spell, they temporarily become a Giant Spider as described above, losing their natural poison and any web-spinning powers. They can readily navigate in existing webs (including the sticky strands of *web* or *spellweb* spells).

If spellcasting is interrupted for any reason, or the "normal" creatures used already bear a magical dweomer (e.g. they are *polymorphed* into their present form), the spell is ruined, but forces them into their "real" form. The caster of the *spiderform* is *stunned* for 1 round.

If this spell is used on any drow, and overcomes its magic resistance, the drow is temporarily transformed into a drider under the caster's control (AC3, MV 12, THAC0 13, 1 attack: bite for 1-4 plus save vs. poison at -2 or be paralyzed for 1-2 turns; retains own spells, hit points, and intellect).

This control is like a *charm,* and lasts for 1 round per level of the caster. It is broken instantly if the drider is commanded to do anything contrary to its nature—that is, contrary to the known wishes of Lolth or its superiors, and anything clearly fatal to the drider. Transformation to and from drider-form takes 1 round, during which time the drider can take no action, and occurs at spell expiry or upon command of the caster. The affected drow usually (unless Lolth desires otherwise) remembers nothing of its time and actions as a drider.

The material component of this spell is a spider of any type small enough to be held in the caster's hand. It is crushed during spellcasting (hence normal, tiny arachnids are customarily used), and vanishes.

Seventh-Level Spell

Zin-Carla (Necromancy)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Varies
Casting Time:	4 rounds
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Special



This spell is "the highest gift of Lolth," granted rarely even to favored drow. It is a special form of *animate dead,* that enables the caster to create a special sort of zombie known as a *spirit-wraith.* Imbued with the skills (hit points, armor class, and THAC0) it had in life, this creation is telepathically linked to—and controlled by— the caster of this spell, usually a drow matron mother.

This spell may not be instantaneously granted, or may be denied entirely, at Lolth's will. It is granted only for the completion of specific tasks, and these may never be purely to work revenge or bring harm on other drow. Failure in the task brings on the disfavor of Lolth.

Zin-carla involves the forcible return of a departed soul or spirit to its body. Only through the willpower and exacting, sleepless control of the caster are the undead being's desired skills kept separate from unwanted memories and emotions. The duration of the spell is limited by the needs of the task, the patience of Lolth, and the mental limits of the caster—for a total loss of control usually means failure.

So long as that control is maintained, the *spirit-wraith* cannot tire or be distracted from its task. It does not feel pain or disability, and will continue to function as long as it remains mobile.

A *spirit-wraith* cannot be made to cast spells without losing control over its mind entirely, but can fully use combat and craft-skills possessed in life. If control is lost, the wraith becomes a revenant, driven by hatred and the memory of its violation at the hands of the spellcaster. Uncontrolled *spirit-wraiths* do not stop until the *zin-carla* caster is destroyed.

A *spirit-wraith* driven to do something against its old nature has a chance of breaking free of its control (treat as a *charm* spell, with the same saving throw as in life). For example, one cannot successfully use this undead to destroy a being that it loved in life.

Spell-like natural powers (such as the *levitation* ability of drow) are retained and can be used by the undead. The *spirit-wraith* can use its former experience and memories, as much as allowed by the linked caster. Both the zombie and the caster are immune to the effects of spells that attack the mind, and similar spell-like powers (such as the mental blast of a mind flayer). It knows wariness, anger, glee, hatred, frustration, and triumph, but not fear. It cannot be controlled by the spells and priestly powers normally used to command encountered undead—and control of it cannot thereby be wrested away from the caster of the *zin-carla.*

Spirit-wraiths do not breathe, but can speak (if allowed to do so by their controller). They can utter command and activation words, and the controlling caster can speak through them directly, but spell incantations will have no effect if uttered by the undead.

To stop a *spirit-wraith,* it must be physically destroyed—if it is still able to even crawl, it will do so, tirelessly, searching for a way to complete its task.

The material components of this spell are the corpse to be animated, and a treasured object that belonged to the person to be controlled. If the corpse is badly decomposed or not whole, other spells (such as *Nulathoe's ninemen)* and magical unguents will also be required, to restore it to whole, supple condition.

Wizards and other powerful creatures (such as mind flayers, aboleth, or cloakers) who raid or despoil drow cities can



expect to face either a full-scale attack—or a *spirit-wraith* or two.

VHAERAUN (lesser god)

Vhaeraun is the god of thievery and the furthering of drow aims, interests, and power on the surface world. He is also the god of drow males opposed to the matriarchy of Lolth, teaching that females are no better than males. He believes that drow should work with other elven races for common advancement—never associating or trading with duergar, svirfneblin, or other dwarven and gnomish races. (Humans and halflings can be tolerated.) Vhaeraun is handsome, even vain, and does not forget slights and deceptions.

Roleplaying Notes: Vhaeraun is proud, sometimes haughty, and bears grudges of legendary length. Any underhanded means and treachery is acceptable to him if it furthers his aims or is done in his service—but if others so treat him or his people, it is a deep sin that cannot go unpunished.

Vhaeraun is an active god, who finds it hard to hold aloof from the doings and needs of worshippers; there is a 15% chance that he will manifest if called on—and if the proper ritual is performed, his avatar is 20% likely to appear.

Statistics: AL ne; WAL any evil (drow of any alignment); AoC drow males and evil activity (particularly thievery) on the surface world, or against drow of other faiths in the Underdark; SY a black half-mask.

Vhaeraun's Avatar (thief 20)

Vhaeraun's avatar appears as a slim, graceful, handsome drow male, 16' tall and well muscled. His eyes and hair change hue to match his mood, from red (for anger) to gold (triumph) to blue (amusement) and green (puzzlement or curious interest). Vhaeraun always wears a long, flowing black cloak. Those looking at it in darkness can see stars, the moon, or whatever else is behind it, through it (even if the avatar is obviously within the portion they're observing). Vhaeraun's cloak melts into nothingness if removed from him, or if his avatar is destroyed. Its folds can harmlessly absorb seven spells of any level per day, and attract both *magic missiles* and area-effect spells such as *fireballs,* completely protecting the wearer (and nearby beings who would otherwise be harmed). Vhaeraun never wears armor of any sort, although his avatar may use protective magical items given to him by worshippers (regardless of class restrictions, so long as they function for beings of his alignment).

Str 16	Dex 19	Con 16
Int 18	Wis 12	Cha 19
MV 16	SZ 16'	MR 60%
AC 4	HD 20	HP 160
#AT 1 (2)	THAC0 1	Dmg by weapon (or spell)

Special Att/Def: Although he cannot normally use spells, Vhaeraun can duplicate and use any spell in the mind of a priest or follower of his faith, who is within 120'. This can be done in addition to physical attacks during a round. These spells function as if cast by an 18th level wizard.

Once every 6 rounds, Vhaeraun can cause a 70' range *bladebend:* the blade of any one edged weapon currently drawn and held twists about to strike its holder for full damage.



Vhaeraun's Manifestations

Vhaeraun prefers to appear as an avatar, but when he cannot (i.e. when rituals of summoning have not been performed), he sends a black, flitting shadow. It cloaks a favored being about the face, like a half-mask, and remains for 9 rounds. During that time, the favored being is:

- empowered with *true seeing*
- empowered to strike creatures normally hit only with the most powerful magical weapons, even if the weapon employed is not magical
- unable to fall, fumble, or miss footing on a leap or catch
- can move silently and *pass without trace* (as with the spell, a faint trail of magic is left)
- healed of 2d4 hp of current damage

This manifestation never favors the same being more than once per day.

Vhaeraun may also send a manifestation to signify his displeasure, or his defiance of rivals or enemies of his people. This takes the form of a floating, insubstantial half-mask of shadows, that drifts silently to confront the beings he wishes to (passing any magical barriers, and entering any place, regardless of guards, holiness to another deity, etc.). The mask can only move and (twice per appearance) utter a chilling, mocking laugh. Those hearing it must save vs. spell or be affected as if by a *fear* spell (without saving throw).

Duties of the Priesthood

Priests of Vhaeraun must encourage, lead, or aid bands of drow and allied chaotic evil creatures in thievery, and instigate plots, intrigues, and events to continually increase drow influence and real power in the surface Realms.

They must manipulate trade, creatures, and intrigues designed to frustrate and lessen powers and plans of drow priestesses (particularly those who serve Lolth), and continually foment rebellion or disobedience among drow males.

Drow thieves in need must be aided (even if female) — healed, bailed out of jail, or forcibly rescued. Drow males oppressed or under attack by drow females must be physically aided, in any circumstances. Cruelties against drow males must be avenged.

Requirements: AB standard (drow males only); AL ce; WP any; AR g; SP all, charm*, combat, divination*, elemental*, guardian, healing, necromantic, protection*; PW 3) *pass without trace,* once/day/level gained thereafter, 6) *animate dead, 9) locate object;* TU command.

Aims, Credo, and Ethos: The drow must forcibly claim a realm and rightful place on the surface world, and this must be a society of equality between the sexes. The existing drow matriarchies must be smashed, and the warring practices of twisted Lolth done away with, so that the drow are a united people, not a squabbling gaggle of rival Houses, clans, and aims.

Rituals: Priests of Vhaeraun utter prayers to the Masked God of Night whenever they accomplish something to further his aims. Offerings of the wealth and weapons of those they vanquish (enemies of the drow, or regalia of female drow priestesses) are to be melted in black, bowl-shaped altars. Priests of the god must be self-reliant; the only summoning ritual or spell they are allowed to



employ is to summon Vhaeraun himself. If Vhaeraun's avatar comes, an offering of a magical item must be rendered—or one will be taken. If no offering is present, the summoner will find himself on a *quest* to gain one, to be left on the altar with a prayer for forgiveness. Vhaeraun's avatar has been known to pursue thieves who make off with magic intended for him.

Customs, Rules, & Taboos: Rituals to summon Vhaeraun must be made in darkness, by night. The most important attacks, negotiations, and other activities of the clergy must also occur at night.

Contact and marriage with other elven races is encouraged. "Half-drow" usually breed true back into the drow race; Vhaeraun sees this practice inexorably raising drow numbers in surface lands.

Every priest must work to establish some sort of permanent drow settlement on the surface world, and either support that settlement's needs personally, or (preferably) make it self-supporting.

Equipment, Garb, & Offerings: No priest of Vhaeraun can wear armor, and dark garb is preferred. The god's holy symbol is a black mask, which can of course be worn and used like any mask. Poison use, manufacture, and experimentation is encouraged. Especially effective spells, poisons, and tactics devised by a priest are to be shared with the god—and thence, all clergy. Offerings of magic and wealth are to be made regularly. The more, and the more value, the more the god is pleased, though he favors daily diligence more than rare, huge "hauls."

Specialty Magic: Priests of the god have devised many spells, but these pass into general use (if not combat-oriented, they can even be sold to human and other wizards, as a sign of friendship, and to enrich the priesthood). A current project is to magically duplicate Vhaeraun's *bladebend* ability, but this has not yet been perfected. The spell so far results in writhing weapons flying at random all about a chamber (DMs can use this as a spectacular "desperation" spell employed by a priest of Vhaeraun). The most important spell yet developed by the priesthood of Vhaeraun follows; it allows them to construct magical items normally beyond the powers of priests.

Soultheft (Alteration, Necromancy)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	Neg.

This spell enables the caster to steal the soul or spirit of a recently-slain character, to empower magic. The caster's holy symbol must be touched to the corpse, within 1 turn per level of the caster. The spell calls the life-force of the dead character back into the holy symbol. It will escape again, by itself, if the holy symbol is not touched to another object within 4 turns.

The object to receive the life-force must be touched by the holy symbol as a secret word is spoken. The transfer takes 1 round to occur. If transfer is interrupted, the life-force "snaps" back into the holy symbol, but the transfer can be attempted again.

Once transferred, the life-force empowers an item to function magically for 1



month or 10 charges per level or hit dice (in life) of the dead character. Remember, this spell uses a trapped soul for an "engine" to power a previously-enchanted magical item. It cannot be used to turn a plain item into a magical one, i.e., one cannot use this to turn a sword into a *holy avenger +5*.

The character cannot be contacted, raised (or otherwise called back to living existence) unless the object empowered by the stolen life force is identified, seized, and held by the being doing the raising. The enchanted object will betray the fact that it holds the essence of a particular being to any magical scrutiny—i.e., a *detect magic* will not only show a magical aura, but will reveal the ghostly image of the stolen soul trapped within the item.

The material components of this spell (not consumed in casting) are the priest's holy symbol and the corpse. A suitable enchanted item must also be prepared, but need not be present at the casting of the *soultheft*.

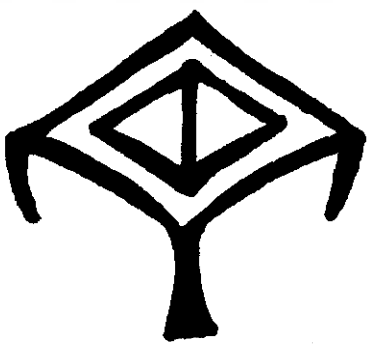
Splinter Faiths

Drow in the Realms have embraced offshoots of the major faiths, usually following a charismatic mortal leader who claims to be something more.

The only such cult known to be still active, albeit in a debased form, is the She-Spider Cult, a Thayan-based sect that tried to link worship of Shar with devotion to Lolth.

Opposed in the end by both goddesses, the Cult enjoyed initial success as a secret society operating slaving and drug-running operations in Mulhorand, Unther, and southern Thay. They eventually degenerated into a criminal gang without divine support. It still stages fake rituals to thrill worshippers and to slay foes under the guise of sacrifices.





CHAPTER 4

The High History of the Drow

The history of the drow in the Realms is long and grand, but very murky to the sage or interested inquirer of today. Truth has been willfully twisted by clever and fanatical drow to serve many partisan noble House interests and the major drow faiths. It is usual in Lolth-dominated communities, for example, to pretend that traitors to the Goddess, or vanquished noble Houses, simply "never existed." Although this is a hollow deceit at the time, it effectively "rewrites history" by four generations later. The history of the drow can thus only be recounted in general terms—following the work of Shahaerynus, a drow sage who dwelt in long-ago Myth Drannor, and compiled *The High History of the Drow*. What you are about to read are excerpts from this book. Susprina, Elminster tells us, is currently working on a sequel.

The Descent

We know very little of the Ilythiiri, or "Elves of the South," before, this crucial event. Even then, they were known as "Dark Elves," for the hue of their skins. They dwelt in the jungles and hot forests of the South. A proud, warlike, culturally advanced (some sages of other elven peoples say "decadent") folk, the Ilythiiri attacked all neighbors, including other elven tribes. Their cruel raids and depredations, ordered by warlike nobility and the clergy of their two cruel deities, Ghaunadaur and Lolth, forced elves, humans, dwarves, and others to ally against them.

Defeated in a series of titanic magical battles, the dark elves fled into underground warrens they had earlier discovered. This event, known as "the Descent," marked the end of the drow as a surface-dwelling race.

The Dark Wars

The warlike drow nature did not change when they escaped their surface foes. They immediately launched a series of wars to establish territories in the Underdark. They began by stealing and seizing dwarven magical items, and using them against the dwarves—establishing an enmity that is still strong today.

The drow then fought among themselves, noble against noble, priest against priestess, for rule of their new realm. This all-out war ended amid great magical explosions that brought down the roof of the largest dwarven cavern they had seized, great Bhaerynden. The ceiling collapsed entirely, burying many drow and the shattered dwarven cities. The cavern, now open to the sky, became known as The Great Rift. The surviving drow nobles gathered what people, slaves, and equipment they could seize, and fled into the Underdark in search of places to dwell. "The Scattering" brought about the many rival, self-interested cities where most drow live today.

The Drow Today

Drow still hate each other, and strive fiercely to eradicate or weaken those of rival cities, clans, noble Houses, or faiths. This constant strife keeps other races far safer than they would otherwise be, as the drow (urged on by the clergy of their gods) fight among themselves, rather than launching new wars on others.

Some few (perhaps 15% of all) drow are deemed "good" (actually, most are better described as Lawful or Chaotic neutral in alignment) by other races. They look to the surface, and worship Eilistraee, turning their backs on the darkness their



brethren have embraced.

It is not easy for a drow with a peaceful disposition, or feelings toward what most surface dwellers deem "good," to develop a strong personal morality or even survive for long in the cruel, twisted societies of the drow cities. Only truly outstanding individuals (Drizzt Do'Urden, for example) manage to win free of drow lifestyle. They are the heroes—and, usually, the wandering adventurer-outcasts—of the race.

No "good" drow is yet known to have succeeded in turning the bent of a drow city toward good. Altering the smallest of customs and (dis)courtesies is impossible without the approval and support of Lolth, who dominates most such societies. City dwellers are ruled by fear, deceit, and cruelty; it is impossible for them to act other than as the "dark villains" surface Realmslore makes them out to be, as long as they remain in the cities of the Underdark. Drow who leave cities are dismissed and ignored—except by drow merchants, who are glad to have drow surface contacts.

Drow who dwell in small roving bands, however, or who reach the surface and manage to establish an existence there, can and have adapted to local mores and conditions—and exhibit natures no more good or evil than the general run of humankind.

Initial daytime exposure to the surface world usually blinds drow (DM'S NOTE: apply "Total Darkness" effects to them, as though they were human; if they bind their faces, they fight as if in "Starlight," as detailed in the "Darkness" section of Chapter 13, "Vision and Light," of the *Dungeon Master's Guide).* Drow who are prepared for the effects of sunlight, and who have practiced fighting by sound alone, can reduce these penalties. (DMs must adjudicate this on a case-by-case basis, following a general rule that the drow will be quite effective against opponents within arm's reach, and vastly less so, the further away foes are.)

Initial daylight surface exposure is also likely to give a drow horrific sunburn. After an initial attack, this burning quickly lessens, but drow will always prefer to keep their skin and heads covered during daylight hours.

Drow who adapt to the surface always remain comfortable in darkness, and able to see at night as well as a cat does. They also retain a lithe agility, a dislike of bright lights, open sky, and loud noises. They also have an unparalleled viciousness in battle. The detrimental effects of light on drow (detailed in their *Monstrous Compendium* entry and, in this book, in the Magical Items chapter under "Attunement") fade slowly; all negative modifiers are reduced (toward normality) by 1 point for every year of continuous surface-dwelling, until they cease. If the drow remains on the surface for at least one year after all negative effects cease, they will never return, and the individual can thereafter operate freely both underground and aboveground. ("Surface dwelling" does not preclude sleeping in caves, exploring cellars, tombs, dungeons, and other underground areas for periods of less than four continuous days, or dwelling indoors and avoiding direct sun.)

Some drow have built successful trading careers in Waterdeep, Calimshan, Chessenta, and Mulhorand. Others are known to lurk in the dark depths of The High Forest and The Far Forests, or trade with Zhentil Keep's merchants in the woods northwest of Shadowdale.





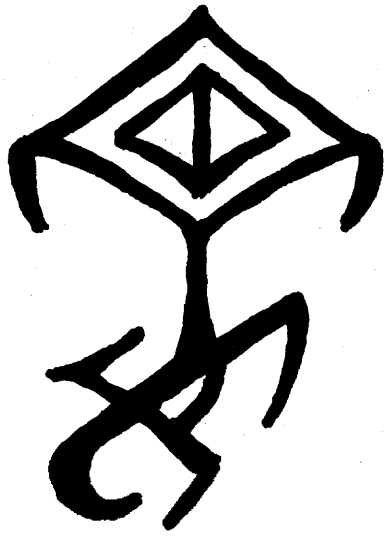
CHAPTER 5

Drow Spells

This chapter details a few common and important spells used by dark elves. Some of these magics were created and are used by various surface-dwelling races. Drow have stolen both spells and wizards during night raids on The World Above, and have also independently devised spells known in surface realms.

Several spells (some since refined and altered by the drow) may date from before the Descent, when drow dwelt in The Lands of Terrible Light. The DM is urged to create new and terrible spells unique to individual drow cities and families, and to advance drow mastery of magic with the same vigor and success that surface wizards attain.

New dark elven spells can appear whenever desired; their use against player characters goes a long way toward establishing a sense of mystery and power around drow. Folk in the Realms hate and fear drow, considering them capable of anything a proud, energetic, and evil surface kingdom can achieve; player characters should be no exception.



WIZARD SPELLS

First-Level Spells

Spidereyes (Alteration)

Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	1
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables the caster to temporarily see through the eyes of any living arachnid, which must be touched. This creature, and a strand of spiderweb, are the material components of the spell. This spell does not give the caster any direct mental contact with the spider, and does not confer any sort of control over the arachnid, or ability to learn its thoughts or emotions.

Most spiders have eight eyes (two compound, six simple) whose vision is not readily understandable to most intelligent races. The spell allows the caster to comprehend what the spider sees (with range, focal viewpoint, and usually infravision) as readily as the spider does. The range between spider and caster is limited only by the spell duration and the spider's travels, but the spell is broken if either spider or caster move to another plane of existence. The interposition of certain magical barriers, such as the border of a *minor globe of invulnerability* or any more powerful spell, between arachnid and caster will also end this spell.

Usually small, harmless spiders are employed by casters of this spell, to serve as spies where a caster dare not go—but often, frustratingly, a spider will not go or



look where the caster wants it to, unless controlled or influenced by additional spells.

Sometimes, this spell is cast on a giant spider (the caster requires a successful attack roll if the spider is hostile and not surprised) to see through its eyes while battling it, so that the caster and companions can strike from areas that the arachnid cannot see.

Second-Level Spells

Skyhook (Evocation)

Range:	60'
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	3 turns + 1 turn/ level
Casting Time:	2
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell creates a solid hook of magical force, invisible to all but the caster, at a desired location. The hook need not be attached to anything, and is usually created in midair over a pit or chasm. Once cast, it remains immobile. Creatures can hang onto it, ropes can be tied to or hooked over it (appearing to hang from empty air), and so on. It supports loads of up to 700 pounds.

If its weight limit is exceeded, the *skyhook* instantly vanishes.

Otherwise, it remains in place until the spell expires, unmoved by physical impacts, deliberate attacks, and magical effects. It cannot be physically harmed, but its own solidity and fixed location make it dangerous to creatures leaping, falling, or flying into contact with it. Two rounds before it expires, a *skyhook* warns its caster of impending collapse by fading into invisibility from the caster's gaze.

A *skyhook* is too small to be stood upon (i.e. to cast spells or fire missile weapons from, or serve as a perch from which to climb further), but its hook is large enough to provide purchase for thick cables or up to six pairs of grasping hands.

A *skyhook* can be destroyed by its caster (in 1 segment) by willing it out of existence, but the caster need not concentrate on it to maintain it. A skyhook saves vs. a *dispel magic* cast against it as if it were the caster, and gets a +4 bonus. It saves as the caster (no bonus) against a *disintegrate* spell, and can readily be destroyed by a properly-directed *limited wish* or more powerful spells.

The material component of this spell is a miniature metal fishhook (or metal hook of any size or type; in a pinch, a piece of metal crudely bent into a hook-bend can be used). The spell is known to drow, dwarves, human miners and warriors as an aid in climbing, or the placing of temporary supports when bridging chasms, crossing large subterranean caverns near the ceiling, and scaling cliffs and fortress walls.



Third-Level Spells

Dark Wings (Alteration)

Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	3
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Neg.

This spell transforms a piece of bat wing and a piece of bone into a short-lived, magically-assisted pair of giant bat wings. These powerful appendages have a 15' tip-to-tip span, and sprout from the shoulders of the caster or one who is touched by him (who must save to negate the spell, even if willing).

The wings allow the affected being to fly clumsily (MV Fl 17 (D)), but with great power. With these wings, a being can slow a fall, carry companions or gear of up to twice his normal body weight, or glide to bring up to three times the winged being's normal body weight to a harmless landing.

In flight, the wings can buffet other creatures for 2d4 damage per round (slowing movement to 7 per round), and can be used to shield the winged creature and others, giving them the wings' AC of 4 if desired. The wings can take any amount of damage without collapsing or harming their owner. They slow walking movement rate to a maximum of 7, however, dragging behind the being on which they have grown. They cannot be removed before the spell expires, even by the caster, without the use of *dispel magic* or *polymorph* magics.

Hand of Darkness (Alteration)

Range:	10 yards/level
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 turn + 1 round/level
Casting Time:	3
Area of Effect:	Light sources within a 30' radius sphere
Saving Throw:	None

This spell cloaks the light sources that the drow hate so much, quickly and with great precision. On the round after casting, the radiances caused by glowing magical items, *light* and *continual light* spells, torches, fires, and other light sources within the 30'-radius area of effect "go out." The sources themselves are not extinguished (an unseen fire still burns fuel, and beings coming into contact with it), but simply give off no light.

The spell area of effect is aimed as if the caster were launching a direct attack (a "missed" attack roll causes the spell focus to be other than where it was intended; refer to the Scatter Diagram in the "Grenade-Like Missiles" section of the "Combat" chapter of the *Dungeon Master's Guide).* A *dispel magic* spell ends the effects of a *hand of darkness,* but will also destroy any magical *light* that it was masking. *Continual light* or "at will" radiances such as glowing magical swords are negated for 1 round/level of the caster of the *dispel.*

Creatures requiring light for vision (a *hand of darkness* spell has no effect on infravision) suffer "Total darkness" penalties while this spell is in effect (see "Vision and Light" in the *DMG).*

Hand of darkness cannot be dispelled by subsequent casting of *light* or *continual light* spells. The effect continues until



the *hand* spell expires or is specifically dispelled. Beings in the area cannot see light from outside, and light sources brought into the area have their lights "extinguished." The material components of this spell are a piece of coal or handful of ash, a small sphere of black glass or stone, and a scrap of black cloth, fur, or hide.

Fourth-Level Spells

Acid Bolt (Conjuration)

Range:	200 yards
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	4
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	Special

Surface-dwelling wizards view this spell as an improved version of *Melf's acid arrow,* but *the acid bolt* is a very old spell, thought to date from before the Descent of the drow.

The caster creates a continuous, straight stream of shimmering liquid that emerges from the caster's hand, and can be aimed (caster's attack roll to attain a "direct hit"). On impact, the *bolt* forms a 10'-radius sphere of acid, and explodes outward in a burst of liquid.

Creatures struck by splashes from the *acid bolt* (any creature within a 20'-radius danger zone) take 2d4 damage.

Creatures struck directly by the *bolt* suffer 4d4 damage, and all items worn or carried by them must make saving throws.

Splash damage only lasts one round. Direct hits do damage for multiple rounds, unless the acid is somehow neutralized. The *acid bolt* does an additional 1d4 damage per round for every additional three experience levels of the caster. Note that this is different from the effects of the *Melf's acid arrow* spell, in that items carried by targets only make a saving throw only on the round of the initial strike.

The material components of this spell are spittle from the caster, a dart, thorn, needle or icicle, a crystal or glass sphere of any size, and a clear glass vial of acid.

Backlash (Necromancy)

Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	4
Area of Effect:	One spellcaster
Saving Throw:	Neg.

This little-known spell is a weaker version of the *death link* spell (detailed in the *Forgotten Realms Adventures* sourcebook). It affects only priests, wizards, and other beings who cast spells (as opposed to those who exercise spell-like natural powers requiring neither study nor material components). If cast on non-spellcasters, it is wasted (unless they are under the effects of an *imbue with spell ability* spell).

The *backlash* spell leaves only a faint dweomer, waiting inactive for later triggering. It cannot be removed by a *dispel magic,* but will be ended by a *remove curse* or more powerful spell.

An emplaced *backlash* takes effect only when the victim first employs an offensive spell that fails—i.e., interrupted or incorrect spellcasting, a successful saving throw, or a target's magic resistance or immunity. Consequently, this spell's effects may occur hours or years after its casting.





The *backlash* causes the spell to work with full effect on the caster of the failed spell. It negates any saving throws or immunities that would normally apply.

A *backlash* only works once. Any number of these spells may be placed on a single spellcaster; only one will take effect at a time, the earliest-placed being triggered first. Rumors persist of certain drow wizards who have developed fifth-level *backlash* spells that last for a random number (probably 2-5) of spell failures. Other types may be triggered only by certain sorts of spells (schools, levels, or involving particular elements, such as flight/air or fire).

Stop (Alteration)

Range:	10'/level
Components:	V,S
Duration:	4 rounds
Casting Time:	4
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell instantly confines the movements of any one target creature within range (including the caster himself) to the spatial location occupied when the spell takes effect.

In other words, the target's motion—airbore or otherwise—is instantly halted, and cannot move away from that spot. The *stopped* creature has full freedom of movement, but will remain in one spot for the duration of the spell.

Stop affects only one creature, chosen by the caster (seen or visualized, concentrated upon, and within range). It can therefore serve to separate a chosen rider from an unaffected mount.

Willing or not, target creatures are fully affected for 1 round. On the next round, a target, gets a saving throw vs. spell. If it is successful, the spell fails and movement begins again, slowed to *feather fall* (q.v., *Player's Handbook)* rate for the duration of the spell. If the save fails, the *stop* continues until the spell ends.

If the caster starts to cast another spell, *stopping* ceases. Creatures able to *plane shift* or become *astral* or *ethereal* can escape a *stop* spell.

A *dispel magic* cast on the target creature will free the creature instantly any time after the initial one-round *stopping.* Similarly, wearing a *ring of free action* allows a target creature to escape instantly after the first round of a *stop* spell.

Fifth-Level Spells

Passweb (Abjuration/Alteration)

Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	5
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Special

This spell enables the caster (or one creature) to pass through existing webs, both natural and magical, as though they did not exist. It also permits passage through barriers of rope or vine, provided the area to be passed through incorporates only non-magical, organic materials. The webs are not disturbed or altered in any way by this spell or the passage through them.



A recipient of this spell may try to free creatures or objects already trapped in a web. Three successful Strength Checks and a Dexterity Check must be made in the same round, for an attempt to be successful. (If a trapped being is unwilling to be freed, and able to actively resist, failure is automatic.)

This spell does not confer immunity to the effects of *viscid globs* (created by a particular type of magic wand; see the "Drow Magical Items" chapter.)

The caster is always affected by his own *passweb,* but a touched target creature, even if willing to be affected, gets a saving throw vs. spell. If it is successful, the spell fails and is lost.

Sixth-level Spells

Summon Spider (Summoning)

Range:	60 yards
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	6 rounds + 1 round/ level
Casting Time:	6
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell calls one spider per level of the caster, of any type and size (the most common sorts of spiders are detailed in Volume 1 of the *Monstrous Compendium).* If multiple spiders are summoned, they may be of various types.

The arachnids appear within spell range and attack creatures indicated by the caster until the spell expires, the caster commands them to cease, or the monsters are slain.

The spiders never attack the caster, and do not check morale. If commanded to attack each other, slain in battle, or if another being attempts to usurp control of them by magical means, the *summoned* spiders vanish into thin air.

If no opponent exists to fight, the spiders can perform other services. They will obey only the caster.

The material components of this spell are a bag (of any size), a small candle, taper, or lamp (not necessarily lit), and a spider leg or entire spider corpse.

Seventh-Level Spells

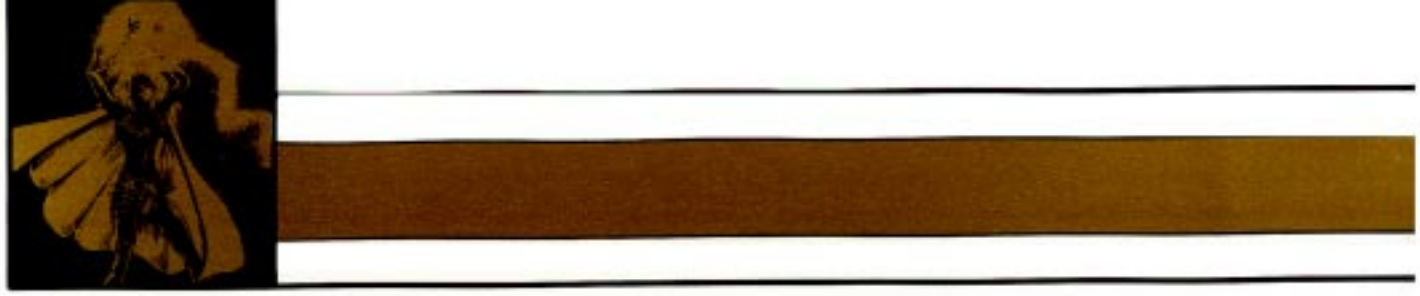
Vipergout (Conjuration)

Range:	0
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	7
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell causes live snakes to be created in the mouth of the caster, who must spit them out. They do not choke or otherwise harm the caster. Until the spell expires, they serve the caster, fighting to the death.

One snake appears for every 3 levels of the caster (rounding down); each round, roll 1d4 to determine how many serpents issue from the caster's mouth in that round, until all the snakes have appeared (the rate of appearance is not controllable by the caster). Until all have issued forth, the caster cannot speak, cast spells with a verbal component, or utter command words—but can breathe normally, swallow without affecting the arrival of the snakes, and freely engage in movement and combat.

The snakes are of the Normal Poison and Normal Constrictor varieties (detailed under "Snake" in Volume 1 of the



Monstrous Compendium), not giant-sized. The spell does not enable the caster to empower them with special powers or increased intelligence. A *summoned* snake cannot be made to attack its fellows, the caster, or itself. *Dispel magic, charm* spells, and all other means short of slaying caster or snakes will fail to break the caster's control over the snakes.

Controlled snakes attack as the caster wills. They can switch targets if desired, can constrict without biting (or without harming), use their coils and jaws to turn keys, move small objects about (e.g. bringing a wand to the caster), gnaw ropes, and engage in other non-combat activities.

The material component for this spell is a piece of snakeskin.

Eighth-level Spells

Death Spider (Alteration, Necromancy)

Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	8
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	Neg.

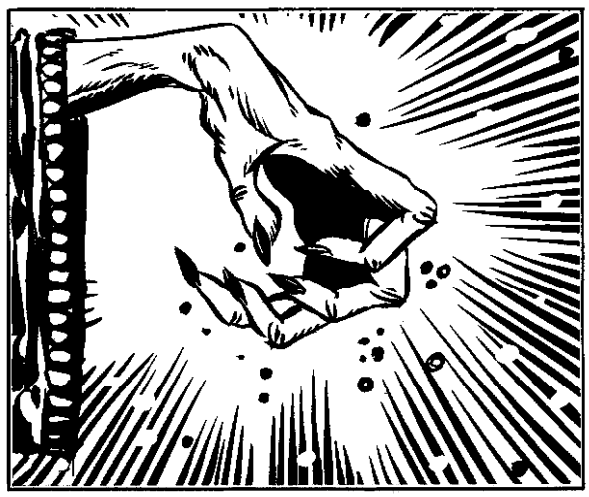
This horrible spell causes one of the victim's own limbs to instantly become a mindless, hairy black spider. The spider twists about and starts eating the victim's flesh, doing 1-2 points of damage per round. Anything worn or carried by that limb drops away.

The victim is allowed an initial save against the spell. If it fails, only a *remove curse* in tandem with a *polymorph* spell, or a *limited wish* or more powerful means, will end the condition. (A *dispel magic* will be effective only if cast within 2 rounds of the touch that confers the *death spider* condition.) The afflicted limb may be severed and burned to destroy the *death spider.* If done within a round of its creation, only a hand or foot will be lost (with accompanying 1d4 + 1 hp, System Shock roll, and loss of the limb's mobility and abilities). If left until longer, the entire limb will have to go, with the loss of 1d12 + 4 hp and a System Shock Roll.

A *death spider* never has a poisonous bite or other spider powers, but if unchecked, it will inexorably consume its entire host.

One day after the host is entirely eaten, the *death spider* will exhibit the web-spinning, venom, and other spells of the spider type it resembles, and become a giant-sized spider of that type.

The material components of this spell are a small live spider of any sort, a drop of the digestive juices of any creature, and a tooth (from any source).







Ninth-Level Spells

Black Blade of Disaster
(Evocation, Conjuration/Summoning)

Range:	10'/level
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	6
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables the caster to create a black, blade-shaped planar rift. It moves about as the caster wills, providing the caster can see and concentrate on it, at a rate of up to 90'/round. If the caster ceases concentration on the effect at any time, the *blade* collapses into nothingness at the end of that round.

A *black blade of disaster* can cut through *prismatic walls* and *spheres, walls of force,* and all other known magical barriers, including an *anti-magic shell.*

Such a *blade* can also be used to strike in battle, twice per round (it has the same THAC0 as its caster). A *black blade* does 1-12 structural (or hull) points of damage (1d12 x 10) to inanimate objects that do not bear dweomers. If walls have spells upon them, consider them magical barriers (see above).

Against creatures, a *black blade* does 2d12 points of damage per strike, attacks twice per round, and absorbs all magical attacks and effects directed at it. Anyone trying to seize or physically attack it is affected as if struck by the blade.

If the caster rolls a natural 20, the *blade* causes the victim to *disintegrate.* Nothing short of a *wish* will restore a character destroyed in this fashion.

PRIEST SPELLS

First-level Spells

Spider Climb (Alteration)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round + 1 round/level
Casting Time:	1
Area of Effect:	Creature touched
Saving Throw:	Neg.

The version of *spider climb* used by drow priestesses is a slight improvement over the widely-known wizards' spell.

Bare hands and feet are required, and the affected creature moves at MV 9 (6 if at all encumbered). Movement is silent, unless loose rock, etc. is dislodged. Objects that weigh less than 1 pound will stick to the affected being's hands and feet for the spell duration, making certain types of spellcasting virtually impossible. The effect can be prematurely ended by the caster, by pronunciation of a word (if the affected being is not the caster, the caster must be within a range of 10'/level for the word to have any effect).

Sufficient force will tear a *spider climbing* being away from the surface he is clinging to; the DM must determine what occurs according to the situation.

Unlike the wizardly equivalent of this spell, no material components are required. If the caster is the recipient of the spell, its duration can be (by silent will) stopped and started; i.e., a climber who reaches a ledge can "turn off" the effect and sleep, cast other spells, and engage in other activities, "turning on" the *spider climb* later in order to climb down.



This option is not available to recipient creatures other than the caster. Such beings must be touched for the caster to transfer the magic to them. This can be done at any time during the life of the spell—i.e. a priest can *spider climb* for a time, touch another being, and by will transfer the remaining time of the ability to that other being. If a being is unwilling to be affected, a saving throw vs. spell is allowed, to negate the effect (this ends the spell immediately).

Spidereyes (Alteration)

Sphere:	Animal
Range:	Special
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	1
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables a priest to temporarily see through the eyes of any living arachnid, which must be touched. Unlike the wizardly version of this spell, a priest requires no other material components. Other than this, it is the same as the wizard spell *spidereyes*.

Second-Level Spells

Darkfire (Alteration)

Sphere:	Elemental
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	2 rounds/level
Casting Time:	2
Area of Effect:	One fire source
Saving Throw:	Special

This magic was developed for use in rituals of worship to Lolth, but has since been adapted into an offensive battle-spell. It requires the same "material components" as a normal fire. The spell may either transform a normal fire, or ignite unlit fuel into *darkfire*.

Darkfire gives off no light at all, although creatures with infravision see *darkfire* as a brighter signature than regular flame. All of its combustion is bent to producing heat and "wild magic" energy, which it does very well: contact with a brazier or hand-lamp of *darkfire* typically does 2d4 hp of damage (plus, flammable items or garments worn or carried by the target must make saving throws against magical fire).

In battle, *darkfire* usually emanates from 1-2 of the caster's limbs, as desired. It does not harm the caster at all, except to burn away clothing it touches. A blow from a flaming limb typically does 1 hp of physical damage, and another 1-8 hp of burning damage.

Darkfire from a flaming arm can be willed into handfuls, and thrown: 1 "ball" per round, attacks as if caster were striking directly, 10' range. Thrown *darkfire* does 1d3 hp damage plus 1 point per level of the caster upon striking—and the DM should note its flammable effects on wherever it lands, in the event of a miss. "Missed" *darkfire* rages where it lands for 1-2 rounds before burning itself out.

Fire resistance of all sorts is only partially effective against *darkfire;* the saving throw bonuses normally conferred by such magic are only half as effective, and any damage reduction is also halved. (In any case where total immunity usually applies, a saving throw vs. spell is required to escape all *darkfire* damage.)



Mindtouch (Divination)

Sphere:	Divination
Range:	5 yards/level, 90 yards maximum
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 turn/level
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Neg.

Similar to the wizards' spell *ESP,* a *mindtouch* allows the caster limited contact with the minds of nearby living creatures. Surface thoughts can be read, but no mental influencing or direct communication is possible. Unintelligent creatures will yield only emotions and instinctive thoughts.

Undead and creatures without minds (as we know them) cannot be contacted by this spell. Contact can be broken or initially foiled by any thickness of lead, two or more inches of any metal other than lead, or two or more feet of rock.

One creature per round can be probed; the priest can freely switch the "listening" from one being to another. The priest can even engage in spellcasting or activities requiring intense concentration without ending the spell—but any round in which the priest does not concentrate on the thoughts of a being is a round wasted. The spell's time until expiry "keeps running," and without concentration, nothing will be read.

The caster can use the spell to help determine if a creature lurks in ambush; even if no thoughts can be read, the priest can "feel" the presence of a mind, and gain some idea of its current state (agitated, active, damaged, at rest, and so on). Even a clear thought-reading will not



always reveal what sort of creature is being read.

The priest's holy symbol is the material component of this spell.

Third-Level Spells

Continual Faerie Fire (Alteration)

Sphere:	Weather
Range:	120 yards
Components:	V,M
Duration:	Permanent
Casting Time:	6
Area of Effect:	12 sq. feet/level, within a 70-foot radius
Saving Throw:	None

This spell allows a priest to permanently "paint" an object with pale glowing light. This radiance may be of any hue desired (amber, green, red, and ale-brown seem most popular, in that order, although adventurous clerics sometimes employ even more exotic hues).

The area can be of any size up to the priest's limitations, but must be continuous: a row of coin-sized patches of light would require a row of spells, whereas a ribbon of light in the same area could be created with a single spell. In this manner, large glowing murals are drawn on the walls of some drow structures.

In addition to its artistic uses, continual *faerie fire* is quite sensitive to life-energy. Undead creatures, however disguised, radiate an aura of blackness when limned with *continual faerie fire* (this does not extend to evil beings from other planes turnable by high-level clerics, only to "true" undead).

All beings and objects possessing a dweomer radiate an additional, flickering white aura, concentrated around the magic they bear—e.g. a sword or potion flask. The entire person of a *polymorphed* being glows, as does the entire extent of any *illusion.* Spellcasting or magical item activation within the radiance of a *continual faerie fire* is accompanied by tiny, winking white motes of light. Note that aura-effects are cumulative; an undead imbued with spell ability or disguised by an illusion would have a black aura, haloed with a flickering white one. The magic that animates some undead is part of their essential nature, and so would not cause a white aura unless they also bear some special magical item or cast dweomer, or are themselves engaged in spellcasting or the discharge of spell-like natural powers.

The radiance does not harm undead or dark-dwelling creatures, and never approaches the intensity of sunlight, but creatures using normal vision can attack and function as if in normal light. The radiance does not alter or damage objects or creatures within its area of effect in any way. Moving objects and creatures retain a glowing outline for 1 round after the round in which they leave the lit area.

The material components of this spell are a piece of foxfire, a drop of water, a pinch of ashes, and a pinch of bone dust. *Dispel magic* ends this spell's effect forever. It operates independently of magical *light* and *darkness,* functioning as if neither existed. Within areas of bright light, the winking white lights of magical outlines are hard to see, and the outlines around beings and objects appear as a faint fuzziness around the perceived edges of the outlined form.

This spell is most often used to illuminate temples or other important buildings. Outside cities, drow most often use



it in the Underdark to illuminate areas where slaves of surface races must work, and to mark trails, landmarks, or borders (often with coded hues).

Spellweb (Evocation)

Sphere:	Creation
Range:	5 yards/level
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 turn/level
Casting Time:	3
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	Neg. or 1/2

A *spellweb* is the priests' equivalent of the wizardly web spell. The spell creates a many-layered mass of strong, sticky strands similar to spider webs but far larger and tougher. The *spellweb* must be anchored to two or more solid and diametrically opposed points (such as floor and ceiling or opposing walls), or the *spellweb* collapses on itself, and disappears.

A *spellweb* always glows with an eerie greenish luminescence when forming; it fades to white as it dwindles in intensity. At the caster's option, the completed *spellweb* can be lightless, or can glow with a very faint pearly radiance, aiding creatures in locating it. Once this decision is made, it cannot be changed.

Priests of all levels can feel when any *spellweb* they have cast is disturbed, damaged, or expires. This tenuous linkage does not cause the priest any pain, nor can it be used by any known creature as a way of contacting or otherwise harming the caster. The caster can't cause the *spellweb* to melt away before its expiry until 9th level, whereupon the caster gains the ability to cause his *spellweb* to dissipate in 1 round, by utterance of a particular command word.

A *spellweb* covers a maximum area of 70 cubic feet. Creatures caught within the area of a *spellweb,* or who subsequently touch its gluey fibers, become stuck fast. Anyone in the area of effect of a *spellweb* as it forms must save vs. spell at -2. If the saving throw succeeds (and space permits), they have managed to jump free of the forming *spellweb*. If the surroundings make this impossible, they are not entitled to a saving throw.

Engulfed creatures of less than 13 Strength are trapped until the spell wears off or they are freed by another creature.

Creatures of 13 to 17 Strength can break through one foot of *spellweb* strands per round. Creatures of 18 or greater Strength can break through two feet of webs in a round.

Creatures that are of Huge or larger size, and possess a motive strength and bulk normal for their size (i.e. a giant slug), can brush through 10 feet of webs per round.

Missile fire is generally ineffective against creatures trapped in webs. Creatures stuck on the outside of a web are reduced to AC 10 (9 if they currently possess either Strength or Dexterity scores of over 15; 8 if both ability scores exceed 15).

Spellweb strands are readily flammable. A magical *flaming sword* can slash them away as easily as a hand brushes away cobwebs. Any fire—such as a torch, flaming oil, or candle—will set a *spellweb* alight. It burns away in a single round, freeing trapped creatures amid much choking smoke (no harm, but reduces visibility enough to cause -2 on all attack rolls for the round following the *spellweb's* ignition). All creatures within



or stuck to a flaming *spellweb* take 2d4 points of damage from the flames, ere they are freed.

The material components of this spell are the priest's holy symbol, a crystal of any size and type (e.g. a diamond or a tiny grain of sugar or salt will serve equally well), and a piece of spider web.

Giant Spider (Alteration)

Sphere:	Animal
Range:	20 yards
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	3 rounds + 1 round/ level
Casting Time:	2 per arachnid
Area of Effect:	One arachnid/level
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables a priest to turn one or more normal-sized arachnids into giant spiders (see "Spider" entry in the Volume I of the *Monstrous Compendium).* Unlike normal giant spiders, the bite of the spiders created by this spell is not a fatal poison; instead, failure of the poison save results in the victim being stunned (no attacks or deliberate activities) for one round, and *slowed* for the rest of the spell duration.

This spell only affects arachnids; insects, crustaceans, and other similar small creatures are unaffected. The material components of the spell are the priest's holy symbol and the arachnids to be transformed. They must be alive and relatively unharmed, and their numbers limit the number of *giant spiders* a high-level priest can create.

Even if a spider is normally poisonous, or the arachnid is a non-spider of some sort, the spell transforms them into a Giant Spider as described above. They will be unable to spin webs, but can readily navigate in existing webs (even the sticky strands of *web* or *spellweb* spells).

If spellcasting is interrupted for any reason, or the "normal" spiders used already bear a magical dweomer (e.g. they are other creatures *polymorphed* into spiders), the spell is ruined. They are freed from arachnid-form by the attempt to use them in a *giant spider* spell, and the would-be caster is *stunned* (unable to think or act coherently) for 1 round.

Venom Immunity (Necromancy)

Sphere:	Guardian
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round + 1 round/ level
Casting Time:	3
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	None

This spell affects the caster or one touched recipient creature. It renders the recipient immune to the effects of *all* toxins for the duration of the spell.

Poisons foiled by this spell are permanently neutralized; they cannot later affect their target, if still present when the spell wears off. Later attacks with the same poisons, however, would have normal effects: unlike a medicinal antidote, once the magical *immunity* expires, it leaves no trace resistance.

Unlike the more powerful *neutralize poison,* this spell has no effect on poisons already present in the victim. It will foil a poison that first contacts its victim in the same round that the victim receives a *venom immunity* spell.

Fourth-Level Spells

Attunement (Alteration/Necromancy)

Sphere:	Guardian
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	1 round
Area of Effect:	1 creature
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables the affected being to safely use the magical powers of *house insignia,* and all other items bearing the same House identifier as part of their enchantment. *Attunement* also allows a being to pass the traps and wards of House defenses without harm.

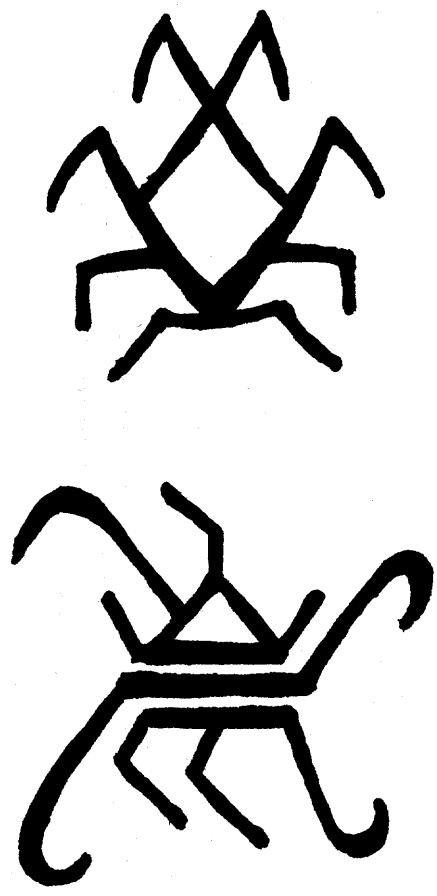
The spell places knowledge of how to wield *insignia* powers in the recipient's subconscious mind—but does not identify any of the powers, or give any idea of their nature and numbers.

The effects of this spell last until the *insignia's* accompanying *curse* (see the *house insignia* section of the "Drow Magical Items" chapter) is triggered, or the attuned being is slain. The material components of this spell are the holy symbol of the caster, at least one drop of the recipient's tears, and a tiny moonstone or diamond (all but the holy symbol are consumed in the spellcasting).

Passweb (Abjuration/Alteration)

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	4
Area of Effect:	One creature
Saving Throw:	Special

Other than a shorter casting time, this is the same as the 5th level wizard spell *passweb.*





Fifth-level Spells

Control Vapor
(Alteration, Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere:	Weather
Range:	40'
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 round/level
Casting Time:	5
Area of Effect:	10'radius/level hemi-sphere
Saving Throw:	None

This spell enables a priest to alter the movement rate and direction of natural or magical smokes and vapors, including breath weapons, spells, and creatures in gaseous form. Within the area of effect the caster is able to hold the vapor stationary or move it up to 10' per round in any desired direction. If the vapor passes out of the spell's stationary area of effect, control is lost.

Creatures who are *wind walking* or in gaseous form get no saving throw to avoid the spell's effects. They are in complete control of the caster. Creatures able to freely leave gaseous form can still do so, but at half the usual rate. Clouds of insects and other swarming lifeforms amorphous-form but non-gaseous beings are not affected by this spell.

Drow primarily use this spell to funnel fresh air into remote caverns, not for battle purposes.

Summon Spider
(Conjuration/Summoning)

Sphere:	Animal
Range:	60 yards
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	4 rounds + 1 round/level
Casting Time:	5
Area of Effect:	Special
Saving Throw:	None

Other than the shorter duration and casting time, this is the same as the sixth-level wizard spell *summon spider.* Also, no material components are needed for this version.

Undead Regeneration
(Necromancy) Reversible

Sphere:	Necromantic
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	Instantaneous
Casting Time:	5
Area of Effect:	One undead
Saving Throw:	None

By means of this spell, the priest can "heal" an undead, restoring to its unlife a number of hit points equal to 1d6 plus the caster's level. Gaseous and intangible undead can be "touched" by a caster reaching into the space they occupy. The spell prevents normal undead attacks or effects of contact with undead from affecting the caster.

The reverse of this spell, *drain undead,* inflicts a like amount of damage. Undead "drain" damage is not gained as healing or extra hit points by the caster. The same protections against undead



powers are given to the caster as *undead regeneration* confers.

Only undead can be affected by either version of this spell.

Sixth-level Spells

Spider Bite (Evocation)

Sphere:	Combat
Range:	Touch
Components:	V,S
Duration:	Special
Casting Time:	4
Area of Effect:	Target creature
Saving Throw:	None

Also known as *venom bite,* this spell confers the poisonous biting ability of a spider to the caster. A successful attack roll is required to administer the poison, and the caster can only bite exposed or clothed flesh (armor is right out). The number of times the bite has venom effects, and the power of those effects, depends on the caster's level:

11-13: one bite only; Poison Type B.
14-16: one bite only; Poison Type C.
17-18: one bite only; Poison Type D.
19-20: two bites; Poison Type D.
Over 20: two bites; Poison Type E.

The effects of these poison types are detailed on page 73 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* in Table 51.

Spider bite can be saved for hours or days after casting, as long as the caster undertakes no subsequent spellcasting during this time.

A bite delivered, successful or not, is considered to "use up" the magic. Victims receive a saving throw vs. poison at -3 to avoid the bite effects. A successful save against one bite attack has no influence on later saves by the same victim, against the same or another *spider bite* caster.

For the entire time this spell is in effect, the caster is protected as if by a *neutralize poison* spell.

Seventh-level Spells

Repulsion (Abjuration)

Sphere:	Guardian
Range:	10 yards/level
Components:	V,S,M
Duration:	1 round/2 levels
Casting Time:	7
Area of Effect:	Creatures in a 10-foot-wide path
Saving Throw:	Neg.

The priestly version of the *repulsion* spell developed by the drow differs slightly from the magic familiar to surface-dwelling wizards.

The priest must be able to confront the creatures to be affected—he must see them, and be seen. As the casting ends, flickering black flames seem to emanate from the caster, streaming outward to define the pathway of effect.

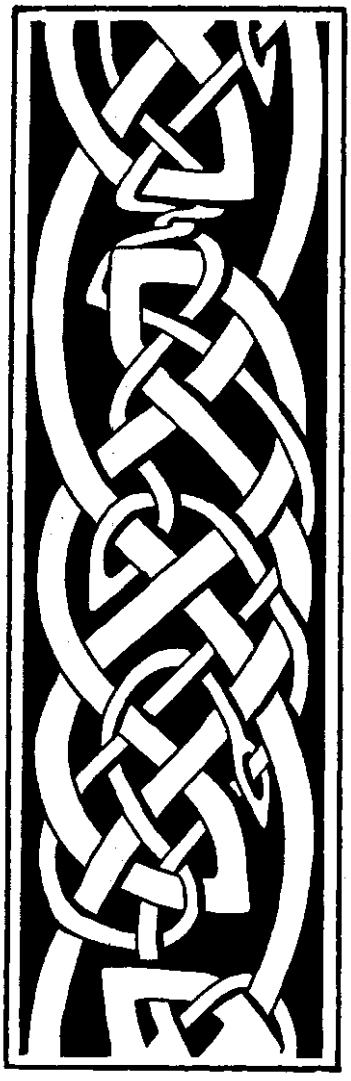
Repulsion forces creatures in its path to move directly away from the caster, at their normal movement rates. The caster can pick a new direction each round, in any direction desired,

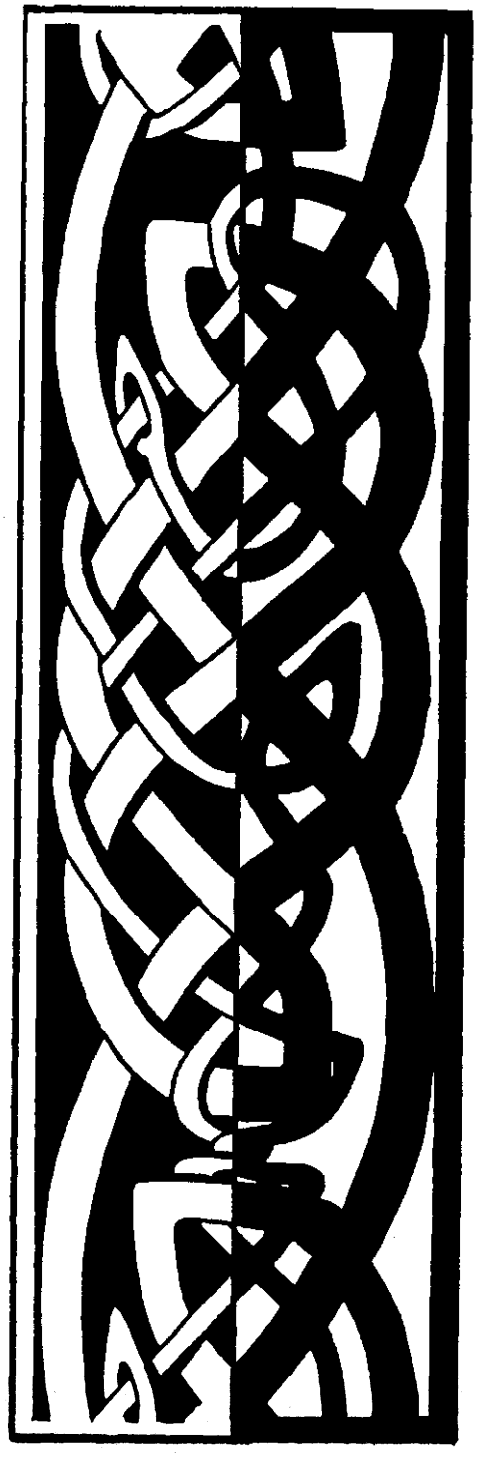
Creatures who fail their save retreat for a complete round, even if this takes them beyond spell range. This spell is not effective against drow or creatures of chaotic evil alignment —but other sorts of

evil creatures will be affected.

The spell ends instantly if the caster undertakes any other spellcasting, intricate action, or hand-to-hand combat. The material components of this spell are the priest's holy symbol, a miniature sword blade (or normal dagger or knife), and a flame, spark, hot coal or ember.

Elminster notes that drow are skilled at magic, and constantly devise new spells! Adventurers, be warned!





Designs used by House Aleanrahel



CHAPTER 6

Drow Magical Items

This chapter details a number of important magical items used by drow. Some have been created and used by surface-dwellers of several races; drow have been known to seize not only magical items, but the wizards who created them, during night raids on The World Above. Other items are unique creations of the drow.

Several of the methods of making items may indeed date from that long-ago time before the Descent, when drow dwelt in The Lands of Terrible Light. Whatever their origin, all of the items in this chapter are known to be in current use by drow—and the secrets of their making to be possessed by some.

With each item's entry, experience-point values and suggested gold piece sale values appear. The former apply only to the creation of such items, not their possession. The latter are guides for DMs to use in valuations, where desperate PCs must part with items—magical items more powerful than potions and scrolls are not sold openly to anyone, anywhere in the Realms.

Items appear in this chapter in the same order as in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.* The only exceptions to this are Drow Clothing and *house insignia.* When using the Magical Item Tables therein to determine drow treasures, put these items at 12 and 13 on the tables, moving the normal results for those numbers to 20.

Drow magic is as energetic and advanced as the researches of surface-dwelling mages. New magical item inventions are frequent, and such items are usually deadly offensive weapons.

Drow Clothing

The radiations of many areas in the Underdark alter and augment certain specially-crafted items of drow garb. These include the cloaks and boots worn by most drow. The cloaks, known as *piwafwi,* are fire-resistant (+6 on the wearer's saving throws vs. fire). Both cloaks and boots are 75%-effective equivalents of *cloaks* and *boots of elvenkind,* detailed in the *DMG.*

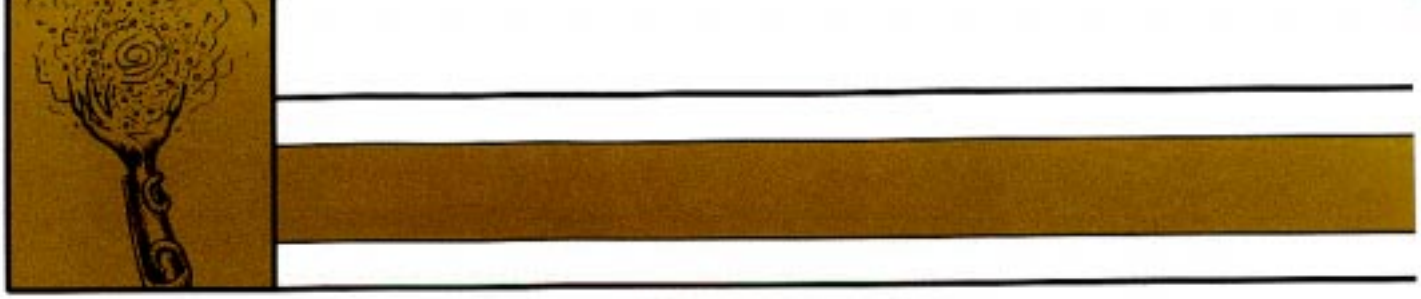
The non-encumbering, black mesh adamantite-alloy armor worn by almost all drow warriors encountered (equivalent to *chain mail +1* to *+5),* and the bucklers many of them use (which carry a magical bonus of +1 to +3), are also imbued with their abilities thanks to the strange radiations of the Underdark.

While these items perform as if they were magical, they do not in fact bear dweomers. The reasons for this are discussed in the "Drow Craftwork" chapter. Experience values are therefore not given for crafting these (PCs would have to spend years learning to make such items in radiation-strong, drow-controlled areas of the Underdark). Resale values for seized items tend to be 1,000 gp per cloak, buckler, or pair of boots, and 2,000 gp per suit of armor. Double value is given if the items are known to have never been removed from Underdark radiations, and 1,000 gp more for high-bonus armors.

Potions

Potion of Magic Resistance: Drow babes and infants have a weak, fluctuating natural magic resistance (from 02-40%; roll 2d20 to determine resistance on a given round). To protect their children, drow alchemists long ago devised a potion whose battle use has spread among the race.

Usable by drow and all other creatures who drink of it, whether or not they have



a natural magic resistance. One quaff of this potion affords a being 2d4 rounds of augmented magical protection, equal to d6 x 10 + d8 x 1% (i.e. roll 1d6 for "tens," and 1d8 for "ones"). If the imbiber possesses magic resistance (of any sort) already, the effects of the potion temporarily replace that resistance (not augment it).

This potion cannot increase magic resistance above 96%, and its protection cannot be extended past 2d4 rounds. A flask can contain up to four doses, but any being affected by this potion cannot be further aided by it (or another draught of the same sort) for 2d4 turns. If the being imbibes additional doses, they will simply have no effect —although their taste and the slight tingling of the nerves they produce is identical to the sensations they give when working.
XP Value: 500 Suggested GP Value: 1,000

Scrolls

Drow use scrolls more often than surface-dwellers. House wizards and high priestesses seldom risk themselves on patrols, but often prepare scrolls to strengthen their underlings. If the scrolls are misread, the unfortunate underling is blamed (often posthumously).

All of the spells known to human spellcasters appear on drow scrolls, especially *dispel magic* and those that alter stone or earth. There are also scrolls unique to drow magic, one of which is detailed here.

Protection from Earth and Stone: (Reading time-2) A protective sphere 20' in diameter is centered on the reader. Earth and stone falling into this sphere are slowed, as if by a *feather fall* spell, and come to rest gently, doing no damage to things they strike. They are weightless, and can be redirected even by fingertip pressure.

If the reader moves, the sphere moves with him. All beings within the sphere can move at normal speed, but are themselves protected by a *feather fall* effect, and can fall great distances without harm. Objects not in contact with a living being lose this effect, and can be hurled or dropped to strike with their usual force.

These scrolls are customarily used by drow patrols to escape the effects of cave-ins. The protection of this sort of scroll lasts for 3d4 rounds. XP Value: 2,000 Suggested GP Value: 10,000

Rings

Ring of Anti-Venom: This ring is ornately carved from horn, tooth, or bone. It gives the wearer immunity to all poisons—ingested, insinuative, contact, and gaseous. Each time a saving throw vs. poison is required, it automatically succeeds, draining 1 charge from the ring.

A *ring of anti-venom* is created with 2d10 charges, and may be recharged by a cleric of 12th or higher level. Attempts to increase the efficacy of the ring beyond 20 charges always result in its shattering. If the ring's charges are exhausted, it instantly crumbles into useless dust. XP Value: 2,000 Suggested GP Value: 10,000 (assumes full charges; deduct proportionally if lesser power is known to both vendor and purchaser)

Ring of Arachnid Control: The wearer may control one giant or 10-40 normal-sized arachnids of any type. This in-



cludes beings who have magically assumed any arachnid form.

Arachnids are not allowed a saving throw unless they have an intelligence of 3 or greater *(polymorphed* characters receive the best class-related saving throw available to the character).

The wearer must be able to see the arachnids to control them. Control lasts as long as the wearer maintains visual contact, concentrates on the arachnids, and does not engage in spellcasting or combat. (The wearer may move slowly if doing so does not break the line of sight.) When the wearer stops concentrating, the arachnids are free to run away or attack. The effects of this ring are otherwise identical to those of a *ring of mammal control* (see DMG). Like that ring, this one has charges. One charge is exhausted per activation. The ring will have 10d10 charges when created.

The ring can be activated once per hour. It can be used for up to a full turn, but if concentration is broken, the ring's powers cannot be called upon again until an hour has passed.

XP Value: 1,000 Suggested GP Value: 4,000

Rods

Rod of Tentacles:

The construction of these fell items is a secret held by drow who worship Ghaunadaur (see the chapter on "Drow Religion"), but apparently involves *animate object, enchant an item, permanency,* and some sort of *monster summoning.*

Tentacle rods are of various types, but all are 2'-long, dark rods with a thickened hand-grip at one end, and either three (lesser rods), six (greater rods) or seven (master rods) 8'-long tentacles at the other. These life-like arms reach and writhe of their own accord when the rod is used as a flail. The color of the tentacles denotes the type of *tentacle rod.*

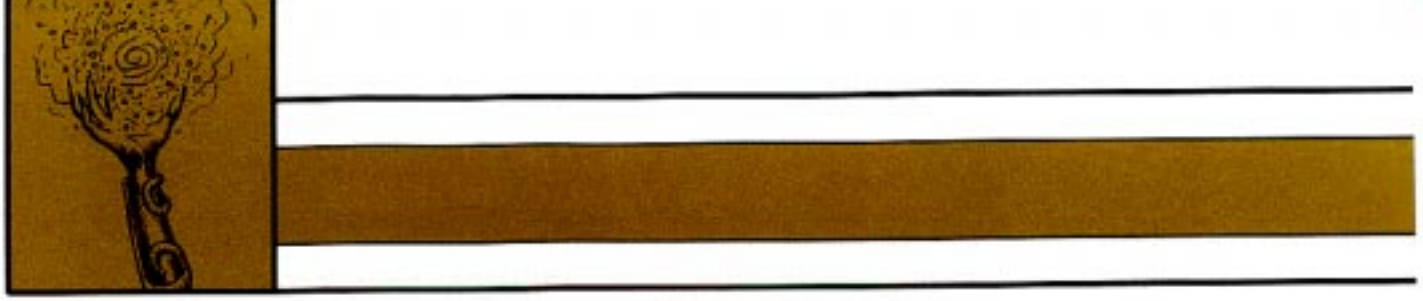
These rods function in the hands of priests of any evil alignment, and then only if a specially enchanted ring of control is worn as well. Such a ring can control any *tentacle rod* of the type it is linked to. If a control ring is not worn, a *tentacle rod* exhibits none of its special powers, and functions only as a magical flail doing 2-5 hp damage (no bonuses).

No saving throws are allowed against the special effects of these weapons.

Lesser Tentacle Rods:

Purple: When wielded in an attack, each arm attacks the same target at THAC0 13, inflicting 3 points of damage. If all 3 arms strike the target in a round, the victim takes double damage (18 hp) and is *slowed* for 9 rounds. If struck by all three arms again during the *slowed* period, the victim is *slowed* for 9 rounds after the latest strike: the *slow* time is not cumulatively extended by each triple-strike. Control ring: rune-carved hematite (material value 500 gp). XP Value: 3,000 Suggested GP Value: 15,000

Red or russet: This does the same damage as a *purple* rod, but its triple-strike causes *total weakness* in the victim's right or left arm (whichever takes the brunt of the attack: determine by situation or randomly). The limb cannot be lifted, or used to strike, grasp, or carry things, for 9 rounds. Control ring: rune-carved rhodochrosite (material value 500 gp). XP Value: 3,000 Suggested GP Value: 15,000



Yellow: Does the same damage as a *purple* rod, but its triple-strike *dazes* an opponent for 9 rounds, causing -1 on attack rolls, and preventing the concentration necessary for spellcasting (magical items can be wielded and command words spoken). Control ring: rune-carved lapis lazuli (material value 500 gp). XP Value: 3,000 Suggested GP Value: 15,000

Greater Tentacle Rods:

Amber: The arms attack at THAC0 7, inflicting 6 points of damage each, and may be directed at multiple targets. If 3 arms strike the target in a round, the victim is numbed and attacks at -4 for the next 3 rounds. If all six arms hit a single target, that victim is *soul-burned,* bursting into flame for 1 round, and suffering 4d4 damage, 1d6 of which is a permanent loss of hp (all worn or carried items must save against "magical fire"). Control ring: carved ruby set with a cabochon piece of amber (material value 12,200 gp). XP Value: 5,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Black: Attacks and deals damage as an *amber* rod, but if all six arms hit a single target, that victim is *soul-chilled,* taking 6d6 hp of internal cold damage, 1-8 of which is permanent. The victim is also *slowed* for 6 rounds. Control ring: obsidian set with a black opal (material value 2,500 gp). XP Value: 5,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Jade: Attacks and deals damage as an *amber rod,* but if all six arms hit a single target, that victim is *feebleminded* (as the spell; effects last until a *heal, wish* or *limited wish* applied). Control ring: jade set with a diamond (material value 5,500 gp). XP Value: 5,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Violet: The arms attack at THAC0 7, inflicting 6 points of damage each, and may be directed at multiple targets, if any are within adjacent reach. If 3 arms strike the target in a round, the victim is *blinded* and attacks at -4 for the next 3 rounds. If all six arms hit a single target, that victim is *blinded* for 6 rounds, and loses 1 point of Dexterity for 2-5 years (a properly-worded *limited wish* or a *restoration* will restore this loss, but a *heal, regeneration, dispel magic,* or *remove curse* will not). Control ring: amber set with an amethyst (material value 2,500 gp). XP Value: 5,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Master Tentacle Rods

These extremely rare items have seven multi-colored tentacles, one of each hue of the other types of *tentacle rods.* The arms attack at THAC0 4, inflicting 10 points of damage each, and may be directed at multiple targets, extending with lightning speed to 16' in length, and retracting an instant after striking. If 3 arms strike the target in a round, the victim is robbed of 1-4 senses for the next 6 rounds. If all seven arms hit a single target, that victim is simultaneously affected by any two six-arm effects of a *greater tentacle rod* chosen by the rod-wielder. Control ring: carved malachite set with a star sapphire (material value 6,500 gp). XP Value: 7,500 Suggested GP Value: 25,000 (All *tentacle rod* sale values assume that a control ring for the same type of rod is included; otherwise, deduct 75% of the given price.)



Staves

Staff of the Abyss: This ornately-carved staff of leather-like horn is inscribed with fell black runes and vile images of fanged, many-tentacled cruel horned monsters. It is topped with a many-horned skull with grim, interlocking fangs. Whenever a special function of this staff is used, two amber flames appear in the eye sockets of the skull, and blaze for 5 rounds.

A strike from this staff inflicts 4-24 points of damage, which may be healed only at the rate of 1 hp per day (magical curatives cannot hasten this rate). If any creature of good alignment touches the staff, the staff deals this damage.

The wielder of a *staff of the abyss* can cause *fear* in any creature touched (save at -6); this power may be combined with an attacking blow, but is not automatic—the wand-wielder must concentrate on the effect.

The staff also has two special functions, each of which are usable only once per day.

- The staff-wielder may *summon* a vrock from the Abyss once per day (it will remain for 1 turn, unless slain or dismissed by the staff-wielder earlier). The summoned vrock will not attack the staff-wielder, and will obey him to the best of its ability. If the vrock is slain while serving the staff-wielder, the staff transforms the wielder into a replacement vrock, who is sucked into the staff, to serve its next wielder!

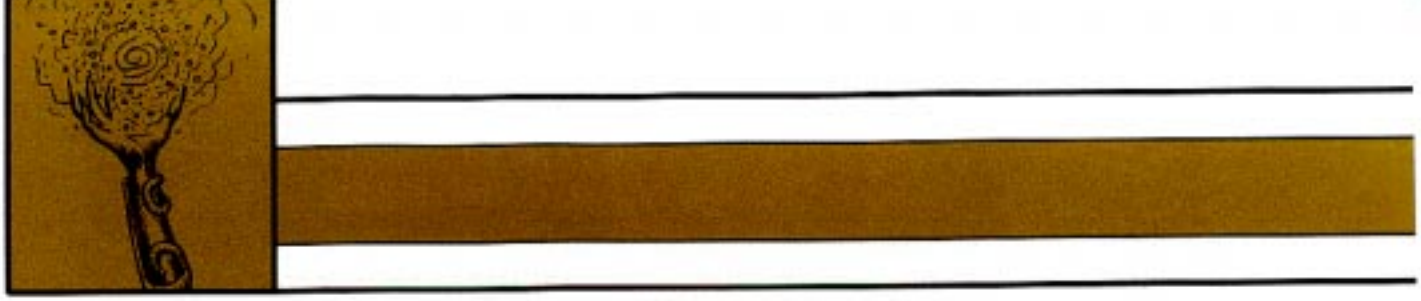
The **vrock** is AC -5; MV 12, Fl 18 (C); HD 8; #AT 5; Dmg 1-8 x2 (foretalons)/1-4 x 2 (rear talons)/1-6 (bite) +7 (strength bonus); THAC0 13; SA: spores, screech, first attack, *dance of ruin;* SD: spell-like powers, +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised; MR 70%; AL CE; MC8 ("Tanar'ri, True—Vrock"). The summoned vrock will always attempt its normal *gate;* Abyssal creatures brought in will ignore the staff-wielder, but obey the vrock.

The vrock resembles an upright, man-like taloned vulture. In aerial combat, they like to rake from above with their rear talons, wounding an opponent's wings (if any), or sending their target tumbling end-over-end in the air. They have a natural strength of 19, and fight in perfect coordination with others of their kind.

- The staff-wielder may also transform himself into a *glabrezu* for 5 rounds. The intelligence and awareness of the staff-wielder is retained, and the transformation heals 10-60% of current hp damage each time the change is made (once from wielder into glabrezu, and again when the change back is made). The change back is involuntary, not requiring that possession of the staff be maintained.

The **glabrezu -** form is AC -7; MV 15; hp (and saving throws) as in real form; #AT 5; Dmg 2-12 x2 (pincers)/1-3 (claws) or by weapon x 2/2-5 (bite); THAC0 11; SA: grab; SD: spell-like powers, +2 or better weapons to hit, immune to non-magical attacks; MR 50%; AL as in real form (but strong urges toward cruelty, destruction, and violence will be felt); see MC8 ("Tanar'ri, True—Glabrezu"). Unlike a real glabrezu, the transformed staff-wielder cannot *gate* in any Abyssal creature, or *plane shift* itself.

The glabrezu-form resembles a 15'-tall biped with russet to black hide, a dog-like head with bat-like ears, penetrating violet eyes, and fangs. Two humanoid, muscular arms end in pincers like those of a giant crab or lobster, and below these,



another two arms end in wicked claws, which are able to wield weapons, tools, and small items as a human would.

The effects of the form's spell-like powers cannot last beyond the 5-round period. Moreover, the staff-wielder can use a special defensive power in the first round of glabrezu-form, but does not master control of the offensive special powers until his second round in the new form. This type of staff may be used by any non-good intelligent being able to grasp it. XP Value: 10,000 Suggested GP Value: 50,000

Wands

Spider Wand: This foot-long, tapering stick of smooth, plain wood contains 5d10 charges when first created. It has two powers, each of which costs 1 charge per use. One power may be used per round.

A *spider wand* may project a silvery strand of weblike material, which acts as a *rope of entanglement* (detailed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide).* The webbing vaporizes after 3 rounds.

A *spider wand* may also be used as a striking weapon in combat. If it hits any opponent in a round in which it has not cast a web, the being struck must save vs. poison or fall dead in 1-2 rounds.

The wand can be wielded by characters of any race, class and alignment, and can be recharged by any priest of 9th or higher level. If the wand's charges are ever exhausted, it changes into the husk of a long-dead spider, and then crumbles away into useless dust. XP Value: 4,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

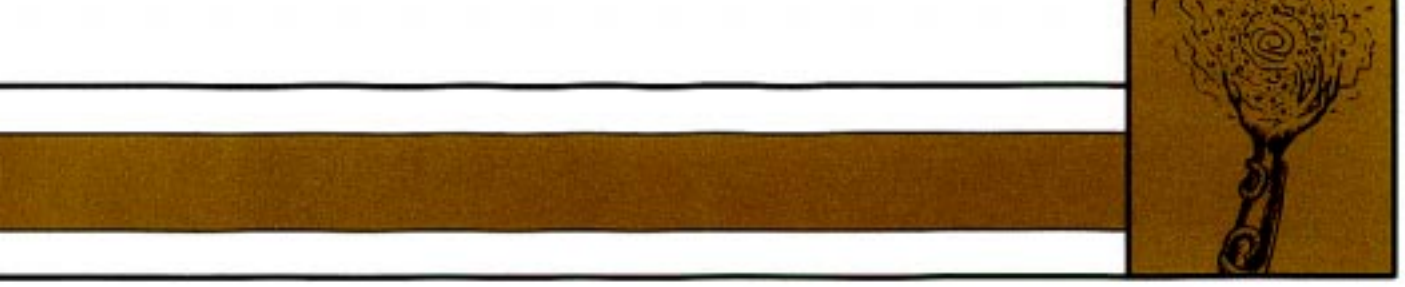
Wand of Acidic Spheres: This foot-long, tapering stick of smooth, plain wood functions only in the hands of wizards (including multi-classed characters), and has 6d12 charges when created.

Each use drains 1 charge, and the wand cannot be recharged; it vaporizes when exhausted. The wand can be activated once per round, firing a ball of acid in a straight line from its tip. The acid does 2d4 damage per round to whatever it strikes, and lasts for 3 rounds (items must make saving throws each round).

The ball of acid sinks into whatever it hits, doing no splash damage to surroundings. The acid ball strikes as if the wand-wielder was attacking with a missile weapon (normal attack roll against targets within 40', -2 against targets 41-80' distant, and -5 against targets 81-96' distant). XP Value: 3,500 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Wand of Darkness: These wands are fashioned of ebony or carved and polished bones; some of them have small, ornamental claws at one or both ends. Illithids, denizens of the lower planes, and other creatures of evil appear to be attracted by the activation of such wands. Any intelligent, speaking creature of neutral or evil alignment can use a *wand of darkness;* creatures of any good alignment cannot make it function, and suffer 1-2 points of damage per contact (or per round of continuous contact).

These wands have 1d20 + 80 charges when enchanted, and can be recharged only by powerful evil priests and wizards who know the proper spells and processes. When the wand is exhausted, it crumbles to useless dust —and the limb of any creature holding it shrivels and becomes useless (like a *staff of withering; heal, regeneration, restoration* or *limited wish* spells will reverse this effect).



The wielder activates the wand by a command word, and then chooses one of its four powers by silent act of will:

- *Darkness 15' radius,* lasting 4 rounds and centered on the wand-tip. The wielder and anyone else touching the wand can see perfectly in this *darkness.* Cost: 1 charge.
- By touch, the wand can break a *protection from evil* circle, or deal any creature of good alignment 2-5 points of fiery damage. Creatures immune to fire, or of neutral or evil alignments, are unharmed—but the charges are still lost. Cost: 2 charges.
- *Summon nightmare,* with a 4 in 6 chance of success (charges are lost even in failure). The evil "Dark Horse" appears in a harmless explosion of curling black smoke and brimstone stench in 1d3 rounds. It immediately knows and serves its summoner. It will not attack him, and can be commanded to fight, or carry a rider (on a journey in the Prime Material Plane, or into or through the Astral and Ethereal Planes). It serves for 9 rounds, and then vanishes. If anyone is astride it at that time, they are (DM's choice, or determine randomly) flung off for possible injury, or taken along on the nightmare's return to its plane.

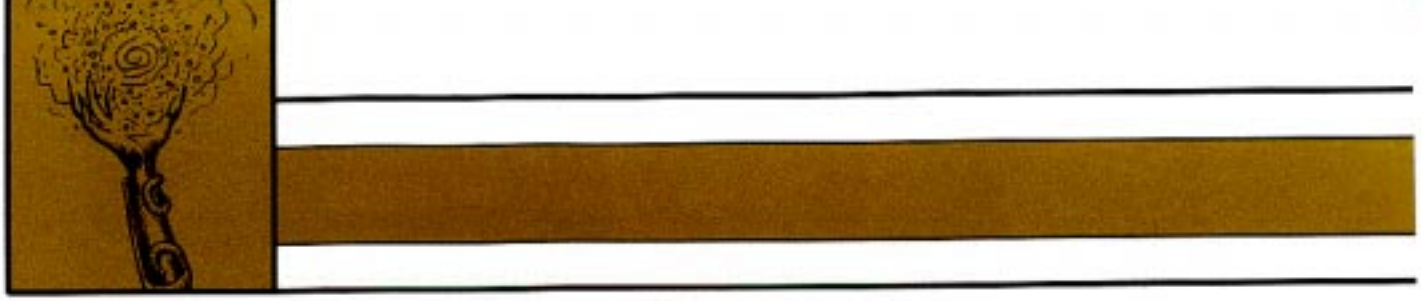
The nightmare is AC -4; MV 15, F1 36 (C; D when mounted); HD 6+6; #AT 3; Dmg 4-10 x2 (hooves; x4 in aerial combat)/2-8 (bite); THAC0 15; SA: can breathe a smoking, hot 10'-radius spherical cloud once every 3 rounds of combat that blinds all non-lower planar creatures (save vs. paralyzation to avoid effects) and causes them to choke for 1-2 rounds, attacking at -2 and doing -2 on all damage dice; SD: can *fly* or become *astral* or *ethereal* at will; AL NE. This creature appears as a dead black, gaunt, fang-mouthed horse with a wild mane and tail, its eyes glittering red and its nostrils and hooves emitting small, constant flames (at the DM's option, these can force normal fire saving throws in struck or trampled flammable items). Cost: 3 charges.

- *Animate dead* on a single creature of up to 7' tall, creating a zombie, skeleton or animal zombie (detailed in the *Monstrous Compendium).* The undead creature serves the wand-wielder for 6 turns (unless destroyed earlier), and then collapses. If it is still complete, the corpse or skeleton can be re-animated by spending another 4 charges.

Incomplete skeletons cannot be animated, and existing undead (not created by the wand) cannot be controlled, but each attempt to do either will drain the usual charges. Cost: 4 charges.

In addition, 10% of these wands (their values are given below in parentheses) can *summon shadow* when so ordered. This function has a 1 in 3 chance of success (2 in 3 if in deep caverns or ancient ruins), and expends charges whether successful or not. The shadow (see the *Monstrous Compendium)* arrives in 1d3 rounds, and will not attack the wielder or any other creature touching the wand (even if commanded to do so by the wand- wielder). Cost: 4 charges. XP Value: 4,000 (4,500) Suggested GP Value: 25,000 (30,000)

Wand of Viscid Globs: This unadorned metallic baton possesses 1d20+80 charges when created, may be used by any race or class of character, and can be recharged by a wizard of 7th or greater level able to cast *mending, web, item,*



extension I and *enchanted weapon* spells, in a long, complicated, and secret process.

When the wand is pointed and a command word spoken, a blob of gummy, sticky, glue-like, greenish-gray substance is fired from one end of the wand, up to 60' away. It can fire one *viscid glob* per round, at a cost of one charge per firing.

When it hits, the glob covers a circular area about 5' in diameter. Items within that area are permanently bonded to each other—hands to weapons held, arms to shields, armor to bodies, etc. (an open mouth will be glued open, and speech prevented, but the victim will not suffocate; the glob permits the passage of air).

A successful save against wands indicates that the target twists or dodges to somehow avoid the glob. However, globs that miss their intended target will hit land either behind the target or on the floor 10-60' beyond.

The bond created by *viscid globs* is extremely strong. Strong beings will tear their own joints apart before breaking the seal. Creatures with an intelligence of 7 or more will realize this. Those of 2-6 intelligence must make a successful Intelligence Check to avoid tearing themselves apart.

Globs remain sticky and dangerous for 10 rounds after firing. Stray shots are hazards, and "globbed" beings are dangers to those trying to aid, avoid, or fight them. Stuck characters trying to hurl themselves onto a foe may be hampered by inability to see or move freely. They may even be prevented from moving at all because their feet are glued to the floor! Obviously, the DM must adjudicate these situations carefully.

Luckily, *viscid globs* can be dissolved by alcohol. The amount found in a belt-flask of ordinary wine is sufficient to free two glued areas (painfully if living flesh is involved). A saddle-skin of wine typically holds the equivalent of eight flasks. XP Value: 4,500 Suggested GP Value: 25,000 (assumes full charges; deduct proportionately if lesser power is known to both vendor and purchaser)

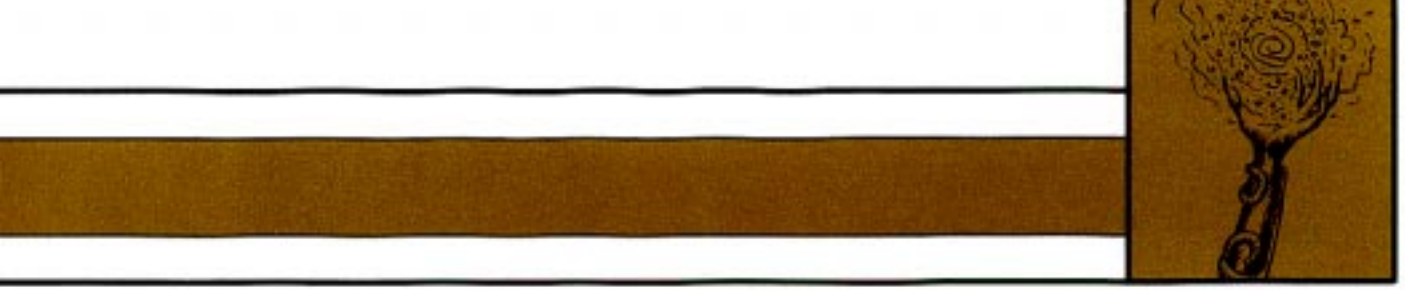
Miscellaneous Magic

Bracers of the Blinding Strike: These items appear as a pair of wrist or arm guards. They radiate magic, and if worn by non-warriors, function as *bracers of defense, AC4* (detailed in the *DMG).*

In the hands of a fighter, the deadly potential of these bracers is realized. A being of any warrior class (including multi-classed characters) will benefit from two additional powers: these bracers add +1 to all initiative rolls, and thrice a day the wearer can employ the "blinding strike" power, which doubles his or her attacks in the round in which the bracers are activated. XP Value: 4,000 Suggested GP Value: 20,000

Driftdisc: This magically-animated, 6' diameter disc is the silently-floating conveyance used to move in state around drow cities. They are used only on important occasions, in ceremonies, or as floating beds by the more eccentric drow matrons.

Driftdiscs are developments of a spell akin to *Tenser's floating disc* (a magical effect known to be much older than the mage whose name it bears), cast upon smooth-polished discs fashioned of a certain type of dark rock. These rocks, mined in the most radiation-strong areas of the Underdark, are permeated with the radiation and have the property of ex-



tending the effective time of some spells cast upon them (if the spells are applied in an exacting, still-secret process). *Driftdiscs* maintain their dweomers for 2d6 months. If exposed to sunlight, they lose their powers as drow clothing does (see the "Drow Craftwork" chapter). Most drow Houses have 1 or 2 such conveyances.

Driftdiscs glow a faint pearly-white or white-with-a-greenish-tinge radiance. They are AC 3, MV Fl 16 (A), and will take 4 HD of damage before shattering. Their ramming impact does 1d4 points of damage; if a victim is crushed between them and a hard surface (such as a rock cavern wall or structure), 2d6 damage per round is dealt, even if the disc is moving slowly. Most drow matrons move their discs about at half speed or less, slowing their adherents and bodyguards to their own pace.

Driftdiscs customarily float 3' above any nearby horizontal surface if left untended. They can be remotely navigated by the wizard who enchanted them (1 mile range; the wizard can "see" from the rim of the disc, all around, as if by means of a *wizard eye* spell), or by any being who casts a *Tenser's floating disc* spell. This gives them control of the disc for 4 rounds per point of intelligence.

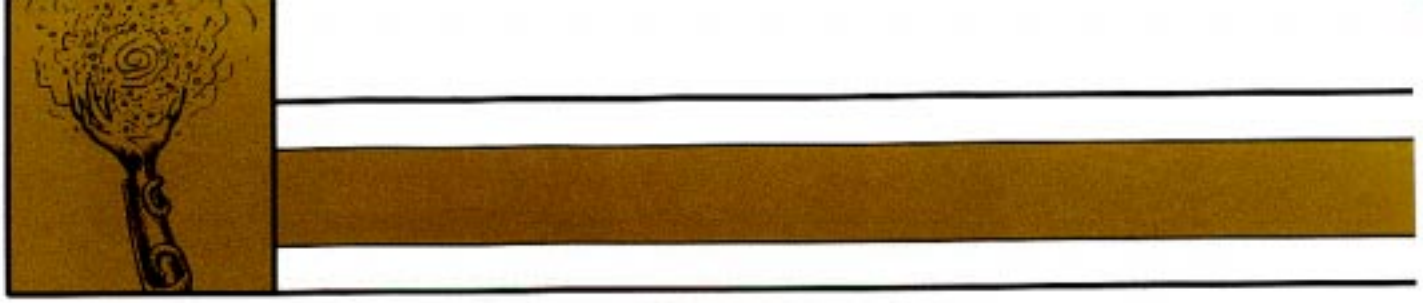
Driftdiscs obey silent mental commands, are unintelligent, and have been seen used as cargo carriers (often, they carry corpses after a battle, or produce and goods purchased by a drow matron shopping in a market), grand "chariots," elevators, or even firing platforms for temple guards.

A *driftdisc* may be fitted with *house insignia* (see below). If so, all powers of the *insignia* can be used by (or against) beings carried by the disc, as if they wore the *insignia* directly. (The values that follow do not include the value of a fitted *insignia.)* XP Value: 3,000 Suggested GP Value: 15,000

Fire Elemental Gem: This gemstone appears as a well-cut, faceted gem of pink, red, orange, or amber hue. It functions as a *brazier commanding fire elementals,* detailed in the *DMG,* save that the elemental may be summoned from any existing fire source.

No fire elementals will attack the bearer of this gem if it is prominently displayed to them, choosing to return to their own plane rather than attack the wielder. Any race or class of being may employ the power of this gem. XP Value: 5,000 Suggested GP Value: 30,000

Floatchest: This uncanny item is merely a strongchest, casket, or open cargo-box of stout wood. Flat, dark stones are built into false bottoms of such containers: stones which carry *animate object* and *levitate* dweomers. These rocks are permeated with the radiations of the "hottest" radioactive areas of the Underdark, and maintain their dweomers for 1d4 years. (The spells are applied by a secret process; other spells used on the rocks by experimenting human mages are also extended in effect, but none for nearly as long.) They lose their powers as drow clothing does (see above, and in the "Drow Craftwork" chapter) when exposed to sunlight. A *dispel magic* does not bring a *floatchest* down, but acts instead as a slow spell. (Multiple *dispel magics* do not have a cumulative slowing effect, nor will *slow* spells cast on the chest or its handler have any effect on its rate of movement, unless the handler directs the chest beyond command range, as explained below.)



Most drow noble Houses, temples and academies have 1-6 such "floats." Merchants accustomed to handling delicate, valuable or dangerous cargoes may employ 1d8 floats in a caravan, or up to 3d4 floats within a drow community. Floats often carry breakables, magic, weapons, or volatile cargoes, and may be navigated about by any being within 30' who touches the float and utters a (usually secret) command word. The float then obeys its handler's silent mental commands until he or she gets out of range, or someone else touches the float and utters the correct command word, thereby transferring control.

A *floatchest* is unintelligent, and is AC 6, MV Fl 14 (B), HD 2, no attacks or defenses. If directed to ram, it can strike a man-sized being for 1 point of damage (2 points to halflings or smaller beings, and can bowl them over if circumstances dictate and/or a Strength Check fails). Floatchests move in utter silence, and can be camouflaged. Drow have sometimes employed them in attacks, as darkened oil-pot bomb carriers—floating them over an enemy guardpost, and then upending them, as flaming arrows or spells are cast. XP Value: 1,000 Suggested GP Value: 1,500

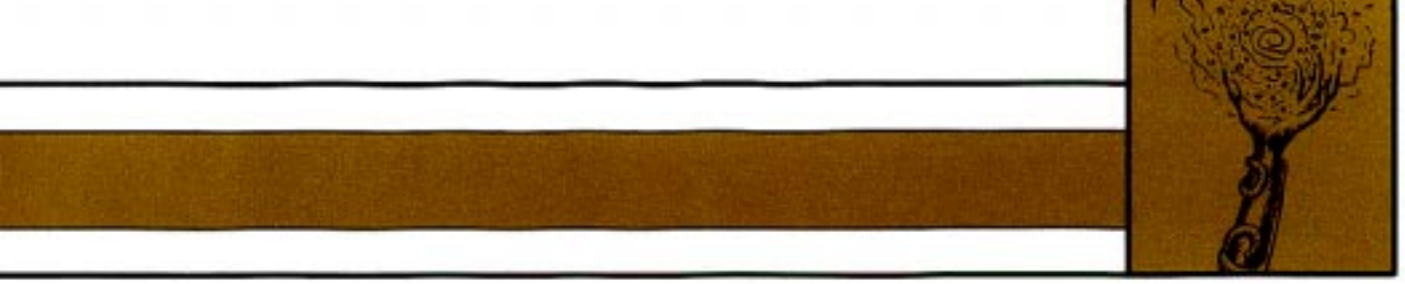
Jade Spider: Drow city gates, and the entrances to drow temples, vaults, and the dwellings of rich nobles and powerful wizards, are often guarded by gigantic spider statues (usually in an enclosed area between two sets of doors).

These animated stone constructs are known as "jade spiders" because their sharp-tipped mandibles and saw-edged legs are studded with a particular sort of magically-treated jade. Umber hulks are nauseated and repelled by the presence of this substance, which is corrosive to their scaly hides (double normal damage, per contact), and do not willingly approach jade spiders within 60', or try to win past them—the hulks almost always retreat to hunt elsewhere.

Jade Spiders are typically AC 5; MV 10; HD 6+6; 54 hp (when created, they always have a full 8 hp/die); #AT 3; Dmg 3-12x2 (legs)/2-8 (mandibles/bite); THAC0 15. They appear as smoothly-sculpted, fluidly-moving stone statues, usually about 15' high.

Jade Spiders are fearless, unthinking guardians, who will carry out their assigned orders (e.g. "let no one without this badge or that *insignia* pass, unless in the presence of a being displaying the proper symbol") in the face of certain destruction. They make all saving throws as their creator would (i.e., a 16th or higher level wizard).

Many drow know the secrets of jade spider construction, but drow communities take care to keep this and other magical secrets well-hidden. Only the most aged, infirm wizards are taught all the details; they and their written records typically stay inside their wizardly academies and inner House chambers until death or lichdom comes. It is known that the spells *animate object, enchant an item, geas, permanency, stone shape* and *wish* are involved, as well as certain types of stone. Most jade spiders are given set commands to follow, but it is rumored that spells and devices exist that allow individuals direct control over certain jade spiders in battle. XP Value: 10,000 Suggested GP Value: 65,000



Light Pellet: This nasty weapon was devised by drow for use against other drow, but can be used against other creatures that employ either normal or infravision. Victims are severely discomfited and temporarily dazed by light as bright as sunlight.

Light pellets are simply small pieces of glass, rock crystal, or igneous "slag" or "coke." The cleric preparing the pellets casts a *continual light* spell on such a "core piece," and it is immediately rolled in fat or grease by a hooded drow assistant (or a slave, of a race not so harmed by light). Once the pellet is thoroughly coated, it is rolled in clay, which is then slowly and gently baked hard.

Typically assembled in pouches of 3d4 and kept hidden as House "special weapons" (alongside flash globes, poisoned tripwires and strangling-wires, and the like; see the "Drow Craftwork" chapter), these pellets are simply dashed to the ground by a masked or hooded drow operative skilled in blind-fighting.

The clay shatters, falling away from the core and its blinding light. Any unsuspecting drow must make a save vs. spell to avoid being blinded (-4 to hit, and a 4-point AC penalty) for 1d4 + 1 rounds. The DM should adjudicate the effects on other creatures according to their nature and the situation. XP Value: 20 (each) Suggested GP Value: 50 (each)

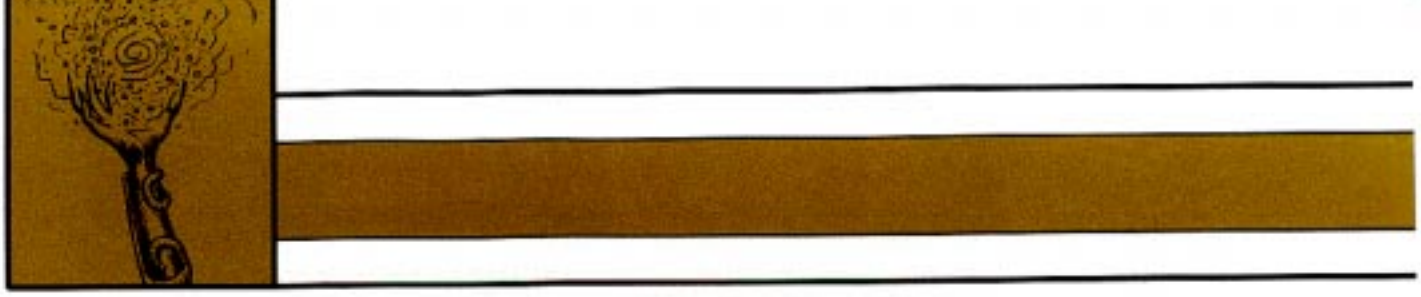
Lurker Cloak: This jet-black cloak appears as a normal item until its command word is spoken. It will fit drow and other elves as a long cloak, and humans as a short cloak, and can be used by creatures of any class and race, of up to and including 9' in height (such as some trolls).

The user and all of his or her worn or carried gear then *polymorph* into a lurker above (gaining form and movement only: AC 6; MV 1, Fl 9 (B); grayish, stone-like manta ray—not smothering ability). In an underground, stony environment, the lurker's camouflage permits a 4 in 6 chance of surprise. This power may be activated only once per day, for up to two hours duration.

If an M-sized or smaller creature tries to ride the lurker as an aerial steed, the lurker will be reduced to AC 8; MV Fl 4 (D), and will descend MV 3 in each round that it flies strongly (MV 4) ahead—in other words, a character in lurker form can ferry a clinging companion down from a clifftop or sheer drop, by crash-diving, and rolling at the last moment to dump the passenger for a 20' or less fall (typically 2d6 impact damage). If this manoeuver is attempted, both parties must make successful Dexterity and Strength Checks. If the passenger fails either, he or she falls in midflight. If the lurker fails the Dex Check, the passenger falls, and if he fails the Strength Check, he plummets under the weight, and both crash-land.

A lurker can haul human-sized companions across a chasm (from one side to a ledge on the same level) of 20' width. It will drop 10' vertically for every 10' (or part thereof) that the chasm is wider. XP Value: 2,000 Suggested GP Value: 12,500

Orb of Duo-Dimension: This small, black orb is carved of rock or bone, and pierced with many holes, on all surfaces except one (where the wielder holds it). Inside is a quantity of precious black powder—large flakes, actually, from the ashes of burned drow. A single orb can hold enough powder for up to 30 applications. The orbs are created by wizards, but may



be used by any intelligent being of any race and class who is able to hold an orb and utter its command word.

The command word of the orb allows the invisible magical force that seals the holes to relax, allowing the flakes within to spill forth.

If they are shaken over any mammal (including intelligent human, demi-human, and humanoid beings), that creature feels a strange tingling, and within 1 round is affected as if by a wizard's *duo-dimension* spell (detailed in the *DMG).* This condition lasts for 7 rounds.

These orbs are typically used in surface raids and underground sneak attacks, where passage through extremely narrow cracks is desired, without opening a permanent, larger passage that enemies might use later. XP Value: 500 Suggested GP Value: 20,000 (assumes more than 20 applications held; deduct 1,000 per application if lesser efficacy is known to both vendor and purchaser)

Signal Speculum: This device is a simple magically-heated metal plate, one side insulated with heavy leather, and the other bare. It is usually small enough to fit into a belt pouch, and is used by drow (and other intelligent creatures used to employing infravision in dark surroundings) as a signaling device. (To a creature employing infravision, the uncovered bare metal side appears to blaze brightly.) Created by wizards or priests, this item can be used by anyone.

Specula can also serve to warm chilled guards, wounded, or other immobile creatures, ease cramped or torn muscles, and even warm drinks, hands, or feet. XP Value: 50 Suggested GP Value: 75

Spider Mask: This relatively rare drow item is a velvet-black cloth face mask, which has four spider-like, jointed wire "legs" protruding from each side of it. It entirely conceals the face when worn, and confers 90' infravision to wearers having none.

When worn, it also automatically gives *free action* in all webs both normal and magical, and immunity to *web* spell effects and the sticky entanglements of *viscid globs.*

A *spider mask* also allows a +5 bonus to saving throws against any sort of arachnid poison.

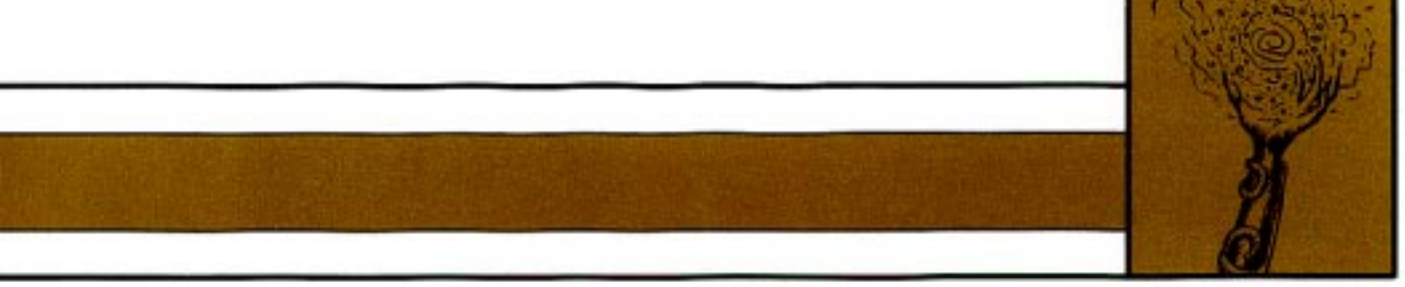
Any creature that has a head of less than giant-size may employ a *spider mask;* only wizards can make them. XP Value: 1,500 Suggested GP Value: 5,000

Walking Chest: These strange items are strongchests or open cargo-boxes of stout wood, which have been mated to the magically animated, preserved legs of a dead giant spider.

The necromantic arts by which *walking chests* are created remain secret, but most noble Houses and drow temples and academies have 2-5 such *"crawlchests."* They carry food, messages, items, and cleaning supplies about, but must be directed by an individual wearing a control ring linked to the specific chest.

Any being wearing such a ring can by silent command move the chest about; it will precede or follow him, as long as he remains within 40'. Control rings for *crawlchests* are fashioned of plain silver, pewter, or iron.

A *crawlchest* is unintelligent, and is AC 5, MV 18 (can climb walls and grades, and leap up to 16' horizontally), HD 2 + 2, no attacks or defenses. If directed to ram, it can bowl a man-sized character over,



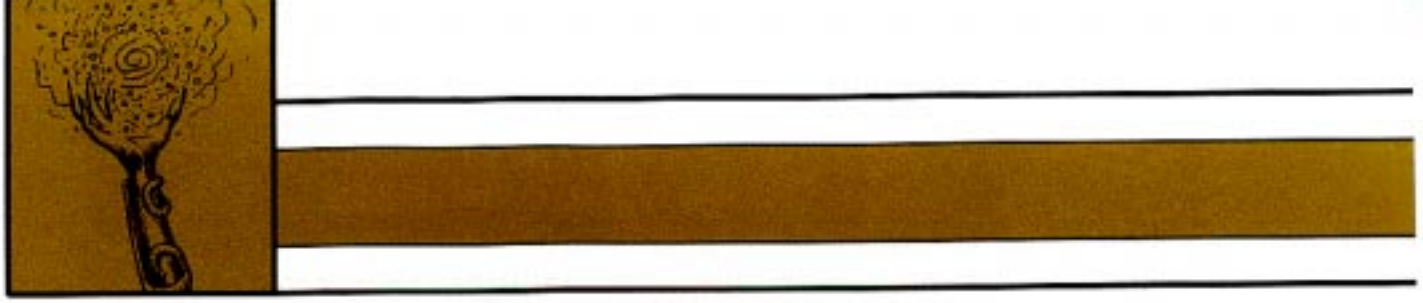
striking for 1 point of damage (2 points to halflings or smaller beings). XP Value: 500 Suggested GP Value: 700 (assumes control ring included; sale price drops by 90% without ring)

Adventurers have seen *"crawlchariots"* in battle. These are armored versions of the *walking chest,* fitted with harpoon-guns that fire lances and/or grapnel-ended lines. They may also sport pointed spikes to dissuade infantry attacks, rams, pincer-arms, or arms equipped with rotating circular blades. Their intricate controls require training for competent use—an enemy who leaps onto an active *crawlchariot* and seizes its controls in battle is usually unable to influence its activities. A magical brooch usually takes the place of a control ring with this device.
XP Value: 5000 Suggested GP Value: 10,000 (Like *house insignia, crawlchariots* are jealously guarded devices. Let the buyer—and the seller—beware!)

Magical Weapons

Bolts of Power: Despite their collective name, these weapons are magical darts usable by all drow, and all character classes of other races except priests. These *bolts* are found in groups of three, each dart having a different function. The darts are identical in appearance, though an *identify* or similar spell can discern their different functions. (The XP Values given below are per individual bolt.) They may be thrown (S to 10', M 11' to 20', L 21' to 40') or fired up to 60' by hand crossbow (ranges: S to 20', M 21' to 40', L 41' to 60'). All of these darts do the usual (1d3, 1d2 to L or greater-sized creatures) damage. They can function within, and pass into, a *globe of invulnerability* or related spells. They cannot take effect within an *anti-magic* shell—it prevents their functioning, and thereby preserves their magic for re-use. They come in the following types:

Dart of Screaming: If this dart misses a living target, it does nothing, and may be re-used. If it hits, it emits a shrill, raucous shrieking noise. The scream inhibits the ability of the struck being to cast spells, and serves as an alarm that is impossible to ignore. Since the dart provides a sound with a precise location, it can be tracked with ease. Even if the dart is removed, the noise accompanies the victim for a full 9 rounds after the dart strikes. XP Value: 100 Suggested GP Value: 500
Dart of Silencing: If this dart misses a living target, it too may be re-used. On impact, it cloaks the victim (and a continuous area of 5' radius around him) with magical *silence.* This *silence* stays with the target for 1d6 + 6 rounds, even if the dart is removed and hurled away. The effect may be ended by a *dispel magic.* XP Value: 300 Suggested GP Value: 1,000
Dart of Stunning: The creature hit, and all beings within 10', must save versus spell or be *stunned* (reeling and unable to think coherently or act). The duration is 2d4 rounds for the struck victim, and 1d4 rounds to other beings within range. XP Value: 200 Suggested GP Value: 800
Dart of Blinding: The creature hit, and all beings within 10', must save versus spell or be *blinded* from a sudden burst of bright light (-4 on attack rolls, and a 4-point armor class penalty). The duration is 2d4 rounds for the struck victim, and 1d4 rounds to other beings within range. XP Value: 200 Suggested GP



Value: 800
Dart of Vapors: This creates a cube-shaped cloud, 20' on a side, centered on its impact point (which need not be a living creature). This cloud's effects are in all ways equal to that of the second level wizard spell *stinking cloud,* XP Value: 200 Suggested GP Value: 800
Spider Dart: This dart does not activate unless it strikes a living target. The target must save versus poison (Type A, damage 15/0, but the dart's penetration and magical strength force the save to be at normal chances, not at +2, and will bring on the poison effects in 1d2 rounds if the save is failed).

The dart then reverts to its true form, becoming a Large Spider (AC 8; MV 6, Wb 15; HD 1 + 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg (bite) 1 + poison: save at +2, onset time 10-30 minutes, otherwise as dart was) at the spot in which the dart hit. The spider is not under anyone's control, and usually crawls around, attacking immediately. XP Value: 400 Suggested GP Value: 1,200

Death Lance: These rare, 10'-long lances or spears are fashioned of some mottled, sparkling-and-dull gray metal. They have 2d3 charges when created, and may not be recharged. Their making is a secret known only to a few drow; wizards of 18th level or greater are needed.

Used by drow city-gate and temple guards to fight off powerful foes, they discharge a powerful negative force when they hit, doing the usual physical damage (1d6 vs. up to M-sized, 1d8 to L and larger targets) plus 3-12 hp chilling damage.

In addition, any victim struck must save vs. poison. If the save fails, a lance charge is expended. Dark, writhing tendrils of black light crawl down the lance, and the struck victim suffers the effects of *energy drain* (as the spell, but 1d4 levels may be taken, in a single round).

A *death lance* may be employed by any race or class of character, but its use is not considered a good act, and may have consequences for paladins, priests, and certain other individuals. XP Value: 1,000 Suggested GP Value: 5,000

Whip of Fangs: Evil priests are the only beings able to employ these horrific weapons. In drow communities, only priestesses are allowed to possess and use them.

These belt whips have adamantite handles, but their tendrils are living snakeheads, 2-5 in number. The whips, once enchanted, are attuned to a specific individual and may only be used by another being after another attunement ritual has been performed (otherwise, they attack anyone except their attuned wielder who touches them!). The ritual of attunement requires the consent of Lolth, and priestesses consider such whips personal gifts from her, believing that they will cease to function, or even turn on their wielder, if they are used in an act against the will of the Spider Queen. Forbidden acts usually include using a whip against a matron mother or other ruling priestess.

Living serpents are required in the making of these weapons; they become enchanted extensions of the will of the wielder, hissing, coiling, writhing, and reaching in response to the thoughts of their wielder. The whip of an angry priestess can knot about her belt, and menace the beings she is angry with, without her ever touching it.

The whip's tendrils are from 1 to 3 feet in length. Each is AC 8, has 2 HD, and



attacks (THAC0 14) for 2d4 hp of damage. The serpent-heads have no poison effects, but their long fangs bite deep, leaving scars and injecting waves of magic that both numb and shoot waves of muscle-knotting pain through the victim.

Angry drow priestesses typically use these whips indiscriminately on slaves, servants, pupils, male relatives, and casual acquaintances. Injured heads regenerate 2 hp/day; slain heads cannot be healed. XP Value: 1,000 Suggested GP Value: 1,000 plus 500 per living head

House Insignia

All blood and ranking members of the noble drow houses customarily carry *house insignia:* small magical tokens fashioned in the shape of the recognized symbol of the house.

Unlawful use of a *house insignia* is punishable by instant death in most drow communities, for these tokens are not only symbols of the authority of the noble houses, but useful—and sometimes quite powerful—items of magic.

By tradition, all *house insignia* are crafted and enchanted by the House wizard (and any apprentices, colleagues and assistants they employ). Although the enchantment is done under the direction of House priestesses (who participate in and control all attunements), it is common for the House wizard to work a few little secrets and surprises into each *insignia* he enchants. These give the wizard an unknown, waiting "edge" in internal House conflicts.

The DM is encouraged to devise such hidden powers. They are activated at the will of the House wizard (or another who knows a secret word or phrase of activation), and can be activated whenever they are within 90' of him. The wizard need not touch or see the *insignia,* nor speak the activation word(s) aloud, but must concentrate, foregoing any spellcasting for a round.

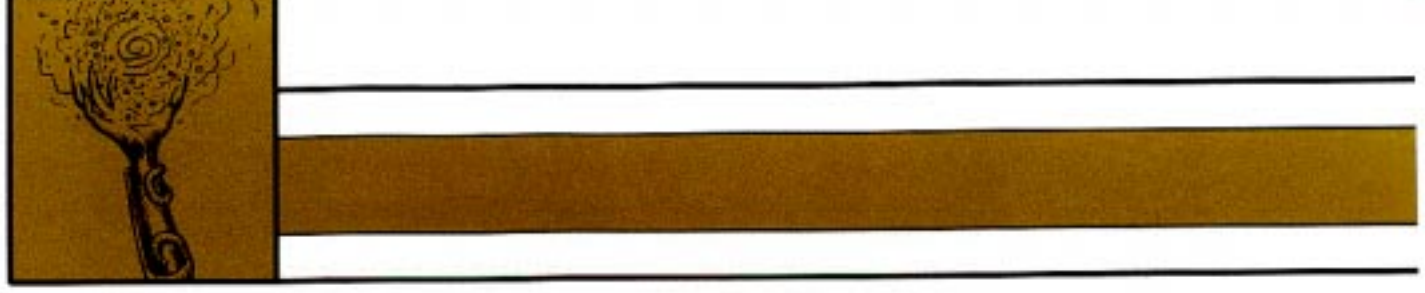
Hidden *insignia* "traps" typically include the following: any being bearing or touching it *dimension doors* to a place of the wizard's choosing; emitting smoke equal in effects to a *pyrotechnics* spell; growing hot equal in effects to a *heat metal* spell); or exploding (4d6 damage to all within 10', 2d6 to those 11-20' distant). Every *house insignia* can be traced by those who have been taught to do so (typically the Matron Mother, the ranking High Priestess, and the House wizard—who does the teaching). Consequently, house wizards can always cloak the *insignia* they wear to foil such tracing (a secret never revealed to drow females by House wizards, for their own safety).

All *insignia* powers function at the level of the House wizard who worked the enchantment, typically 11-14th (10 + 1d4 levels).

All drow know that the *insignia* nobles bear have magical powers. In some cases, the major power of the *insignia* of a House is known in its community. *House insignia* are known to be harmful to unauthorized creatures who attempt to use their powers.

All drow priestesses know more than this: to safely use *insignia* powers, a being must be attuned to the *insignia* (see "Attunement," below). This attunement spell is normally cast only on those who bear the name of the House, either by noble blood or by currently-held rank (such as patrons).

Insignia powers can only be exercised by touching the token with one's bare flesh, and concentrating on the specific



power desired. (This precludes spell-casting for one round.) All attuned beings, regardless of race or class, can employ *insignia* powers that they know about. Only one *insignia* power can be employed at a time, and only one power can be used in a round. Minor powers can be used as often as desired, intermediate powers a maximum of twice each in any one-turn period, and major powers only once each per turn (or, in rarer cases, a maximum of 9 times per day, but in any succession or timing; for example, in 9 consecutive rounds).

DMs should create new and different *insignia* powers, not just pick and choose from the tables that follow. DM selection is preferable to random determination, particularly for major powers.

In the tables below, all powers duplicate spells of the same names, as given in the *Players Handbook*. Powers marked with an asterisk duplicate spells described in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® Adventures sourcebook.

Minor *House Insignia* Powers
(Roll 1d12 4 times, referring to this list)

1. *blur*
2. *water breathing*
3. *comprehend languages*
4. *read magic*
5. *shield*
6. *feather fall*
7. *spider climb*
8. *unseen servant*
9. *corpselight**
10. *jump*
11. *water walking*
12. *scatterspray**

Intermediate *House Insignia* Powers
(Roll 1d12 4 times, referring to this table)

1. *blink*
2. *protection from cantrips*
3. *knock*
4. *hold undead*
5. *magic mouth* (previously-"recorded" message)
6. *charm House monsters* (equivalent to *charm monster,* but affects only creatures magically linked to the insignia; attuned beings—e.g. other drow—are immune)
7. *hold person*
8. *cloak from undead** (attuned beings only)
9. *protection from normal missiles*
10. *non-detection*
11. *web*
12. *wizard lock* (other holders of the same *insignia* can freely pass)

Major *House Insignia* Powers
(Roll 1d12 4 times, referring to this list)

1. *tongues*
2. *dig*
3. *dimension door*
4. *dispel magic*
5. *illusionary wall*
6. *monster summoning* (DM's choice of type and number of monsters: spell versions *I* through *VII* are possible)
7. *animate dead*
8. *charm monster*
9. *ironguard**
10. *Ilyykur's mantle**
11. *fire shield*
12. *wraithform*

A note on the *charm House monster* power: it gives *insignia*- users absolute control over *insignia*- linked house beasts. For instance, a subterranean lizard commanded to "await my return" by a being flourishing an enchanted *house insignia* will remain immobile, ignoring



danger or ready prey, until attacked, magically controlled to do otherwise, or it collapses from hunger.

Harmful *Insignia* Effects

All *insignia* have the power to do harm to a would-be user. The damaging effects are normally visited only on unattuned beings who touch an *insignia* with bare flesh, or attempt to awaken *insignia* powers. They may also, in some cases, be activated by House wizards (at will, within 90') or by the destruction of the *insignia* itself. *(Insignia* are customarily AC 2, and can take 3d6 points of physical damage before being destroyed; they typically save as metal, with a +1 bonus due to their enchantments.)

These effects vary, according to the spells used by the House wizard in the creation of the *insignia.* They have been known to include:

- user afflicted by *blindness* lasting 4d4 rounds
- user *feebleminded* for 25 rounds, minus 1 round per point of intelligence over 15
- user suffers a minor curse (DM's choice of effect)
- user burned for 5d4 damage (resists magical healing; restored only through rest and time)
- user loses voice for 2d4 days
- user wracked by debilitating pain for 2d4 rounds: suffers initial loss of 1d6 hit points, and is penalized by -3 on all attack rolls and by 4 points on Armor Class during this time.

XP Value of an *Insignia:* 400 per power instilled (includes secret powers) Suggested GP Value: 1,000 to 1,500, if insignia has a known, useful major power, or a wizard has devised and cast spells to give it "open attunement;" i.e. anyone can use it. (These items are battle-booty, sold from one non-drow to another; drow never sell such items, even those of hated rivals.)

Attunement

A ritual in which chosen drow (nobles and officers of a House) are attuned to the *insignia* and defenses of the House. This ritual is traditionally conducted under the eye of the matron and patron of the House, and is conducted by the highest ranking priestess (after the matron) and wizard (usually the House wizard) of the House.

The person to be attuned holds an enchanted *insignia* while the wizard casts a *bestow curse* on him or her. If the being ever knowingly gives the *insignia* to an enemy of the House, or willfully damages or destroys it, the curse will take effect.

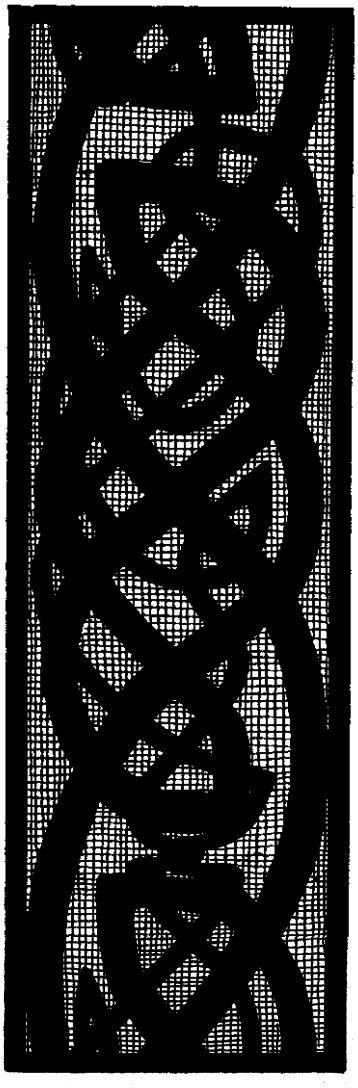
A typical curse is a *continual light* (harmful to most drow), centered on the traitor's body. Unaffected by a *dispel magic,* it is transferred to any being casting *remove curse* to remove it.

Wish and *limited wish* spells will end the curse, and it wears off after 1 day per level of the caster.

Continual light effects on drow are detailed in the *Monstrous Compendium* drow entry (in MC2, under "Elf, Drow"). Summarized, they are: a -2 dexterity and attack. penalty, plus an additional 1-point attack penalty against targets that are also in the lit area (i.e. a "lit" drow attacking a "lit" creature does so at -3). Targets save against the magical attacks of lit drow at +2 (+3 if the target is also lit). Drow in the radius of a *light* or *continual light* spell are 90% likely to be seen; in this case, the spell on the drow

makes it 100% detectable.

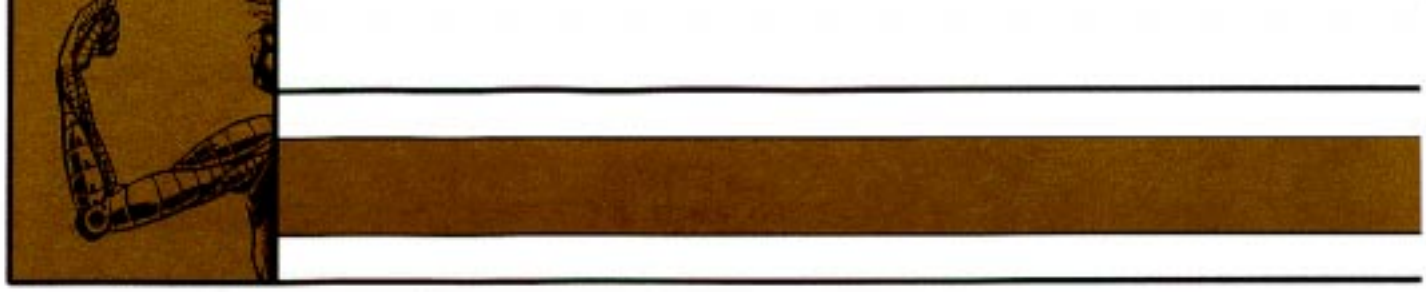
The presiding priestess then casts *attunement* on the being, who keeps hold of the *insignia* as he or she prays to Lolth. When the prayer is concluded, the attuned being is taken to a private place for instruction by the presiding wizard, and then a feast is held. The *attunement* spell is detailed in the chapter on "Drow Spells."





Designs used by House Aleanrahel





Clothing And Weaponry

Drow weapons and armor are usually crafted from a dark, flexible metal known as adamantine, an alloy of adamantite. Most drow garb does not radiate a magical dweomer, but has magical effects.

Drow craftsmen, armorers, and wizards have developed careful processes to expose the materials from which these items are made to a specific combination of radiations and enchanted materials, and to handle the raw materials in exacting, largely secret ways.

This process takes a long time, and hence is ongoing: the adamantite ore that will be used in the adamantine alloy of a drow buckler may spend a year or more "baking" in the cold, hard radiations of a guarded, highly-prized natural cyst-cavern, in the heart of what was once a lava flow.

The result of such processes, in many drow communities throughout the Underdark, have produced a large body of quasi-magical items. Even the lowliest drow fighter (i.e. a warrior on patrol or defending a drow community) wears the equivalent of *chain mail + 1.*

This does not mean that drow children, servants, slaves, and common laborers go around in such garb: although all drow items are affected to some extent by the radiations of the Underdark, only specially-crafted clothing (that most often seen by adventurers) has the quasi-magical properties spoken of in tavern-talk throughout the Realms.

Direct sunlight destroys most drow cloth, footwear, armor and weapons. It should be noted that drow do not hesitate to use captured weapons, especially finely-made elven work, which is ideal in size, weight, and balance for drow use.

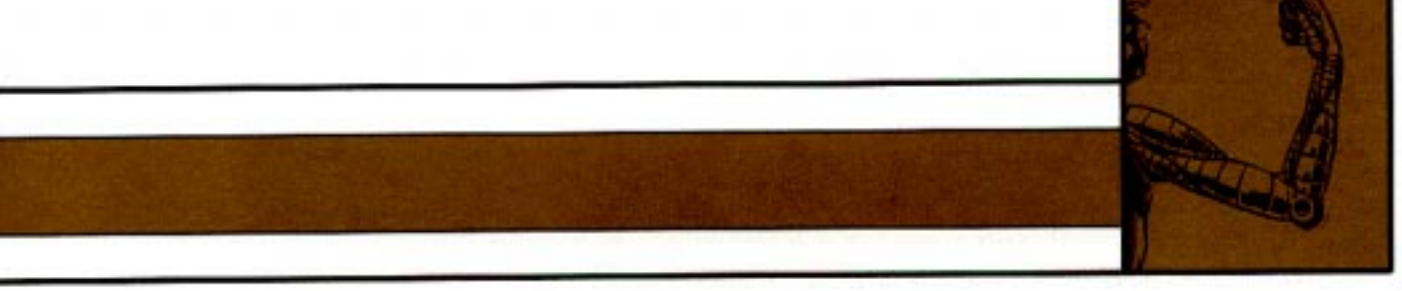
When most (90%) of the items listed above are exposed to the light of the sun for more than 2 rounds at a time (and any exposure totaling 5 rounds in a 5-day period, even if composed of brief instants), irreversible decay begins.

Within 2d6 days, the items lose their magical properties, and crumble to worthless powder. Drow items away from the Underdark's radiations that are carefully protected from full sunlight lose their quasi-magical properties in 1d20 + 30 days. They retain their shape and usefulness as normal items indefinitely, so long as exposure (the limits given above) does not occur.

Any drow item that is protected from direct sunlight and exposed to the radiations of the Underdark for one continuous week out of every four will retain its properties indefinitely. It is important to remember that just getting such items underground will not do: an area of radiation (easily found by drow and other creatures with infravision) must be found, and the items left there. As most such areas are inhabited or at least visited by drow (raiding bands favor such areas near the surface for temporary bases), the safety of such items—and of anyone left to guard them—is suspect, to say the least.

It is important to note that the locations of high-radiation areas in the Underdark force most drow communities to be stationary. Thus, they are relatively easy prey for rival drow, monsters and other subterranean races. This has forced the drow to develop strong fighting magic, good training and tactics, to survive. Magic occupies such a large part of this book because of its paramount importance to the drow.

The "Drow Magical Items" chapter de-



scribes many "fighting magic" weapons and accoutrements. Although these are largely made in the Underdark, almost all of them remain stable when exposed to sunlight, because strong magical dweomers (precisely identical to those employed by wizards of surface realms) give them their powers. The items below, however, do not bear dweomers, and therefore are useful only in the Underdark.

Flash Globes These non-magical weapons are carried by many drow bands when they expect to fight other drow or intelligent beings of the Underdark (such as illithids). They are glass globes full of deepcap mushroom distillate, used as weapons by some drow. Flung by hand or by staff sling, these globes shatter on impact, releasing their luminous, irritant liquid. This vaporizes into a cloud 10' in diameter and 12' tall (5' in diameter if globe is broken against a vertical surface).

Each creature in this area of effect must save vs. poison or be blinded and out of action (scratching furiously) for 6+1d4 rounds or until the eyes are washed. The luminous droplets on the creature's body also cause an AC penalty of +1 to +4, lasting for 2-5 turns or until washed off. Both effects last for at least 1 round, and can only be removed by another full round of washing.

Poison

Drow sleep poison, used on their darts and javelins, is highly prized by traders on the surface world. It is a black, heavy, gummy substance, rather like molasses, and reacts to both air and sunlight. It will remain potent for a year if kept in a sealed packet—but loses its efficacy 60 days after exposure to air (either aboveground or in the Underdark). It loses its potency instantly when exposed to sunlight.

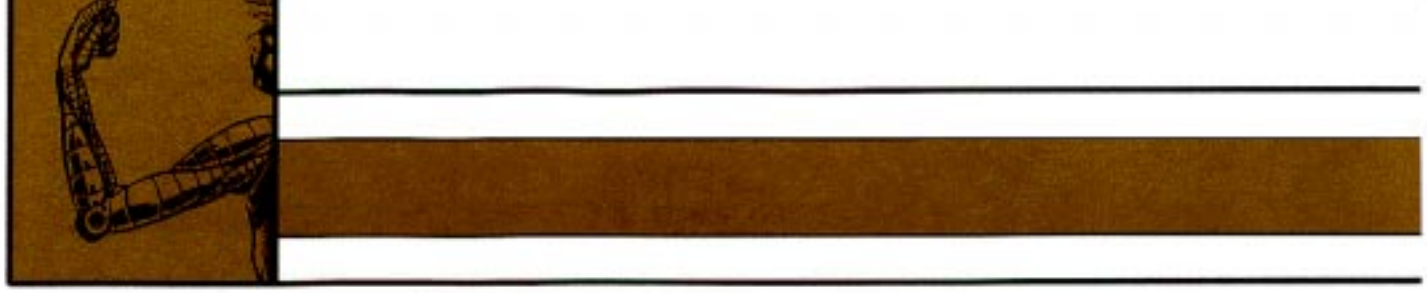
A victim struck with a sleep-poisoned weapon takes physical damage, and must make an immediate saving throw against poison at -4. If the save fails, the victim feels waves of weakness and lassitude pass over him, is -4 to hit, moves at half speed, and suffers a +4 AC penalty for the round after being struck, and falls unconscious at the round's end. If a sleeping victim is not slain, the drugged slumber lasts 2d4 hours.

Dispel magic and physical means (slapping, noise, rough handling, etc.) will not awaken the victim.

Neutralize poison spells and the forcible feeding of potions of *sweet water* or *vitality* will revive a poisoned sleeper. Drow poison cannot affect any sort of undead.

A poisoned weapon can be used twice. The first successful strike on any body, living or dead forces a save (as noted above) at -4. If the weapon is recovered and re-used, the second use forces a save at -2 (some of the poison was removed by the first strike). A third and subsequent strikes will have no poison effects; all of the poison is gone or inactive.

Drow poison is dissolved (and neutralized) by alcohol (it will not poison the alcohol used). A poisoned weapon loses its efficacy after 60 days, and the poison must be re-applied. The making of drow potion takes at least 4 days and a well-stocked laboratory. Application of poison from a carried packet takes a trained drow warrior 1 round (of rolling the weapon's point in the stuff), and takes others unfamiliar with its handling 2 rounds.



In extremis, a drow applying poison can scoop up a handful, or rake it onto fingertips, and strike barehanded at an opponent. If the drow manages to get the poison into the opponent's eyes, nose, mouth, or an existing wound, it has the same effect as a poisoned weapon attack (successful attack roll required; consider such targets to be two armor class points better than the rest of the target—a natural roll of 20 will succeed in any event).

Drow sent on assassination missions sometimes use poisoned strangling-wires (garrotes), and fingernail polish. Temporary traps around prisoner or slave holding areas, or around a sleeping patrol out in the "wild" Underdark often use poisoned tripwires.

Drow have built up resistance to poisons, both individually and through generations of exposure. During training, successively larger doses of drow sleep poison and various spider venoms are administered to them. As a result, drow characters make all saving throws against sleep poison of their own make and all spider venoms at +7. Saves against other sleep poisons or drugs, and the toxins produced by insects and other arachnids, are made at +6, all other injected poisons at +5, and all other ingested poisons at +4. Drow saving throws against contact poisons and poisonous gases are at normal chances. (For driders, increase all of these saving throw bonuses by 1, and add immunity to all drider poison.)

Mining and Engineering

Drow are skilled engineers and artisans, but they prefer to let slave races do the heavy work of mining. Unlike gnomes and other races native to the Underdark, drow do not have the deep-rooted connections to, and perception of, their environment.

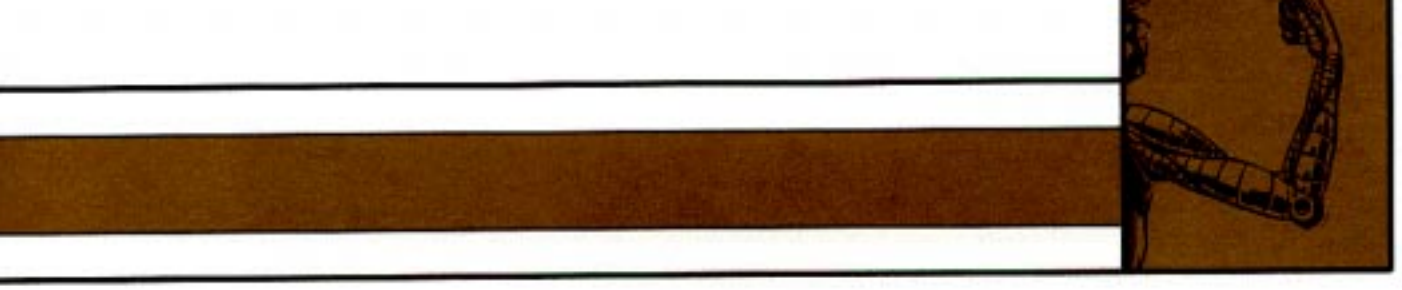
Dark elves are more a race of skilled dilettantes and overseers than (to use a human term) "handymen." Their best engineers lack the feel for the rock that dwarves, duergar, and svirfneblin possess, and are fewer in number than individuals with comparable skills in those races—but they often succeed on sheer bold brilliance where they cannot match deep understanding of stone, subterranean water movements, and other conditions.

Drow engineers often create intricate spiral tunnels, as well as boldly-flying stone bridges, balconies, and buttresses. The complex shaping and hollowing-out for habitation of stalactites, stalagmites, and cave columns ranks the drow among the creators of Toril's most impressive works.

Dark elves routinely fashion suspension bridges in the depths. These chasm bridges are able to stretch to survive minor earth tremors. They are often slung with the help of trained cave fishers shooting their lines.

Even more numerous and impressive are drow waterworks. Drow are skilled at collecting and diverting underground waters to serve them—providing for their dietary and industrial needs, and to carry away their wastes. Fluted, intricately-curved pipes are bored through solid rock, and are often fit with shut-off valves and alternative side-channels, pumps (both of the piston sort, worked by slave power as needed, and the corkscrew-type, worked by water force and pressure), and catch-basins.

The usual sort of shut-off valve is a



gigantic, hollow stone sphere closely fitted into a basin. The sphere has inlet and outflow holes, and is attached to a huge, counterweighted lever. When the lever is turned so that the sphere's holes line up with the inlet and outlet channels of the basin, a continuous flow of water is allowed. When a sliding panel in the basin is opened, and the sphere turned the right way, only a measured amount of water—the amount that will fill the hollow sphere—is diverted through the opened panel, into a side-channel. In this way, drow can fill a bath, or obtain enough water for a particular industrial use. In all cases, permanent magic is used to make water-seals perfect.

Drow specialties are the cutting and shaping of rock into smooth-flowing sculpted forms; the construction of magical walls, gates, and other fortifications; and the diversion and handling of underground water. Most (70%) encountered drow will have a 'feel' for how such things are constructed, how they work, and where ways around them or means of controlling them will be concealed or found—even if the drow have never worked directly on such things before.

The average drow is skilled in the identification of various rocks, their condition, and the presence and condition of ores and gemstone material. This is due to growing up surrounded by rock, to training in youth, and to experience when on patrol in the Underdark and/or living and working in drow cities.

Any drow can readily recognize radiation-permeated drow handiwork, when able to hold and examine it (although a cloak of similar cut and hue made by surface-dwellers, for example, could fool a drow five feet or more distant).

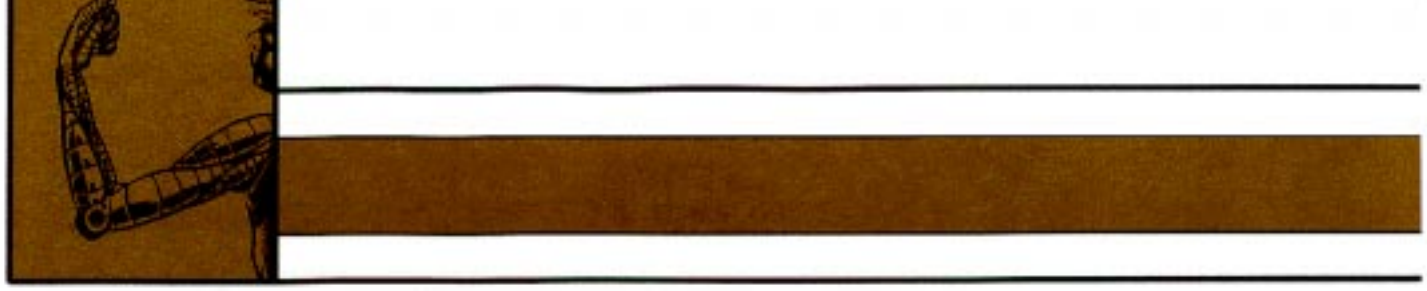
Drow Artisans

Some drow become the artists of their race. Every noble House has at least two drow skilled in sculpture—if none develop among the nobility or adherents of the House, a suitable one will be hired, coerced into service, or even adopted as noble. Every drow House has its gemcutters and those who can work metal, cloth, and other materials into garments, furniture, and devices of rare beauty. Drow take pride in how much more "culture" they can wield, amass, and display than neighboring Houses or commoners.

Of the 10% of drow skilled enough to make items of outstanding quality (good enough to bear lasting enchantments), perhaps 1-4 in every hundred have minds that are both brilliant and practical: they devise useful innovative items, not just "weird devices." Wise merchant clans and noble Houses quickly hire such artisans, or become their regular paying patrons, when their gift is recognized.

Drow artisans tend to be even more scheming, difficult, and paranoid than most drow—given to multi-layered intrigues and the use of hidden locks, passages, body weapons and items worked into clothing. These items typically include gas-powered needle-throwers, extensile mechanical hands for reaching up to 20' away, climbing-wire, strangling-wires, and wire-saws. Needless to say, this makes a normal prison cell incapable of holding an artisan. Such individuals create many rare and powerful "artworks" that drow proudly display or employ—and will not hesitate to use against opponents.

Perhaps the most common drow advanced craftwork are the replacement limbs worn by injured drow. These won-



ders are almost all fashioned of adamantine alloy: assemblies of precise, intricate parts that are as agile and dexterous as living limbs, with many ball-swivel joints and tendon-like cables for control. The adamantine construction makes them both very hard and flexible—they are not prone to shatter or snap off under stress, but can punch or rake through most armor.

Such limbs may have specialized, removable "hands"—a drow lady whose everyday limb-end is a delicate metal hand may substitute an armor-rending claw, or even a sword, axe, or long-spiked mace end, when expecting battle.

If a drow claw attack roll succeeds, drow and target both roll 1d8, adding this to their Strength scores. If the drow has the higher total, an area of armor is torn away. A claw does 1d4 + 2 for a punch ("crushing blow" saving throws for struck target items apply), and 1d4 + 4 per rake (an attack that rends armor does only 1d4 to the victim beneath).

Able-bodied, whole drow may have similar weapon or specialized extensions that strap onto limbs or fit over a hand (e.g. a one-piece sword-gauntlet) or foot (e.g. toe-claws or spikes, used for climbing stone and to kick-stab—an extra dagger damage-attack—in battle).

DMs are encouraged to indulge their wildest creativity in devising strange, cruel new drow items. Internal strife prevents drow societies from adopting these as shared technology; they should always remain "specials."

Gemcraft

Any drow will be able to identify worked metals and alloys of all types found in the Underdark of Faerun, as well as cut and worn gems. A drow finding a gemstone vein can judge as well as any dwarven or svirfneblin miner what direction and how far the vein is likely to travel—and the likely amount and quality of its contents.

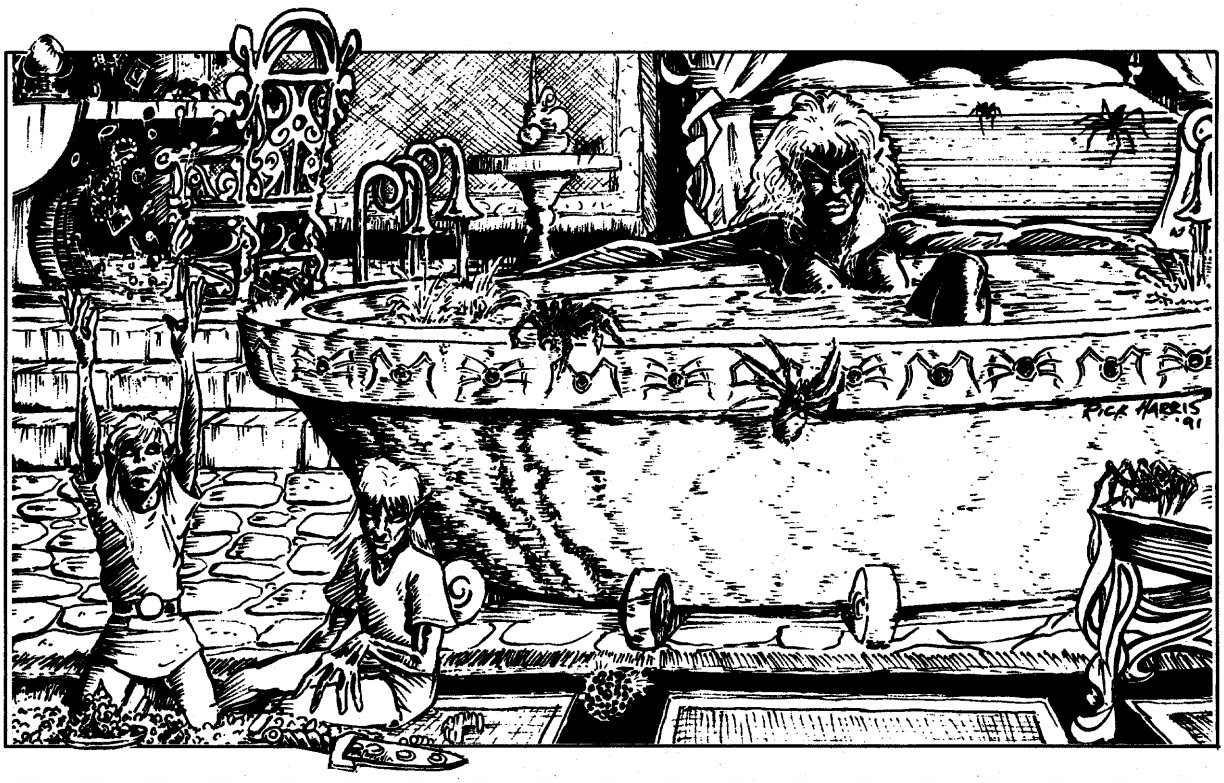
Gems most likely to be worn by an average drow (in rings, or as adornments on wristlets, gorgets, belts, pendants, or collars) can be determined by consulting the following table. Nobles, powerful wizards, officers, and especially priestesses will wear much more, often of rarer and enchanted types not given here.

Drow Personal Gems Table: Base values are given in parentheses; all stones found are likely to be worked—drow prefer smooth or "cabochon" cuts to faceted work—and inset in metal banding. As a rule, drow prefer black gems above all else, and also value blue and dark red hues. Silvery hues are used as contrasts, but are usually provided by metal settings, not by gemstone material. Gems not found in this table are usually carried by drow as a form of money (especially as trade-currency for dealing with other races), not for personal wear.

A gemstone marked with an asterisk is detailed in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS*® Adventures sourcebook.

"Common" Stones

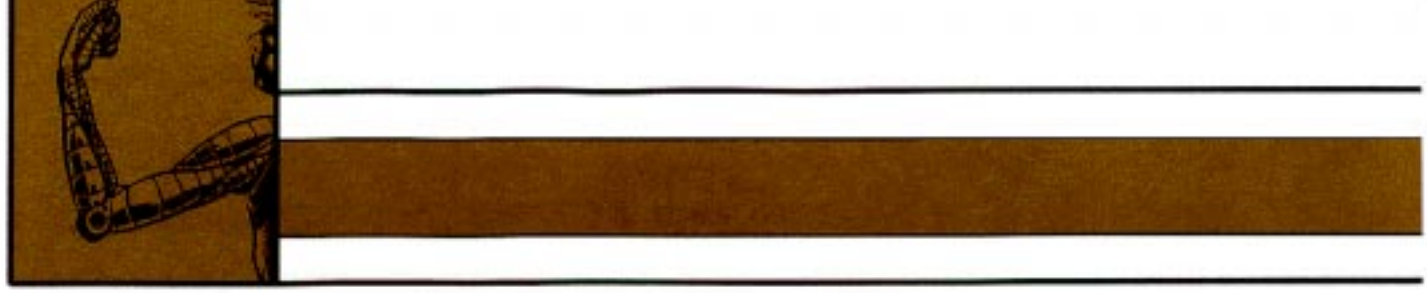
d20 Roll	Stone Description
01	Banded Agate (10 gp); blue and red striping most valued
02	Blue Quartz (10 gp)
03	Crown of Silver* (10 gp)
04	Eye Agate (10 gp); blue circles only, used by worshippers of Ghaunadaur
05	Hematite* (10 gp); much used in items to be enchanted



06 Malachite (10 gp); only when blue-green
07 Obsidian (10 gp); a drow favorite
08 Jasper (50 gp)
09 Moonstone (50 gp); its use is considered "bold," and it is often favored by rebellious youth, or the most ambitious priestesses
10 Onyx (50 gp); black only
11 Rock Crystal (50 gp); usually fashioned into "tears," and used as adornment on black garments
12 Smoky Quartz (50 gp); blue only
13 Zircon (only 30 gp among drow); the "fine gems" of poor drow
14 Aquamarine (100 gp); little used
15 Garnet (100-500 gp); deep reds favored by warriors; violets by priestesses of Lolth
16 Jade (100 gp); a "common" inlaystone or adornment
17 Jet (100 gp); a drow favorite
18 Pearl (500 gp); black, deep mauve or red pearls only!
19 Spinel (500 gp); deep blue only
20 Tourmaline (100 gp); blue and red only

"Prized" Stones

d20 Roll	Stone Description
01	Amethyst (800-1,200 gp among drow, depending on size and hue—darker preferred)
02	Beljuril* (5,000 gp); used only in wizards' towers, temple approaches, and other grand places, as well as temples holy to all drow deities except Lolth
03	Black Opal (1,000 gp); a favorite
04	Black Sapphire (5,000 gp); a drow favorite
05	Diamond (5,000 gp); rich blue only



06 Emerald (5,000 gp)
07 Fire Opal (1,000 gp); a drow favorite
08 Jacinth (5,000 gp); especially favored by wizards
09 Jasmal* (1,000 gp)
10 Opal (1,000 gp)
11 Oriental Amethyst (1,000 gp); a drow favorite: most drow cities are skilled in its treatment
12 Orl* (1,000 gp); red hues only
13 Ravenar* (1,000 gp); a drow favorite
14 Red Tears* (1,000 gp); darker hues only
15 Ruby (5,000 gp); darker hues most prized
16 Sapphire (1,000 gp); darker hues most prized
17 Star Ruby (5,000 gp); the star adornment is considered lucky to those who work magic, and a "risque" thing to wear for all others, often worn at parties by aged drow priestesses
18 Star Sapphire (5,000 gp); the preceding note for the star ruby applies to this stone also
19 Water Opal* (2,000 gp among drow); much used in sculptures and scrying-crystals
20 Zendalure* (1,000 gp); known among drow as "rock eggs," and believed sacred to Ghaunadaur—little used by drow of other faiths

Drow Aptitudes and Handiwork

All drow can readily use common tools, although their work may be crude at first. Fewer, perhaps 20% in all, can personally fashion complicated or exacting implements. Only about 10% of drow are skilled enough to fashion items that will take a permanent magical enchantment, or that incorporate Underdark radiations to function as quasi-magical (such as drow cloaks, boots, and armor). Drow armorers are valued highly; there are never enough to go around, and every noble drow House and merchant clan wants half-a-dozen of the first rank of skill on staff, not merely one or two.

Drow tend to be very good at fashioning and securing trade-containers; that is, methods of storing and moving goods about. They also fashion intricate harnesses for beasts of burden and mounts. These skills are due to the drow demands for goods (such as fruit) that can only be obtained from surface-world sources, through trade or raids, and by the need to harvest or gather needed goods (such as edible fungi, gems, and small edible animals, insects, and crustaceans) in the Underdark. Drow patrols often have folding racks for carrying trussed prisoners or game, and special clay "wet basins" are used to bring back live Underdark crab and fish to drow tables.

Some drow communities also use clay to fashion temporary structures or the dwellings of the poor, in a manner akin to the adobe-like "baked-mud" building of certain areas in the Shaar and in Kara-Tur of the surface Realms. Noble families may employ such techniques to create temporary furniture or sculptures for a party, filling much of their rooms with sweeping, fantastically-curved constructions studded with gems, glowing fungi, and other adornments, fitted with benches, alcoves, tunnels and secluded bowers for wild revelry.

CHAPTER 8

Drow Language

Drow are as eloquent and musical in their speech as other elves, and are capable of readily reproducing the sounds of other languages. Most drow are good mimics; a drow overhearing speech who imitates the words and tone is 45% likely (+1% per exposure to the language) to be audibly mistaken for the being they are imitating.

Most drow have little exposure to surface tongues (outcast, slave-traders, and adventurers being the principal exceptions). A citizen of an underground city who seldom ventures far afield will know two tongues: the everyday spoken language of the drow, or "Deep Drow" (which varies slightly from community to community, in the same way that spoken Common has regional accents, phrases, and words) and the soundless language of gestures and expressions developed by drow long ago.

This "silent language" of drow, sometimes called the "hand code," is a language as detailed as the spoken word. Its specifics are not given in this book for two reasons: First, Elminster believes that some secrets should be kept, and I agree. Second, development of gestures and expressions is an ideal area for DM creativity, to encourage PC roleplaying and uncertainty. Moreover, showing and describing the nuances and combinations of the unspoken tongue requires months of concentrated tutoring. A rudimentary vocabulary of spoken Drow appears in the "Selected Glossary" chapter.

"Deep Drow" (also known as "Low Drow" or "Drowic") is the everyday tongue of the drow, corrupted by passing fashions, trade-tongue jargon, and even words from other languages (notably orcish, dwarven, surface elven and human wizardly terms). It has a similar structure to the Common Tongue, used by humans and in most interspecies trade in the Realms (specifically to the dialect known as "Undercommon," used in The Realms Below). When written, its flowing letters resemble old elven and freehand Thorass scripts, but a being familiar with both elvish and Common writing can puzzle out only 14% of the general nature of a drow inscription.

Deep Drow is a living, changing tongue, and varies from place to place in the Underdark, as well as over time (although drow speech, due to isolation and technology slowed by tradition and a rigid class-based society, does not change with the rapidity of surface languages). The DM is free to introduce new words and phrases at will—and may encounter words and phrases in other sources that are not found here.

Visitors to drow settlements may also sometimes hear "High Drow," an archaic, rarely-used dialect known and heard chiefly by the clergy of Lolth (used in spell incantations, or between priestesses when they don't want lesser drow within hearing to understand their speech). High Drow incorporates some specialized gestures (part of the Silent Language), which drow not familiar with it sometimes call "The Secret Signs."

Adventurers are advised that drow are usually silent in battle. If startled or in pain, they may call out to Lolth, or utter an oath.

Common drow curses are "Ssussun pholor dos!" = "light upon you!" to another drow, or merely, "Ssussan" = "light!" To a non-drow, a drow usually reverses this: "Oloth plynn dos!" = "darkness take you!"

To rally comrades in battle or call for aid, drow may cry their House name—a drow of House Hlaund might cry, "Hlaund ulu usstan!" = "Hlaund to me!" or "Hlaund ultrin!" = "Hlaund supreme!"

CHAPTER 9

Drow Nomenclature

Personal Names

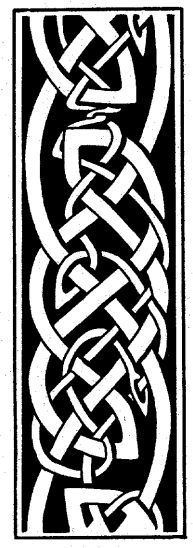
This chapter lists many drow names, useful in themselves and as a "style" guide for creating new names.

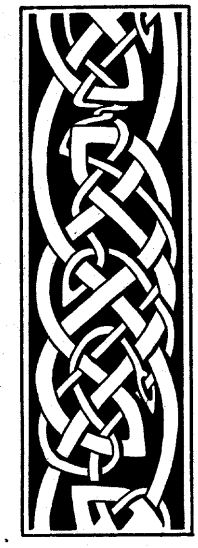
Humans are warned that drow names do not necessarily denote beings of the same sex as similar names (and name endings) in human societies. No noble drow has a first name too close to a common word (e.g. those in the "Selected Glossary" chapter). No drow, of any faith, take names closely resembling the names of any drow deity—it is blasphemous to use the name of one's own deity, and unlucky to have a name too akin to that of another deity.

Certain drow names are found on (or under) Toril and other worlds. Lolth has encouraged the spread of drow from world to world, to strengthen herself and to safeguard the survival of the race. Interplanetary colonization has spread names with the drow that bore them.

Female Given Names

Akordia
Alauniira
Alystin
Angaste
Ardulace
Aunrae
Baltana
Belarbreena
Briza
Burryna
Chalithra
Charinida
Chessintra
Dhaunae
Dilynrae
Drisinil
Eclavdra
Elvanshalee
Elvraema
Erelda
Faeryl
Felyndiira
Filfaere
Gaussra
G'eldriia
Ginafae
Greyanna
Haelra
Halavin
Halisstra
Ilivarra
Ilmra
Imrae
Inidil
Irae
Irruit
Iymril
Jhanniss
Jhaelryna
Jhulae
Jyslin
Laele
Larynda
LiNeerlay
Lirdnolu
Lualyrr
Malice
Maya
Micarlin
Minolin
Molvayas
Myrymma
Nathrae
Nedylene
Nulliira
Olorae
Pellanistra
Phaere
Phyrra
Quarra
Quave
Qilue
Rauva
Rilrae
Sabal
Sabrae
Shi'nayne
ShriNeerune
Shurdriira
Shyntlara
SiNafay
Ssapriina
Talabrina
Talice
Triel
T'risstree
Ulviirala
Umrae
Viconia
Vierna
Vlondril
Waerva
Wuyondra
Xullrae
Xune
Yasraena
Zarra
Zebeyana
Zesstra
Zilvra





Male Given Names

Adinirahc
Alak
Alton
Amalica
Antatlab
Baragh
Belgos
Berg'inyon
Bhintel
Bruherd
Calimar
Chaszmyr
Dinin
Dipree
Divolg
Drizzt
Duagloth
Durdyn
Elkantar
Filraen
Gelroos
Ghaundan
Gomph
Guldor
Hatch'net
Houndaer
Ilmryn
Ilphrin
Istolil
Ranaghar
Istorvir
Jaraxle
Jeggred
Kalannar
Kelnozz
Krenaste
Krondorl
Lesaonar
Lyme
Malaggar
Masoj
Merinid
Mourn
Nalfein
Nilonim
Nym
Ghaundar Nym
Ryltar
Omareth
Orgoloth
Pharaun
Quewen
Quild
Relonor
Riklaunim
Rizzen
Ryld
Sabrar
Seldszar
Shar
Nadal
Solaufein
Sorn
Szordrin
Tarlyn
Tathlyn
Tebryn
Tluth
Tsabrak
Urlryn
Valas
Vorn
Vuzlyn
Welverin
Wode
Yazston
Zaknafein

Surnames

Drow last names are many and varied. Only those of noble blood, or commoners holding titled ranks (such as patron, weapons master, or herald) in a noble House, may use the name of their House as a surname. By tradition, no House name begins with the same "L" sound as the name of the Spider Queen, Lolth, and no drow bears the personal name of "Lolth" or any of its variants (Lloth, Loethe)—except a revealed avatar of the Goddess.

Drow Surnames

Abaeir
Abbylan
Argith
Blaerabban
Blundyth
Coborel
Coloara
Cormrael
Dalael
Dhuunyl
Elpragh
Filifar
Gellaer
Ghaun
Glannath
Hune
Hyluan
Illistyn
Jhalavar
Jusztiirn
Khalazza
Lhalabar
Luen
Mlezziir
Naerth
Olonrae
Omriwin
Pharm
Philiom
Quavein
Rhomduil
Rrostarr
Seerear
Ssambra
Telenna
Tlintarn
T'orgh
T'sarran
Uloavae
Veladorn
Vrammyr
Vrinn
Waeglossz
Wyndyl
Xarann
Xiltyn
Yauntyrr
Yauthlo
Yoegh'il'rymmin
Zaphresz
Zolond

Known House Names

Aleanrahel
Aleval
Arabani
Arkhenneld
Auvryndar
Baenrae
Barrison'del'armgo
Claddath
Despana
DeVir
Do'Urden
Eilservs
Everhate
Fey-Branche
Freth
Godeep
Helviiryn
Hlaund
Hun'ett
Kenafin
Kilsek
Maerret
Melarn
Mylyl
Noquar
Ousstyl
Rilynt'tar
Teken'duis
Tormtor
Zauviir

Known Drow Cities

Abaethaggar
Abburth
Baereghel
Chaulssin
Charrvhel'raugaust
Ched Nasad
Cheth Rrhinn
Erelhei-Cinlu
Eryndlyn
Faneadar
Guallidurth
Haundrauth
Ithilaughym
Llurth Dreier
Luihaulen'tar
Maerimydra
Menzoberranzan
Orlytlar
Rilauven
Sshamath
Sshanntynlan
Szithlin
T'lindhet
Tyrybblyn
Uluitur
Undraeth
V'elddrinnsshar
Waethe Hlammachar
Yuethindrynn



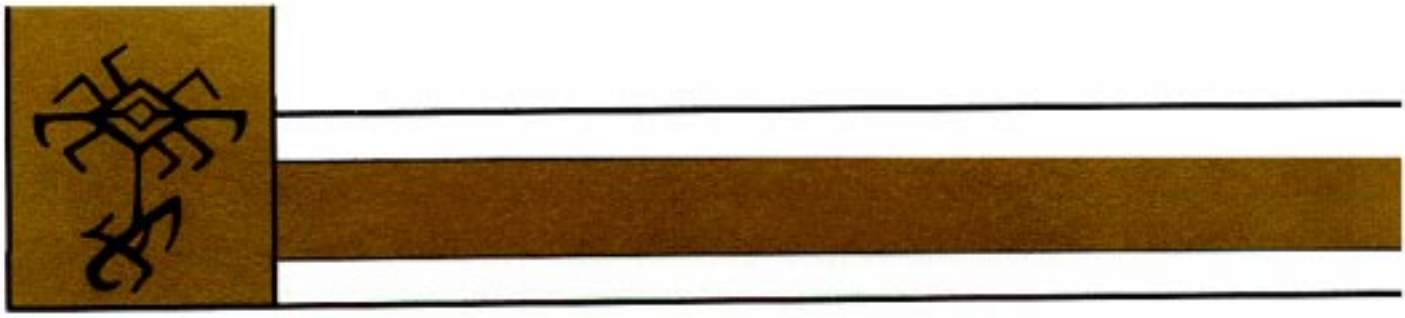
CHAPTER 10

A Selected Glossary of Deep Drow

"Deep" or "Low" Drow changes from place to place and time to time, altered by the introduction of words from other languages (due to trade, magical research and training, and the like). Deep Drow is similar in structure to Common. More details of drow communication can be found under "Drow Language," above; this chapter contains words and phrases for DM use in creating NPC drow speech, inscriptions, and messages.

Words

abban = ally, not-enemy
abbil = comrade, trusted friend
akh = band, group
alur = better, superior
alurl = best, foremost
alust = in front, facing, in the forefront
bauth = around, about
bautha = dodge, to dodge
belaern = wealth, coinage, treasure
belbau = to give
belbol = gift
bol = item, thing (unknown, unidentified, mysterious or important)
brorn = surprise
brorna = surprises
cahallin = food (produce or harvest, including raid-spoils, but not hunted game or cooking)
colbauth = path, known way
dal = from
darthiir = faeries, surface elves, traitors
del = of
doeb = out
dobluth = outcast
dos = you
dosst = yours
dosstan = yourself
draa = two
drada = second
dro = life, alive
elgg = kill, slay, destroy
elghinn = death
elamshin = destiny, the will of Lolth
elend = usual, traditional
elendar = continue, continued, continuing, enduring
faer = magic
faerl = magical
faerbol = magical item
faern = wizard, magic-worker (of either sex, any race)
gol = goblin
golhyrr = trick, ruse, trap
goln = goblins
harl = down, under, below
haszak = illithid (mind flayer)
haszakkin = illithids
honglath = clear thinking, calm, bravery, good behavior
iblith = offal, excrement, carrion (oath)
ilharn = patron (of House; title)
ilhar = mother, to mother (to give birth to young—not to comfort or rear)
ilharess = matron (of House; title)
ilharessen = matrons
ilindith = aim, goal, hoped-for event
inth = plan, stratagem, scheme
inthigg = agreement, treaty
izil = as
jabbuk = master (male in charge of some task or office; rank or title)
jal = all
jivvin = fun, play (amusing cruelty, "animal spirits")



khaless = Trust (especially misplaced or foolish)
kulg = snag, hitch, blockage (to will, or actual—e.g. debris in a shaft or passage)
kulggen = deliberate rampart, shield, or other barrier
kyone = alert/alertly, wary/warily, careful/carefully
kyorl = watch, wait, guard
kyorlin = watching, waiting, guarding

lil = the
llar = three
llarnbuss = third
lueth = and
luth = cast, throw, hurl

maglust = apart, alone
malla = honored (term of respect)
mrimm = guide, key, inspiration
mzild = more

nau = no
natha = a
nind = they, them, their, theirs
nindyn = those
noamuth = wanderer, lost, unknown

obsul = opening, door, gap or chink
ogglin = rival, opponent, enemy (active; all creatures are considered potential ogglin)
olist = caution, stealth
oloth = darkness (utter natural darkness or magical darkness)
orbb = spider
orthae = holy, sacred

phalar = grave, battle-marker
phindar = monster, dangerous being (especially a non-intelligent creature)
pholor = on, upon
phuul = are
plynn = take, seize
qua'laelay = disagreement, argument, confrontation (not yet open conflict)
quarth = order (exercise of authority)
Quarvalsharess = Goddess (Lolth; other goddesses are "quar'valsharess")
quarthen = ordered, commanded
qu'ellar = House (titled noble family)

ragar = find, discover, uncover
rath = back
ratha = backs
rathrae = behind
rivvil = human
rivvin = humans

sargh = confidence in weapons, battle-might, strength-at-arms, valor
sargtlin = (drow) warrior
sarn! = beware! warning!
sreen = danger
ssinssrigg = passion, lust, greed, longing, love
streea = suicide, death in the service of Lolth, a House, or a community
streeaka = reckless(ness), fearless(ness)
ssussun = light, brightness

taga = than
talinth = think, consider
thalra = meet, encounter
talthalra = meeting, council, parley
thalack = war, open fighting
Thalackz'hind = raid, attack from afar
tlu = be, to be
tuth = both

ul-Ilindith = destiny
ultrin = supreme, highest, conqueror ("ultrine" when applied to Lolth only)
ultrinnan = conquering, victory, to win or prevail
ulu = to
uss = one
usstan = this one (self, I)
usstil = one in my place
ust = first

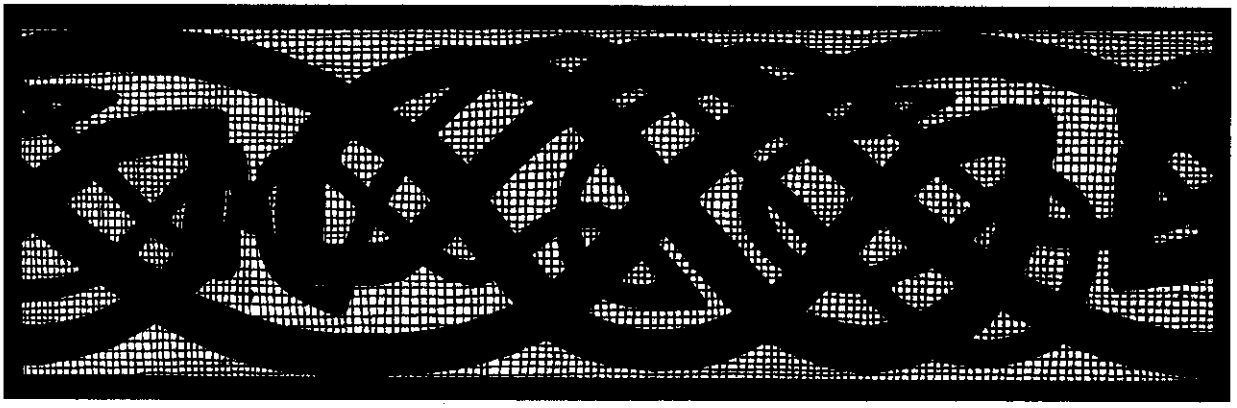
valsharess = queen
veldrin = shadows, concealment afforded by varying light
velkyn = unseen, hidden, invisible
vel'uss = who
velve = blade (dagger, knife, sword)

wael = fool
waela = foolish, unaware/unwary
wun = in
wund = among, within, into

xal = may, might, perhaps
xun = do, to complete or accomplish
xund = striving, effort, work
xundus = doing, achievement, work completed or manifested in some concrete result

yath = temple, of the temple (property, work, or decree)
yathrin = (drow) priestess
yathtallar = high priestess
Yorn = power/will/servant-creature of the Goddess (Lolth)

zhah = is
z'har = ride
zhaun = to learn, to know
zhaunil = learning, wisdom, knowledge
z'hin = walk
z'hind = trip, journey, expedition
z'orr = climb
z'ress = power, strength, force, dominance (especially of the will—i.e. success in manipulation)



Phrases

Jal khaless zhah waela. All trust is foolish.

Oloth zhah tuth abbil lueth ogglin. Darkness is both friend and enemy.

Xun izil dos phuul quarthen, lueth dro. Do as you are ordered, and live.

Lolth tlu malla; jal ultrinnan zhah xundus. Lolth be praised; all victory is her doing.

Ilharessen zhaunil alurl. (Matron) Mothers know best.

Lil alurl velve zhah lil velkyn uss. The best knife is the unseen one.

Lil waela lueth waela ragar brorna —lueth wund nind, kyorlin elghinn. The foolish and unwary find surprises—and among them, waiting death.

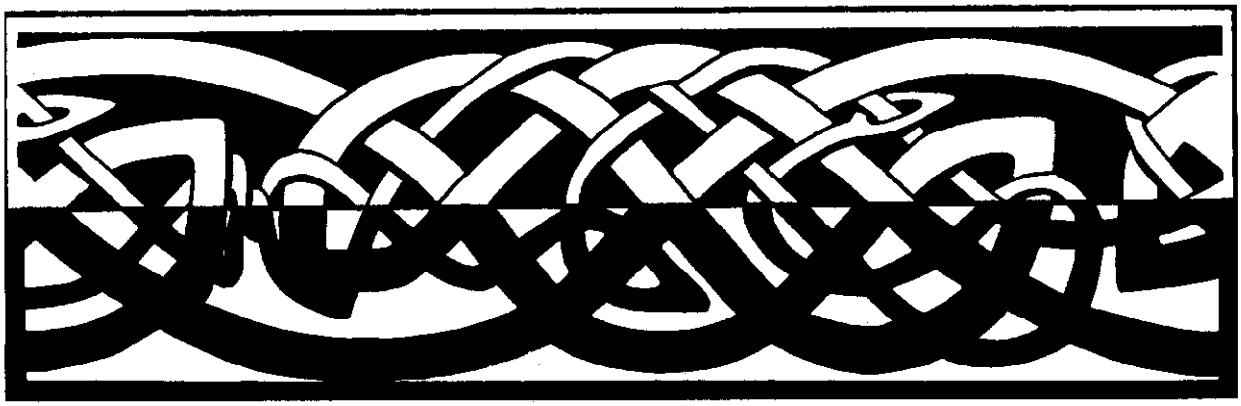
Khaless nau uss mzild taga dosstan. Trust no one more than yourself.

Nindyn vel'uss kyorl nind ratha thalra elghinn dal lil alust. Those who watch their backs meet death from the front.

Ulu z'hin maglust dal Qu'ellar lueth Valsharess zhah ulu z'hin wund lil phalar. To walk apart from House and Queen is to walk into the grave.

Kyorl jal bauth, kyone, lueth lil Quarvalsharess xal belbau dos lil belbol del elendar dro. Watch all about, warily, and the Goddess may give you the gift of continued life.

Vel'uss zhaun alur taga lil Quarvalsharess? Who knows better than the Goddess?



CHAPTER 11

Dark Elven Symbols

Elegant, flowing runes and intricate glyphs—always limned in black paste, ink, or inlay—are used by the richest and most powerful drow. These rare, seldom-seen inscriptions are used as defenses for treasure and fortifications.

Dark elves use symbols to mark House territory boundaries, House possessions (including slaves), and to mark routes in the Underdark. Some such symbols may be enchanted using *glyph of warding* spells. These magical symbols are of three sorts: way-marker runes, sacred glyphs, and House defenses. These pages detail typical symbol powers (a DM can select the effect of a particular symbol, or decide on its type and roll 1d8), but the DM should devise others before PC adventurers become familiar with most powers of drow symbols. This chapter explores some symbols and their uses.

Drow Runes

Runes can be "set" to be activated by direct touch, by movement of the surface they are placed upon (e.g. opening a door on which a rune has been drawn), or passage through an opening that an adjacent rune has been linked to. Runes may be visible, or invisible except while flashing in activation. No drow rune can be triggered more than once per round, and there is always at least one round of inactivity between activations (sometimes much longer). During these inactive intervals, the runes can be safely passed.

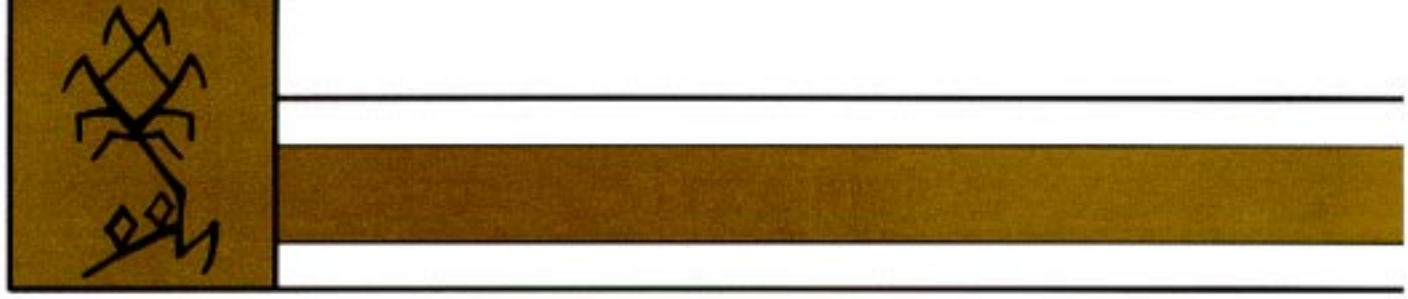
Attempts to remove runes with *dispel magic,* a *remove traps* spell or thiefly skill have a 1 in 6 chance of success, a 2 in 6 chance of "deactivating" the rune for 1-2 rounds, and a 3-6 chance of triggering the rune, even if the attempt occurs during an inactive interval. An *anti-magic shell* renders runes inactive as long as it is present. Remember, priestesses of Lolth and those who carry a *house insignia* are not affected by runes.

Way-Marker Runes

Way-marker runes are used in areas of the Underdark patrolled or traveled by drow, but not inhabited by them. Located in side-caverns, alcoves, and other areas of natural shelter that drow may wish to rest in or defend against a hostile monster, these runes are recognizable to all drow. They are not discharged by any drow passing them, but will visit their harmful effects on any non-drow who tries to pass them. (Note that a human wizard employing *alter self* or a stronger *polymorph* spell to take on drow form can "fool" such a rune, but mere illusions—such as the *change self* spell—do not.)

Way-marker runes last for 1 year per level of the drow placing them, and will discharge as often as triggered, during that time. (Some ancient drow runes of this type are *permanent;* the process of their making appears lost to present-day drow.) The spells and processes allowing drow to emplace runes are among the best-kept, most precious secrets of drow clergy and noble Houses. It is extremely unlikely that even a drow player character would ever learn such things, so they are not included here.

Each rune has only one power or effect. If a being disturbs a rune repeatedly, or simultaneously triggers more than one, the effects are cumulative. Saving throws are allowed against all rune effects; success indicates half damage or an escape from the effect entirely, at the DM's option.



Typical *way-marker rune* effects include:

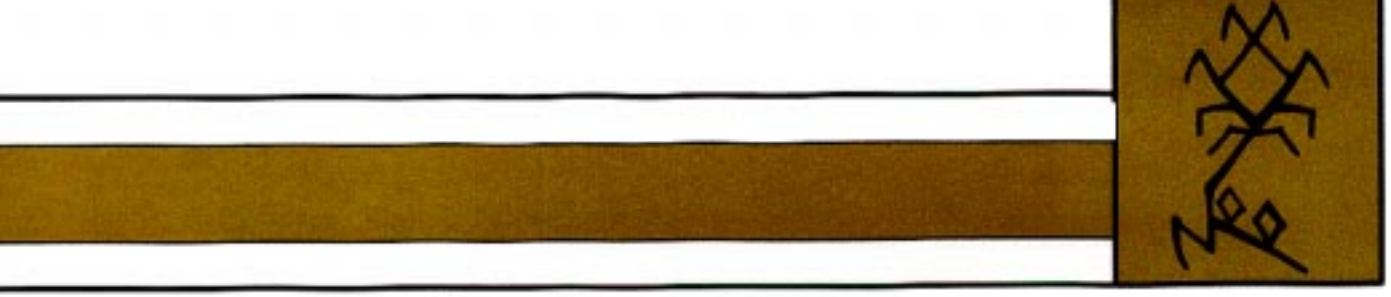
1. *Shocking grasp* (direct-contact electrical discharge) of 7d4 to 9d4 hp damage
2. *Lightning bolt* (arcing discharge to nearest non-drow being, when triggered: if more than one being within 20', roll 1d6: on a 2, 4, or 6, the bolt forks and strikes at the nearest two beings, doing them 5d6 damage each; otherwise, the discharge is a single strike, for 8d6 damage, with a 30' maximum range)
3. *Chain lightning* (as the spell, starting as a 12d6 damage discharge, and losing 1d6 hp-damage potential per "jump," with a 70' maximum range)
4. *Repulsion* (as the spell, causes retreat in exactly the path of approach used, retracing route at maximum movement rate but facing back toward rune, so that affected creature has a 4-point AC penalty toward attacks from creatures along the way; lasts for 9 rounds)
5. *Wall of fire* (as the spell; a "wall" appears instantly filling any gap or passage one side of which is within 20' of the rune, or directly in front of the rune, as "set" by the beings emplacing the rune; the wall will fill the opening, if set to do so, but if free-standing will be 10' across and 20' high, 20' across and 10' high, or a cylindrical ring, 20' across and 30' high—which closes in on itself by a radius of 10' per round, into a pillar; in all cases, this effect lasts for 7 rounds per activation, and deals the normal damage for the spell, including 2d6 + 12 points on all beings passing through the flames)
6. *Flesh to stone* (as the spell: permanent, no material components required, all possessions also affected; allow the saving throw to be made at +1; it changes the effect to a one-round, bone-chilling "wave" of stony appearance and feeling, equal in effects to a 1-round-long *slow* spell)
7. *Power word, blind* (as the spell, affecting triggering being only; saving throw allowed, at -3; if successful, blindness lasts for only 1d4 rounds, during which time the blinded being attacks and saves at -4, loses all damage bonuses, and suffers a 4-point armor class penalty; if failed, blindness —with combat effects just noted—continues until *dispel magic, remove curse,* or *cure blindness* applied)
8. *Hold monster* (as the spell, affects triggering creature only; saving throw must be made at — 3 — if failed, creature is *held* immobile for 7 rounds, if successful, creature is only *slowed* for one round)

Sacred Glyphs

In certain areas, special marker-glyphs are emplaced by priestesses of Lolth, to mark areas sacred to the goddess (typically caches of scrolls, or rich veins of gemstone claimed as the property of a local priesthood of Lolth). These glyphs take the form of a pair of female drow lips, shaped as if to bestow a kiss, and surrounded by eight spider legs shaped to form a circular outline for the glyph.

These glyphs discharge whenever a non-priestess of Lolth tries to pass them. If a priestess wishes to temporarily negate them (i.e. to allow a drow miner to work out some gems), a secret command word, whispered as the glyph is touched, will deactivate the glyph for 2d4 + 1 rounds. This deactivation can be performed repeatedly. Priestesses of Lolth are not subject to the effects of glyphs unless they have lost Lolth's favor.

Typical "sacred glyph" effects include all the effects of *way-marker runes,* plus the following:



1. Nine rubbery, 20'-long black tentacles lash out from the rune itself, striking at all living creatures in reach. These tentacles are akin to *Evard's black tentacles* (as the spell in attacks and details; the tentacles last for 9 hours per activation, or until destroyed; destroyed tentacles are not replaced by the rune's magic, and will not be present at its next activation)

2. *Shadow flares* spring from the flashing glyph, spraying forth at all living beings within 40'. 8d8 bolts of black energy leap forth, striking as THAC0 13 missiles, and will hit one being if only one is within range. When the *flares* strike, they immediately solidify into obsidian spears, dealing 8 points of damage each.

3. A *forcecage* appears around triggering creature and any other beings within 20', and lasts for 12 turns—during which the DM should roll for wandering monsters, or to determine whether defenders arrive to interrogate or attack with missile fire. The *cage* can be destroyed by *dispel magic,* or escaped by three methods:

— passing through the bars in *gaseous form* or *wraithform;*

— passing through the *cage* by means of magic resistance—one attempt only, requires successful resistance check;

— by bursting out as the *cage* is forming, which requires a successful saving throw vs. spell to execute. This method does an inescapable 2d4+8 hp damage to the escaping being.

4. *Sink* This affects triggering creature only, saving throw negates effects. If the throw is failed, the creature sinks steadily into the ground, remains entombed for 2d4 days, and then slowly rises up again. *Dispel magic* will halt sinking, but a second *dispel magic* is required to free the creature. A *dig* spell will also free characters trapped in this way.

5. *Feeblemind* The effects last until a *heal, limited wish,* or *wish* is applied. This version affects even non-spellcasters, who save against the spell at +2.

6. *Reverse gravity* This affects all beings within a 30' x 30' area of effect, one side of which is centered on the glyph.

7. *Polymorph other* Only the triggering being is affected. The victim is changed into a huge spider—see Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium* for details of the 6'-diameter form, which is AC6, MV 18, THAC0 19, 1 bite for 1-6 damage; former hit points, morale, and saving throws retained; no poison gained; normal chances for loss of personality and mentality.

8. Glyph functions as a *fire trap,* exploding for 1d4 + 12 damage (as the spell; 5'-radius blast range, save results in half damage, rounding up).

No other drow priesthoods employ such glyphs, except clergy of Ghaunadaur. In the rare instances where priests of the "Eye" have used glyphs to defend an altar, sacred cavern, or gem-cache, they will be of types 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8. Use the table above, and for results of 3 and 7, apply type 4 (the *sink* glyph, a favorite of Ghaunadaur's followers).

Way Shelter Runes



Power Suffixes



01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08

Sacred Glyphs



Lolth Ghaunadaur

Power Suffixes



01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08

House wizards and drow renegades seeking to defend their homes and treasure-places are always working to devise new, more powerful symbols.

Accompanying this chapter are a selection of the most common drow symbols. Note that the shape of a symbol does not always betray its effect.

Drow symbols that have magical powers are always drawn with magical inks, whose formulae are secret.

The finest sort of magical symbol-ink is *everdark,* an ancient formula known to the drow Houses in several cities. Its composition remains secret, but is rumored to involve ingredients from no less a creature than the deep dragon (detailed in this sourcebook), and is understandably rare. Its use is known to increase some symbol effects by up to 1d6 extra hp damage, or an additional 1-2 rounds of effect, or cause a -1 to -2 modifier to saving throws (in addition to existing modifiers); the DM should choose which *everdark* effect best applies.

House Defense Glyphs





House Glyphs



Alevai



Arabani



Arkhenneld



Auvyndar



Baenrae



Barrison del'armgo



Claddath



Despana



DeVir



Do'Urden



Eilserus



Everhate



Fey-Brandhe



Freth



Godeep



Helviiryn



Hlaund



Hun'ett



Kenafin



Kilsek



Maerret



Melarn



Lylyl



Noquar



Ousstyl



Rilynt'tar



Teken'duis



Tormtor



Azuviir

Power Suffixes



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08

The Spider and the Axe: War in the Depths

An ideal longterm campaign setting (or major event in the background history of an ongoing surface campaign) is a war between drow and dwarves. Neither race has a high birthrate, and both tend to be rich, so many hireswords can be enlisted. Allies such as duergar and human mercenaries, illithids, deep gnomes (and of course, PCs) would spice up the brew considerably.

Both drow and dwarves compete for the same subterranean riches, warring over veins and lodes of mineral-rich ore. Like surface miners, they prize both pure deposits of metallic ore and gems very highly. Drow tend to leave hard, dirty mining work for duergar and dwarves, but often come along after passages have been dug and lodes exposed, to seize control of the revealed riches. ("Likewise," adds Elminster, "if drow have used *dig* spells to expose a rich mineral deposit, dwarven raiding parties have been known to 'liberate' treasure, too.") Disputes between these territorial races are common, and armed skirmishes frequent. Where svirfneblin will withdraw from strong, persistent drow attacks, dwarves will meet the dark elves with stolid, stubborn fury. More information on dwarves is given in *FR11/Dwarves Deep*.

An all-out war in the depths could go on for years, as the warring sides enlist monstrous allies or slaves, dig outflanking passages, try to cause roof collapses and "hotrock" (magma) flows to damage enemy settlements and strongholds, and devise new magic.

DMs should note how such strife would affect the surface world. The price of gems, steel, dwarven smithy-work and the like would increase due to lack of availability. The price of weapons, food, and other supplies would also climb through increased demand from the depths. The cost of transportation would rise in some areas as competitive underground shortcuts were lost to use.

Even PCs not directly involved in the war would find many opportunities for adventure. Wizards who need certain rare material components obtainable only in the Underdark (usually from monsters dwelling therein) would pay well for supplies gleaned in the thick of battle.

In any drow community at war which contains more than one noble House, clan, or group, internal strife would be as deadly as the war itself. The various drow interests would constantly vie for supremacy, trying to make drow rivals take more losses (and blame for defeats) than their own House or clan.

Drow war band compositions and equipment vary from community to community and place to place, according to the wealth, contacts, and religion of the drow involved. A typical patrol consists of 1d6 + 6 warriors, a leader, a commander (who may have 1d3 apprentices/acolytes and/or 1d3 bodyguards), and (30% chance) 1d8 "allies"—orcs, bugbears, goblins, or the like. Illithids never fight in drow patrols, although a patrol might guard one on a journey.

Although there are all-male and all-female patrols (usually from communities where internal hostilities have reached the boiling-point), most drow patrols are mixed.

The warriors in a patrol are almost always armed with hand crossbows (10 poisoned bolts, 20 in wartime), shortswords, daggers, buckler shields, and 1d3 javelins, with an atlatl ("throwing stick;" used by drow to hurl javelins, it increases their effective range from S3/M6/L9 to



S5/M8/L11, and requires much practice to use effectively). Typically 1d6 of these fighters will be second level— the "basic" drow whose statistics are given in the *Monstrous Compendium* "Elf, Drow" entry; the others will be of higher levels, usually up to 4th.

The patrol leader is a warrior or warrior/priest of at least 6th level, and is usually armed with a mace (+3 or better) to denote authority, a hand crossbow, and javelins with an atlatl. This leader is often male, and a veteran of the Underdark, who knows the terrain the patrol is encountered in intimately. In larger patrols, the leader is usually female, multi-classed, and of 7th or greater level; she may have one or two lieutenants of either sex, who are fighters of 5th or 6th level.

An elite patrol commander is usually (65%) a priestess of 7th or greater level. Her bodyguard will always be female fighters (of 5th or greater level) or fighter/mages (levels 3/3 or greater). Her "acolytes" will be priestesses of the same faith, and 3rd or greater level.

A "duty cleric" of roughly the same level as the commander will accompany the patrol as a healer (and as the "eyes" of the clergy, in a Lolth-dominated community). The commander may also have 1 or 2 apprentice mages along.

The use of *charmed* or otherwise docile "carrying slaves" in a patrol is frowned upon by some drow—they are usually more noisy than the drow, and their loyalty is open to question. Slaves are never present in wartime or "alert" situations; otherwise, they are 20% likely to be found.

In wartime, all patrols use poisoned weapons (the "Drow Craftwork" chapter details drow poison effects). Typically, all warriors in such a patrol carry 1-3 *potions of healing,* in rust-proof steel vials at their belts and in their boots. Patrol leaders may be of 1d3 levels higher than normal, and commanders will sometimes be more important (and powerful) drow.

Cramped subterranean conditions rarely allow dark elves to amass armies. Strike forces tend to be patrols grouped under the command of powerful fighting mages or clerics. Such "pincers" typically consist of two to four patrols under the command of an "overleader" or "battle-captain" of 9th or greater level, accompanied by 1d4 "webmasters" or lieutenants of 7th or greater level.

The pincers report to the overall leader of the force, the "battle-lord" or "warmistress," who is usually noble. This leader will have a bodyguard (of wartime patrol strength) of mages, priestesses, messengers, and personally loyal guards.

This "command guard" of a force carries potions, scrolls, and magical items that can be dispatched where needed in a fight—a rich prize for those who can overcome the guard. Such guards are almost impossible to defeat with much magic intact, because its members are powerful, magically-protected drow who will fight to the death, using their magic effectively and with no thought of holding anything back for later.

Those experienced in fighting drow report that they are prone to launching harrying strikes, not sieges, treachery rather than honesty parley, and action rather than waiting— they are not patient foes, and can often be lured into forays or imprudent attacks by insults, harassment, and tricks that make them appear foolish. Adventurers are warned, however, that this is a generalization—beware fatal exceptions!

CHAPTER 13
The Underdark

We only peek here at the vast world under Faerun known as the Underdark. DMs running subterranean campaigns should consult the classic *GDQ 1-7/Queen of the Spiders,* and the *FR11/Dwarves Deep* sourcebook for further information.

The Underdark is a many-layered network of caverns, passages, and rivers of water and magma. Its stone ceilings look down on strange features: stalagmites sharp as dragons' teeth, lacy rock curtains, arches, and graceful bridges. A heavy, brooding silence is broken by far-borne echoes. They magnify sounds of life, cracks and deep boomings of shifting and shattering rock, and the murmur of moving water.

The Underdark is too dangerous for most beings (including drow) to travel in alone. Its natives almost all possess infravision—and lurk in the darkness hunting those weaker than themselves.

Areas of the Underdark favored by drow have large ferrous ore deposits. Adamantite and gems tend to be plentiful. Magnetic forces are strong, and the rock gives off radiation akin to magical energy. Drow have learned to use and thrive among these energies.

These radiations prevent teleportation magic from operating reliably in the Underdark. The maximum range of such travel is half a mile. A *teleport* will travel straight for half a mile, then divert into the nearest open area—even if it is a tiny cavity enclosed in solid rock! Near very strong radiation, *teleports* are reduced to *blink* range, or have involuntary *displacement* effects.

Drow eyes see strong radiation by certain rock-glow hues of eerie, vivid blue, green, or amber. Most surface-dwellers can only guess whether radiation is present by the occurrence of drow guards and certain glowing plants.

Drow place shriekers around radiation areas as alarms. Their offspring are usually moved by the drow (who never have enough alarms), but shriekers seem to thrive and willingly stay near radiation, producing offspring faster than elsewhere in the Underdark.

Violet fungi are normally found with shriekers—except in strong-radiation areas, which they dislike and avoid. It is a little-known fact that lots of shriekers and no violet fungi usually means strong radiation. It is known to surface lore that strong radiation areas harbor many small, harmless glowing mosses and lichens, which radiate a great variety of colors.

Such areas are also known to create plants and monsters of unusual size, with deformities, or additional or augmented features. Many tavern-tales tell of two-headed purple worms, flying ropers, or other horrors of the depths. If such monsters are powerful and entrenched in lairs, drow work around them, leaving them as guardians to discourage others. Spiderlike mutants are revered by Lolth-worshipping drow as the work of the goddess. The drow may even feed them with captives or lured intruders.

A campaign could focus on a band of adventurers exploring one strong-radiation area after another, mining them of riches and monsters for sale to surface markets. Such "endless exploration" campaigns take on a survivalist flavor; tools, food, necessary supplies, and exploration strategies become paramount, and the usual intrigue and treasure less important.

CHAPTER 14
Monsters of the Underdark

This chapter details some important creatures who associate with drow, or compete with them in the Underdark. Enterprising individuals may enslave, domesticate, or befriend such creatures.

Drow wizards have been known to use (or be used by!) small creatures from the Abyss, as familiars—when such are available. (These rare horrors are not detailed in this book.) More often, a drow wizard uses a deep bat (detailed herein) or other sort of bat (see "Bat" in Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium);* a spider of some sort (see this chapter and "Spider" in Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium);* a snake (see "Snake" in Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium);* or a spitting crawler (described in this chapter). Other creatures may be used if the DM desires.

When a drow wizard character employs a *find familiar* spell in the Underdark, use the following table in place of the one that appears in the spell entry in the *Player's Handbook:*

Drow Wizard Familiar Table

D20 Roll	Familiar
1-3	Deep Bat
4-5	Bat, Common
6-7	Bat, Giant
8	Mobat (see "Bat")
9-13	Spider (DM's choice of species)
14-16	Snake, Poisonous
17	Snake, Spitting (or special type)
18	Spitting Crawler
19	DM's choice (special creature)
20	No familiar available, in range

The creature most often domesticated by drow is the subterranean, or "deep lizard", detailed in Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium* (under "Lizard"). These are used both as beasts of burden, and (by drow mercenaries, nobles, and notable warriors) as steeds.

Deep lizards can scale stone as easily as a spider. Their soft, sticky, three-toed feet allow them to run along walls and ceilings, leaving a less obvious "heatprint" trail for infravision-using monsters or enemies.

Subterranean lizards move in velvety silence; their favorite prey is the fast, leaping "scurry rat" of the depths.

Monstrous Compendium-format entries for drow-related creatures of the Realms follow. Some are old favorites; others are revealed for the first time.

Bat, Deep

	Azmyth	Night Hunter	Sinister	Werebat
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any temperate/any	Any temperature/any	Any/any	Any/any
FREQUENCY:	Rare	Uncommon	Rare	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary	Hunting Packs	Bands	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any	Nocturnal/any	Any	See below
DIET:	Omnivore	Carnivore	Omnivore	Any/blood (in bat form)
INTELLIGENCE:	High (13-14)	Average to high (8-14)	Average to Exceptional (8-16)	Varies
TREASURE:	Nil	M, 0, Z (in lair)	Nil	All possible
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic neutral	Neutral evil	Lawful neutral	Varies
NO. APPEARING:	1	1-12 (1-30 in lair)	1-6	1 (1-2)
ARMOR CLASS:	2	6	3	7
MOVEMENT:	3, F1 24 (A)	2, Fl 18 (A)	2, F1 21 (A)	Varies (usually 12)/1, Fl 14 (C)
HIT DICE:	2	2 + 2	4 + 4	Varies
THACO:	19	19	17	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2	4	1	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1/1-2	1-4/1-2/1-2/1-6 or 3-12	2-5	1-2
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Magic use	Nil	Magic use	Bite effects
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Magic use	Nil	Energy field	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	40%	Nil	70%	Nil
SIZE:	S (3' wingspan, length up to 4')	M (up to 7' wingspan)	L (9' wingspan)	M
MORALE:	Elite (14)	Steady (11)	Champion (15-16)	Varies (12+)
X.P. VALUE:	650	175	2,000	Varies (usually 975)

"Deep bats" are Faerunian varieties of bat known to be active in both the surface world and the Underdark. The four most important of these species are described in this collective entry.

Azmyth

Azmyths live on flowers, small plants, and insects. They are solitary wanderers, though they do have "favorite haunts" to which they often return. They often form partnerships with humanoids for mutual benefit, sometimes forming loyal friendships with such beings. Azmyths have been known to accompany creatures for their entire lives, and then accompany the creatures' offspring. The lifespan and mating details of azmyths are presently unknown. They are not familiars as wizards understand the term; no direct control can be exercised over one except by spells.

Azymths have crested heads and bearded chins, white, pupilless eyes, and leathery gray, mauve, or emerald green skin. They emit shrill squeaks of alarm or rage, and endearing, liquid chuckles of delight or amusement. They communicate by 60'-range telepathy, and have 90'-range infravision. They can know alignment thrice per day, become *invisible* (self only, for 6 rounds or less; ending when the azymth makes any successful attack) once per day, and create *silence 15' radius,* centered on themselves, once a day.

In combat, azmyths bite (1 hp damage) and stab with their powerful needle-sharp tails (1-2 points). Twice per day, an azmyth can unleash a *shocking grasp* attack, transmitting 1d8+6 points of electrical damage through any direct physical contact with another creature. This attack can be combined with a physical attack for cumulative damage.

Night Hunter

This species is also known as a "dragazhar," after the adventurer who first domesticated one as a pet, long ago. Nocturnal in the surface Realms, it is active at any time in the gloom of the Underdark. It will eat carrion if it must, but usually hunts small beasts. Desperate dragazhar have been known to attack livestock, drow, or humans.

Night hunter packs (known as "swoops") dip down to bite prey (1d4), rake with their wing claws (1-2 each), and slash (1d6) or stab (3d4 damage) with their dexterous, triangular-shaped, razor-sharp tails. They often stalk their prey, flying low and dodging behind hillocks, ridges, trees, or stalagmites, so as to attack from ambush. Night hunters have 180'-range infravision, but rarely surprise opponents, as they emit weird, echoing loon-like screams when excited.

Night hunter lairs usually contain over thirty creatures (three hunting bands or so). They typically live in doubled-ended caves, or aboveground in tall trees, in dense woods. Night hunters will not tarry to eat where they feel endangered, so their lairs often contain treasure fallen from prey carried there. Night hunters roost head-downwards when sleeping. They are velvet black in hue, even to their claws, and have violet, orange, or red eyes.

Sinister

These mysterious, jet-black creatures most closely resemble manta rays—they have no distinct heads and necks, and their powerfully-muscled wings do not show the prominent fingerbones common to most bats. A natural ability of *levitation* allows them to hang motionless in midair. This unnerving appearance and behavior has earned them their dark name, but "sinisters" are not evil.

Aboveground, they prefer to hunt at night, when their 160'-range infravision is most effective. They will eat carrion if no other food is available, and regularly devour flowers and seed-heads of all sorts.

Sinisters are both resistant to magic and adept in its use. In addition to their pinpoint-precision *levitation,* they are at all times, when alive, surrounded by a naturally-generated, 5'-deep energy field akin to a *wall of force.* This field affords no protection against spells or melee attacks. Missile attacks are stopped utterly; normal missiles are turned away, and such effects as *magic missile* and *Melf's acid arrow* are absorbed harmlessly.

In addition, all sinisters can cast one *hold monster* (as the spell) per day. They usually save this for escaping from creatures more powerful than themselves, but may use it when hunting, if ravenous.

Curiously, though they are always silent (communicating only with others of their kind, via 20'-range, limited telepathy), sinisters love music; both song and instrumental work. Many a harper or bard making music at a wilderness campfire has found himself surrounded by a silent circle of floating sinisters. Unless they are directly attacked, the sinisters will not molest the bard in any way, but may follow the source of the music, gathering night after night to form a rather daunting audience.

Sinisters are usually encountered in small groups, and are thought to have a long lifespan. Their social habits and numbers are unknown.

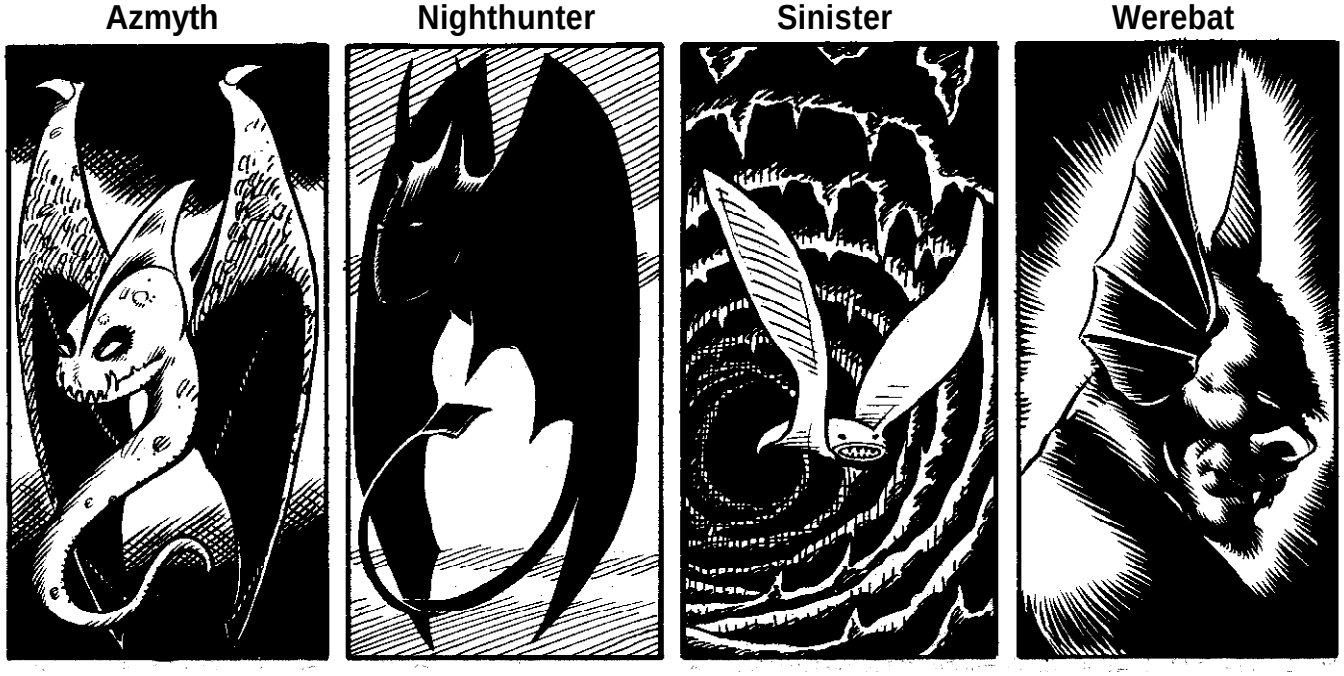
Werebat

The bite of a werebat can transmit a rare variety of lycanthropy. Humanoids bitten by werebats change to a bat-like form at night—even if deep in the Underdark. Werebats retain the intelligence, alignment, Hit Dice, and ability of speech possessed in their other form. They are fully alert and aware in both forms, and possess acute hearing in either form.

Werebats are heavy and clumsy in flight. Driven by blood-lust, they hunt in bat-form (usually alone). The bite of a werebat's long, hollow fangs punctures and drains blood for 1-2 hp damage, and saliva on the fangs causes *weakness* with no saving throw. The effects are equal to the wizardly *ray of enfeeblement* spell, and last 1d4 rounds. In addition, if a *cure disease* or *neutralize poison* spell is not cast on the bitten victim within nine turns (application of a slow poison allows the curative spells given above to be successful if cast within 36 turns), the victim has a 80% chance of contracting lycanthropy. The lycanthropy will be of werebat-form only, and its effects will be felt gradually, over the month following the werebat's attack.

Werebats are virtually indistinguishable from non-lycanthropes when in their humanoid form, but once afflicted, most tend to become solitary, and may be dark-eyed, shy, and elusive. They rarely inhabit lairs as bats, returning to the habitations of their other form between excursions in bat form.

Most werebats are desperate, lonely individuals. Many actively seek treasure, hoarding it so that they can purchase a magical cure for their lycanthropy. Silver, holy water, and the like do no special damage to werebats in either form. They are not undead, cannot be turned, and are immune from controlling attempts by bat-influencing magic or vampires.



Dragon, Deep

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Hill and mountain caverns, subterranean
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary or clan
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivorous
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional (15- 16)
TREASURE:	Special
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1 (2-5)
ARMOR CLASS:	0 (base)
MOVEMENT:	12, F1 30 (C), Br 6, Sw 9
HIT DICE:	14 (base)
THACO:	8 (base)
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3 + special
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3-12/3-12/3-24
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Variable
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Variable
SIZE:	H (24' base)
MORALE:	Fanatic (17-18)
X.P. VALUE:	Variable



Deep dragons are little known on the surface world. They are the old, wise, wide-ranging "silent hunters" of the Underdark. "The drakes of the depths" are cunning and patient, placing their survival—followed by their joy of hunting—above all. Deep dragons carefully amass and hide treasure in various caches, guarded with traps and magic. They are able to use most magic items, and will retain those they seize for personal use.

Deep dragons are an iridescent, eye-catching maroon when they hatch. Soft-scaled and unable to change form, they keep to their birth-lairs until they have mastered both their other forms—that of a giant, winged worm or snake, and a bipedal human (or drow) form.

Combat: Deep dragons burrow and fight with their powerful, stone-rending claws, tearing plate armor, bony carapaces, bones and flesh alike. They love to fight and to hunt prey through the lightless caverns of the Underdark, employing their various forms to follow prey.

In snake form, they are AC 6; MV 9, Fl 4 (D), Sw 11. They lose their claw attacks, but gain a constriction attack (successful attack roll required, does 3d8 damage/round, hampers victim's movement, spellcasting, and attacks: causing -1 on all attack rolls and a 1-point armor class penalty).

In human form, a deep dragon is AC 10, MV 12, Sw 12, and does damage by spell or weapon type. Armor can be worn, but it is always destroyed (doing the dragon 2d4 damage in the process) in any transformation of shape. A deep dragon can alter the size, shape, hue and features of its bipedal form to resemble a human, elf (surface or drow), half-elf, half-orc, orc, hobgoblin, dwarf, duergar, or any similar creature of like size. It can do this well enough to always be taken for a being of such a race, but is only 66% likely to copy a specific being well enough to be mistaken for that individual.

Deep dragons are wary in battle and approach, but find spell and claw-to-hand combat well-nigh irresistible. They will avoid obvious traps, ambushes, and open combat with magically-strong, numerous opponents trying to find them, but delight in stalking prey, pouncing on creatures without warning, and using their spells to bury opponents under rockfalls, or smiting with destructive spells.

Breath weapon/special abilities: A deep dragon's breath weapon is a cone of flesh-corrosive gas 50' long, 40' wide, and 30' high. Creatures in the cloud can save versus breath weapon for half damage (if they have dry, exposed skin, they save against the flesh-eating gas at -2). Cloth, metal and wood are not affected. Leather, however, is in the same position as dry, exposed skin.

Deep dragons cast spells at 9th level, adjusted by their combat modifiers. Deep dragons are born with infravision, innate immunities to *charm, sleep,* and *hold* magics, and the ability to *detect magic* unerringly. They also have *true seeing.* Deep dragons are immune to extremes of heat and cold (-3 on each die of damage taken, to a minimum of 1 hp/die).

As deep dragons age, they gain the following additional powers:

Very young: assume *snake form* three times/day (no time limit on form, can change back at will).

Young: assume *bipedal or "human" form* thrice/day.

Juvenile: gain one additional form change (each form) per day, gain ability to *regenerate* 1d4 hp every turn.

Adult: regenerate ability strengthens, to 1d4 hp every 6 rounds. Gains ability of *free action* at will.

Mature adult: *regenerate* ability increases, to 1d4 hp every 4 rounds. Gains ability to *levitate* three times/day (usable in combination with *free action).*

Old: gains the ability to *transmute rock to mud* and use *telekinesis* three times/day.

Very old: gains the ability to *move earth* three times/day.

Venerable: gains the ability to *passwall* twice a day, and *disintegrate* (non-living matter only, but can be used on undead or the clothing and gear worn and carried by a living being) twice per day.

Wyrm: gains an additional use/day of all powers gained from "Old" age to date, also the ability to *stone shape* twice per day, and use *tongues* once/day.

Great wyrm: the power to use *repulsion* thrice/day is gained, affecting undead and all living creatures except other true dragons. One additional daily use of *stone shape* and *tongues* is also gained.

Habitat/Society: Deep dragons roam the Underdark. They are great explorers, and even venture (particularly when they are young adults) up and about the surface world from time to time—particularly to regain stolen treasure, take revenge on foes, and to seize or steal magic.

Otherwise, deep dragons are found in trapped, well-defended lairs in the Underdark. They often use their powers to reach caverns inaccessible to most creatures (including themselves in full-size dragon form), and to fashion physical, monstrous (transplanting harmful fungi and similar creatures), and magical traps to defend them. Deep dragons often work with drow, as guardians that the drow feed regularly with slaves, captives, and drow who have earned the death penalty.

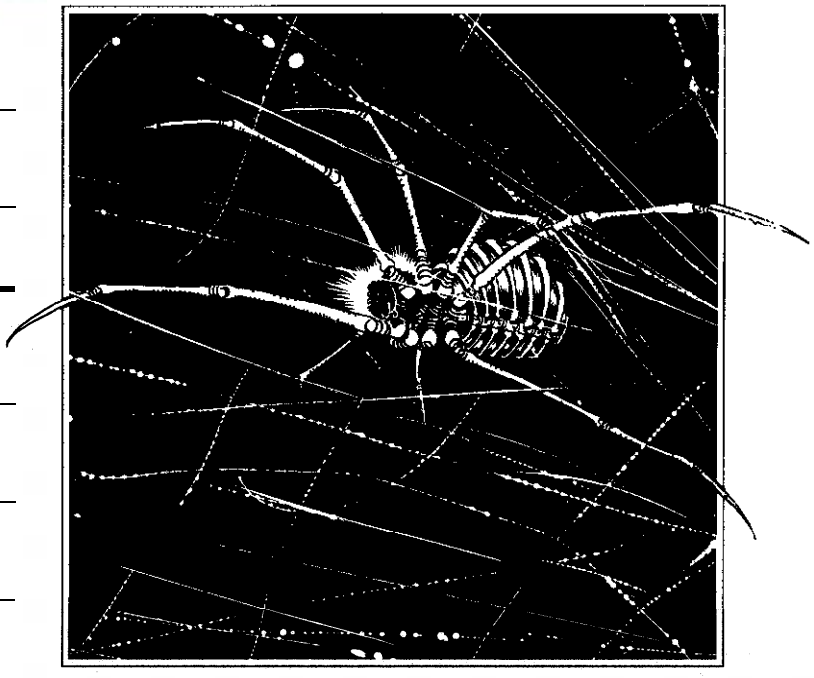
Ecology: Deep dragons have been known to eat almost anything, but they particularly prize the flesh of clams(!), fish, kuo-toa, and aboleth. They view cloakers and mind flayers as dangerous rivals in the Underdark, and seek to eliminate them whenever possible. Deep dragons avoid confrontations (or even openly revealing their presence) to other dragons, if possible, and will never fight or steal from others of their own kind.

DMs are reminded to consult Volume One of the *Monstrous Compendium* when using this monster; the powers and characteristics generally shared by dragons (see 2-page "Dragons" general entry) apply to Deep Dragons.

Age	Base Lgt'	Tail Lgt'	AC	Breath Weapon	Spells: Wizard/Priest	MR	Treasure Type	XP Value
1	1-5	1-4	3	2d8+1	Nil	Nil	Nil	2,000
2	5-14	4-12	2	4d8+2	Nil	Nil	Nil	3,000
3	14-23	12-21	1	6d8+3	Nil	Nil	Nil	4,000
4	23-32	21-28	0	8d8+4	1	Nil	H,Q	6,000
5	32-41	28-36	1	10d8+5	2	25%	H,Qx2,E	8,000
6	41-50	36-45	2	12d8+6	2,1	30%	H,Qx3,E,S	10,000
7	50-59	45-54	3	14d8+7	3,2	35%	Hx2,Qx4,E,S	12,000
8	59-68	54-62	4	16d8+8	4,2,1/1	40%	Hx2,Qx4,E,S,T	15,000
9	68-77	62-70	5	18d8+9	4,2,2/2	45%	Hx3,Qx5,E,S,T	16,000
10	77-86	70-78	6	20d8+10	4,3,2,1/2,1	50%	Hx3,Q,E,S,T,U	17,000
11	86-95	78-85	7	22d8+11	4,3,3,2/3,2	55%	Hx3,Q,E,S,T,U,V	18,000
12	95-104	85-94	-8	24d8+12	4,3,3,2,1/3,3,1	60%	H,Q,E,S,T,U,V,X,Z	19,000

Myrlochar

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare (Uncommon in Abyss)
ORGANIZATION:	Hunting packs
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Very (11-12)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-12
ARMOR CLASS:	4
MOVEMENT:	8, Wb 16
HIT DICE:	6+6
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-5/2-5/2-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	30%
SIZE:	M (6' diameter)
MORALE:	Champion (15)
X.P. VALUE:	4,000



Myrlochar, or "soul spiders," are the servants of Lolth most often summoned from her dark otherplanar domain by rituals of worship or supplication to the Spider Queen. In the Abyss, they are tireless hunters, and often discover and pass through interplanar gates, portals, and other methods of transit, to reach other planes. There, they roam freely, wreaking havoc until destroyed.

Vicious and cruel in their hunting down and slaying of weaker creatures, myrlochar appear as skeletal spiders, whose brown, russet, or ivory-yellow bones glow with a faint greenish-yellow radiance, and whose eyes glow a fiery cherry red.

Lolth's dictates force them to obey a single command from any summoner—to their own destruction, if necessary. Thereafter they are free to roam the plane they have been summoned to at will, so long as they do not harm the persons or activities of beings who openly worship the Spider Queen. Typically, they find cover, and from it begin an almost playful hunting and killing spree—until they finally encounter an opponent powerful enough to slay them. Myrlochar summoned together tend to remain in a hunting group during this period of freedom.

Combat: The skeletal bodies of myrlochar are surprisingly strong and agile. In battle, they strike with the bony points of two elongated forelegs (sometimes with enough force to penetrate a shield), and with saw-edged jaws.

The magical bite of a soul spider does 2-12 damage. There is always a 1 in 6 chance that 1 hit point of any myrlochar bite damage will be permanently drained from the victim—and gained by the soul spider. It is this power that gave the myrlochar its nickname, among long-ago Calishite desert nomads and northern barbarian tribes of the Realms.

In addition, the bite of a myrlochar can also affect its victim with one of two magical effects (the intended victim receives a saving throw versus spell, at -3, to avoid either effect): *hold person* (lasting 4 rounds) or *reverse gravity.* Except as noted, these effects are identical to the wizard spells of the same names.

Myrlochar can navigate and fight normally even in magical *darkness,* by means of acute hearing, smell, vibratory senses, and a sort of active sonar sense, and are not adversely affected by bright light. They make no sound in normal movement, and can pass through webs without hindrance (including the sticky effects of a *web* spell, to which they are immune).

Myrlochar produce no webs of their own, but can adhere to walls, ceilings, the webs of others, weapons (especially polearms) and other items. Soul spiders use these as tools and reaching-aids rather than weapons.

Myrlochar can *levitate* at a vertical movement rate of 6 per round. They can use this ability to slow themselves when falling or leaping, with effects equal to a *feather fall* spell. Myrlochar typically employ polearms or other reaching aids to pull themselves closer to a ledge or quarry when *levitating.*

Myrlochar produce and use no poison, but are immune to all poisons. They are not undead and cannot be turned—but share immunities to *sleep, charm,* and *hold*-related spells with many undead.

Habitat/Society: Myrlochar form hunting packs both on the Abyssal layers and on other planes. No one has ever seen young soul spiders, nor do they seem to form family groupings or mating pairs.

Ecology: Myrlochar never seem to age. They regenerate lost bony matter very slowly (at the rate of 1 hp/4 days), can reattach severed legs and body parts, and will eat the flesh of any creature they can catch. Nothing hunts them except fearful intelligent opponents trying to be rid of them— and foolhardy adventurers, often in the employ of alchemists. Powdered soul spider bone is a potent ingredient in the making of items and enchantments involving *free action* and *levitation.*

Pedipalp

	Large (Schizomida)	**Huge** (Amblypygus)	**Giant** (Uropygus)
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:		All except arctic/all except tundra	
FREQUENCY:	Rare	Rare	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:		Solitary or hunting packs	
ACTIVITY CYCLE:		Any (most active in darkness)	
DIET:		Carnivore	
INTELLIGENCE:		Non (2)	
TREASURE:	M, Qx2	Qx4, T	I
ALIGNMENT:		Neutral	
NO. APPEARING:	1-4	1-4	1-2
ARMOR CLASS:	7	4	2
MOVEMENT:	12	12	6
HIT DICE:	1+1	2+2	4+4
THAC0:		19	
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1	3	3
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-8	1-6/1-6/1-8	1-8/1-8/2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil	Grip	Grip, poison gas
SPECIAL DEFENSES:		Poison immunity	
MAGIC RESISTANCE:		Nil	
SIZE:	S (up to 4' long)	M (4'-6')	L (8'-12')
MORALE:	Average (9)	Steady (11)	Elite (13)
X.P. VALUE:	35	175	650

Pedipalpi, also known as "whip scorpions," are found on various worlds. They vary somewhat in powers and habits; those of Toril are described here.

Pedipalpi resemble a cross between a spider and a scorpion, and can be found in many colors. Brown and tan are the most common, but russet and bottle-green individuals are also numerous. All pedipalpi are immune to all sorts of poisons and corrosives (including acids and noxious vapors). They are often used by drow (cf. "Elf, Drow" in Volume 2 of *the Monstrous Compendium)* as household guardians, pets, and as the equivalent of hunting dogs.

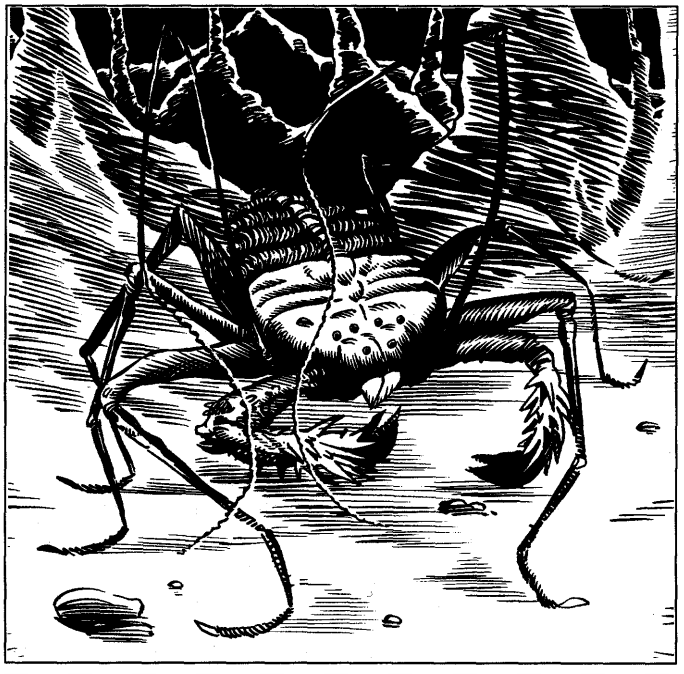
Pedipalpi of Toril mate once every eight months or so, the female producing a cluster of 2d20 soft-shelled eggs. These are injected into the body of a creature disabled (typically pinned under rocks, and/or with joints broken) by the pedipalp couple, and when they hatch, eat their way to freedom.

Large Pedipalp

These scuttling creatures are common in the Underdark of Toril, where they dine on rats, worms, and other small prey. Equipped with two grasping arms and fearsome-looking mandibles, the schizomidae are incapable of grasping prey larger than themselves. "Large" pedipalpi (which may be as little as a foot long, when fully grown) lack the distinctive whip-like feelers of their larger cousins.

Huge Pedipalp

These creatures have developed two 8'-long, whip-like feelers (which they use to probe possible traps, fissures, and other unseen areas) in place of one pair of legs. Another pair of legs (the two foremost, closest to the



1-8-damage mandibles) have developed spiny pincers on the ends.

Besides biting in combat, huge pedipalpi (or amblypygi) use these pincers to strike. After a successful (1-6 points of damage) hit, the pedipalp automatically applies a crushing grip, unless the victim makes a successful bend bars/lift gates roll. The grip causes 2-12 damage on the second round, and on every round thereafter, until the victim breaks free (with a successful bend bars roll; one is allowed each round) or the pedipalp is slain. The pedipalp may use

its bite on others during this time, if it can reach other prey. If it elects to bite the creature it is gripping, it attacks at +6 to hit. (The grip requires the use of both the pedipalp's pincers: if they elect to attack another being, the grip is broken.)

Giant Pedipalp

The uropygi have whip-like feelers and spiny pincers like the smaller amblypygi. They also have dangerous-looking, whip-like tails, that rather resemble the stings of scorpions when held aloft. The tail actually serves only as a feeler; these pedipalpi attack with two pincers and a bite.

After a uropygus scores a pincer hit (1-8 points of damage), it has the option of abandoning its other pincer hit that round in favor of a gripping attack. If it does so, the victim is allowed a bend bars/lift gates roll. If this roll fails, the pedipalp establishes a grip. On the following round, it automatically bites (for 2-8 points of damage), and crushes (for 2-16 points of damage). This damage is repeated each round until the uropygus is slain, breaks its grip to face another opponent (each attack from another creature has only a 1 in 2 chance of causing this; 2 in 12 if the attack hits), or one of the two bone-armored, spined gripping pincers is severed. A pincer will take 20 hit points of damage before being severed (consider these points separately from the pedipalp's true hp total), and has an effective armor class of 0.

Giant pedipalpi can also discharge a noxious vapor three times a day. This acrid, irritating, wet yellow gas expands in a single round, to affect a 20'-radius sphere centered on the pedipalp, before dissipating harmlessly. All non-pedipalpi creatures in this area must save versus poison, or be affected with twitching muscular tremors and spasms for 1-6 rounds (forcing them to fight at -3 on all attack rolls).

Habitat/Society: Pedipalpi of Toril are far-wandering hunters, who roam fearlessly in search of food, establishing no territories and heedless of foes. They will team up to face prey or opponents larger than themselves, but otherwise hunt alone or (if weak or young) in pairs. Pedipalpi never fight or hunt other pedipalpi, or other arachnids of any kind.

Ecology: Pedipalpi poison-sacks (which resemble fist-sized, flexible walnuts) are valued by all who deal in poisons: a strong disabling poison can be distilled from them. The spined foreleg-pincers of pedipalpi serve many goblinkin as maces, and the feelers of a pedipalp can be used in battle as a whip (1d2 damage, 1 vs. L), for 3d4 days after the creature is slain. Thereafter, the feelers dry out too much, and crumble into useless fragility. No other parts of pedipalpi are safe or palatable eating for most creatures.

Rothe, Deep

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any/subterranean
FREQUENCY:	Uncommon
ORGANIZATION:	Herd
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Herbivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Animal (1)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	2-20
ARMOR CLASS:	7
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	2
THACO:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3 + special
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-3/1-3/1-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Charge
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (4' high)
MORALE:	Average (10)
X.P. VALUE:	65



Rothe (pronounced "roth-AY") are squat, strongly-built creatures who resemble musk oxen—with curving horns, cloven hooves, and long, shaggy coats of thick hair. They have evolved into two very similar strains: the smaller, magically-gifted subterranean or "deep" rothe, and the larger "surface" rothe.

Rothe have dirty brown coats, darkening to almost black on the legs and underbelly, and have dark green or black hooves and horns (ivory color if freshly broken off or growing back). Their eyes tend to be yellow or pinkish, and they communicate with snorts, grunts, and sniffs. "Ghost" rothe have white coats, and can employ temporary silence (see below). Rothe regularly regenerate lost horns, and can even, over time (usually a season or so), regenerate lost limbs. The sexes appear identical unless the rothe have been sheared.

Combat: Rothe bite for 1-8 points of damage ("ghost" rothe do 2-8), and slash with their horns (those of deep rothe do 1-3 each, those of their surface cousins 2-5 each, and ghost rothe deal 2-8 each). The curvature of the horns makes goring with them almost impossible, except against opponents above the rothe's head (such as stirges, would-be riders, reckless folk attempting to slay the rothe with a dagger, and so on). If a rothe scores an attack against a foe in such a position, it will gore, doing maximum possible horn damage.

Rothe are not particularly intelligent, but have an instinctive wariness of being surrounded or penned in. Beings who try to surround them, herd them, or raise nets and barriers around them learn that rothe instinctively react to any observed encircling movement (and there are always rothe on watch) by drifting away from such traps, while grazing. Rothe always scout the areas in which they graze—they know where precipices and gorges are to be found, and unlike buffalo, cannot easily be stampeded into killing falls.

If panicked by harrying attacks or successful entrapment, rothe will try to break free of creatures who are harrying or herding them by outrunning them. If this is impossible, the rothe always turn to face those working against them, and charge in a solid wedge of packed flesh. The impact of such a charge has been known to shatter stone walls, uproot trees, and do creatures standing against it 2d4+1 points of impact damage per rothe involved in the charge. Rothe have such strength and determination, when panicked, that the destruction or immobilization of the frontrunners in a charge will not turn the charge aside or end it. Those behind trample their disabled comrades and continue on. The charge of a herd of 8 or more rothe automatically hits, unless targets can get out of its way.

The charge of a lone rothe requires at least a straight, level or descending path or route at least 60' in length. It counts as an extra attack, delivered at THAC0 13, and does 2d4 shock damage per current hit die of the rothe (round down). A rothe, even if it runs onto impaling spears or the like in its charge is never stunned by the force of its own impact. Even if it is dying from the damage it has taken in that round, the rothe gets its usual three attacks, all at +1 to hit.

The churning hooves and weight of a charging rothe do 4d4 hp damage (surface rothe) or 2d4 damage (deep rothe). Victims are allowed to save for half damage.

Rothe have minds of such determination that *charm, sleep, hold* and similar magics directed against them, even if successful, require 1d4+1 rounds to take effect. A wizard rarely has time to *charm* a rothe charging against him, and turn it away!

Habitat/Society: Rothe dislike bright light, and normally make their lairs in caves, overhangs screened by dense thickets, or subterranean cavern networks. They are nimble rock-climbers, leaping from ledge to ledge with skill

and uncanny balance. They will often escape up a cliff face from pursuers, sometimes galloping across loose scree to deliberately start a rockslide. Such slides typically carry pursuers backwards/downhill 6d10 feet in a round. Victims caught in the slide suffer 6d6 rock-impact damage (or 2d6 mud-and-stones damage), half that if a Dexterity Check succeeds.

Although rothe depend on the presence of abundant water to support the mosses, lichens, and ferns they so like to eat, they do not enjoy swimming or immersion in water—and creatures who keep herds of domesticated rothe often confine them on islands, knowing that the water will prove a strong ally in keeping a herd from wandering.

Rothe always band together with others of their kind to form a herd. They never fight with others of their own kind (unlike cattle, rothe bulls never fight for dominance). Rothe work together in herds, the stronger escorting and guarding the weak and the young. Some individuals remain alert and on watch at all times, while others feed or sleep. Rothe sleep standing up, and if caught in severe weather or conditions (such as a blizzard on the surface, or a mudslide underground), they stand together in a solid wedge of flesh.

Rothe young are AC7; MV 10 (deep) or 15 (surface); 1 HD; #AT 3; 1/1/1-4; THAC0 19; and are visibly smaller than adults. They tend to be more inquisitive, but are seldom left unescorted—and will always obey the grunts and head-gestures of their adult escorts.

Ecology: Rothe are raised by many subterranean races as food.

Those who hunt rothe prize not only their beef-like flesh, but make their shaggy hides into tents, cloaks, and other garments that provide warm protection against bone-chilling cold and biting winds. Some traders in the North call rothe hide, with its thick fur or hair still attached, "shield-against-the-winds-fur."

Rothe-bone is tremendously strong and durable, but slowly dries out to become brittle; in hard usage, bone implements rarely last more than six years. Boiled or steamed rothe bones become temporarily flexible and can be woven into iron-strong frameworks, to form a base for shields or tents (whose fabric is often rothe hide, interwoven with what wood or metal scraps the barbarians can salvage). Rothe horns, cleaned and polished, can serve as drinking-jacks or hunting horns. Large, splendid ones are highly prized in the North.

When trained, rothe can serve as steeds for dwarves and smaller beings. They are raised for their meat, and to serve as beasts of burden by merchants and farmers, in all areas where they are found.

Training a rothe to simple ploughing or hauling tasks is a process of leading and rewarding (with sweetgrass, berries, and flowers, their favorite foods), which takes about a "ride" (ten days). Training a rothe to serve as a steed takes four to seven rides, depending on the number of commands and manoeuvers it is expected to master. Training times will be lengthened if the rothe becomes ill or seriously upset (by seeing another rothe or other livestock violently killed, or being confined near a large fire) during the process.

Rendered rothe fat is an alternative ingredient in the making of potions of *vitality.*

Deep Rothe

The staple diet of many drow and duergar communities, these herd animals of the Underdark are small, standing only 4' high at the shoulder when fully grown. They are powerfully built, being on average just as wide as they are tall.

Deep rothe have 90' infravision, and eat fungi, lichens and mosses. They are immune to all known mold and fungi spore or contact effects. The cold damp of even the deepest ice-locked caves of the north is as nothing to them. Used to attacks by blood-drinking bats and stirges, rothe are adept at rolling or ramming their shoulders and heads into rocky walls with sudden speed to crush and/or dislodge such opponents; half charge damage applies, with no damage-lessening saving throws allowed.

Each deep rothe can manifest *dancing lights* to signal its fellows twice per day, 140-yard range. This is used to signal its location, the presence of food, danger, and so on. Different messages are communicated by subtle differences in the hue and movement of the lights. These lights are often mistaken by adventurers for will o' wisps or the work of unseen mages.

Solifugid

	Large	Huge	Giant
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any warm/desert	Any temperate/any dry, non-mountainous	Any temperate/any (subterranean)
FREQUENCY:	Rare	Very rare	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:		Hunting bands	
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Nocturnal	Any	Any
DIET:		Carnivore	
INTELLIGENCE:		Non- (2)	
TREASURE:	Q	Q,S	Nx4,Qx2
ALIGNMENT:		Neutral	
NO. APPEARING:	1-6	1-6	1-4
ARMOR CLASS:	6	5	4
MOVEMENT:	9	11	12
HIT DICE:	3+3	5+5	6+6
THAC0:	17	15	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:		2 or 1	
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-8 (bite)	3-12 (bite)	4-16 (bite)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:		Grip	
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil	Nil	Poison immunity
MAGIC RESISTANCE:		Nil	
SIZE:	M (up to 5' long)	M (up to 6')	L (up to 9')
MORALE:	Average (10)	Average (10)	Steady (12)
X.P. VALUE:	175	420	650

Solifugids exist on several worlds; those of the Realms (which differ slightly from those known elsewhere) are described here. Also called "false spiders," "camel spiders," or "sun spiders," solifugids are arachnids that roam as hunters rather than spinning webs. They have segmented, hairy bodies, powerful hooked beaks, and ten legs—the foremost pair ending in hooked, powerfully-muscled fore-joints equipped with clamps. Their bodies tend to be brown, dun, russet, or yellowish in hue, their eyes blood red or glossy green-black.

Combat: In combat, solifugids try to strike prey with their clamp-equipped forelegs. These do no damage, but should either arm score a hit, any victim of "Large" or smaller size is caught in the solifugid's mighty grip. Only one creature at a time may be caught in a solifugid's grip.

The entire frame of the creature is constructed to maintain this grip against all forces; the only way to win free is to slay the solifugid (its grip relaxes 1-2 rounds after death occurs) or to sever one of the forelegs. A limb can be severed by a *disintegrate* spell, any attack that deals a limb 50 or more hit points of damage. In all cases, damage to a limb should be considered separately from the hp total of the creature.

A solifugid may voluntarily relax its grip at any time. This usually occurs only when a gripped victim is visibly dead (head gone, etc.) and another target presents itself that might otherwise escape. Large solifugids are too stupid, and too driven by a killing instinct, to be *charmed* or influenced by any known spell or power into relaxing a grip, or shifting attacks from one being to another. The other two varieties may be controlled by use of spells or devices empowering a being with *arachnid control* (some of which, used by drow, are detailed in this sourcebook).

A solifugid's only attack is by its beak (the listed damage given, which varies from type to type of solifugid). Creatures in a solifugid's grip are attacked at +3 to hit.

Habitat/Society: Giant solifugids roam the Underdark and the warmer mountain fastnesses of Faerun, hunting by day or night. Huge solifugids roam surface wastelands all over the realms, being particularly numerous in Raurin and in the Shaar, where they lie in wait in gullies for herds of wild animals (or nomadic tribes) to pass. A few of them can be found in the Underdark, particularly beneath large, rolling plains or deserts such as Raurin and the Shaar. Large solifugids, the weakest of the breed, are sometimes found in the Underdark, but prefer hot desert climates (such as Calimshan and Durpar). They come out at night, when the sands are cooler and the darkness cloaks them, to hunt. Their prey often includes other predators, such as snakes and scorpions. They band together to bring down large or dangerous prey—especially prey that may endanger them later, if left alone.

Ecology: Solifugids are immune to all known poisons, and can eat poisonous creatures with impunity. Their diet consists of everything, from large insects knocked down with their forelegs to wandering giants—every sort of creature, that is, except other solifugids, whose taste is abhorrent. A really hungry solifugid will attack anything that moves.

Solifugids are fearless, but by instinct avoid fights that will not profit them. Therefore, solifugids never fight others of their kind—nor, in the Underdark, amid drow who have spells to control arachnids, and other powerful weapons, do solifugids attack drow. It is easier and more profitable to obey or avoid the dark elves, gleaning richer meals from allowed prey. Woe betide wounded drow, however, who find themselves alone after a battle in the Underdark with two or more solifugids!

Sword Spider

This large, non-webspinning hunter is native to the Mhair jungles. It can tolerate a wide variety of temperatures, and was long ago introduced into the Underdark by drow traders. It has a sleek, hairy black body, striped with dark brown fur, and its legs have bony, segmented plates, with raised, sharp ridges that cut like sword-blades.

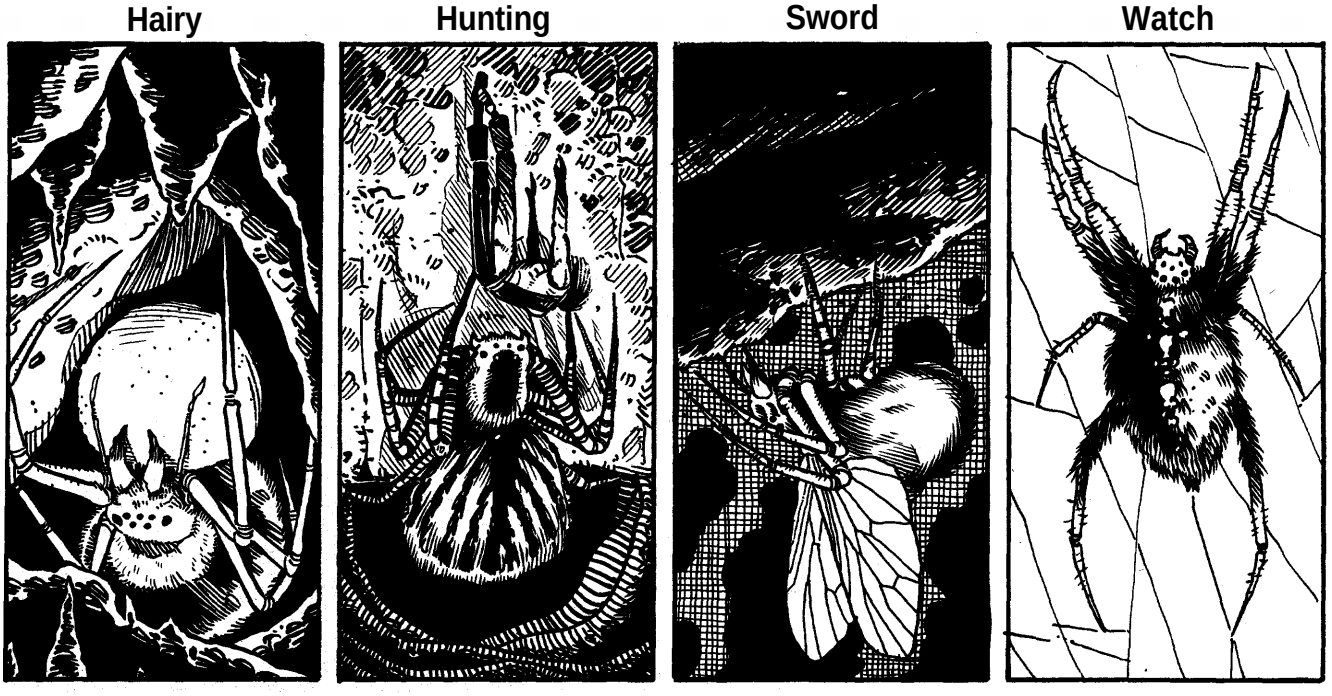
Against formidable prey, a sword spider uses a "leap impalement" attack, bounding up to 30' horizontally to land atop an opponent, with its legs together in a forest of impaling blades. It gets only one attack roll—but if successful, the victim suffers full damage from 3 leg-blades if S or smaller, 4 blades if M-sized, 5 blades if L, 6 if H, and all 8 if G. If the sword spider descends more than 20' in its leap, +1 point of damage is added to each leg. Any upward attack made by the target of such a leap strikes at the descending sword spider at -4 to hit, due to the difficulty in getting past the forest of blades.

Watchspider

Watchspiders are fairly common in guild and rich merchants' cellars and warehouses in Sword Coast cities, from Neverwinter (north of that is too cold) to Lantan. They are a specially-bred subspecies of Huge Spiders (detailed in Volume 1 of the *Monstrous Compendium,* under "Spider"), raised and trained as guardians by the Mhairuun merchant family of Waterdeep, and other folk native to Tharsult. Drow have secretly purchased these arachnids in great numbers from these breeders, and have begun their own training programs and power-augmentation experiments.

Trained to obey a single master, and not to attack certain other beings designated by the master, watchspiders are schooled in disabling spellcasters and avoiding piercing weapons in battle. (They have acquired Low intelligence through breeding, over centuries.)

Their venom has also been magically altered, to cause 2d4-turn paralysis, not death, with an onset time of 1-2 rounds, if a victim's save vs. poison at +1 fails. They are otherwise identical to huge spiders, including their inability to spin webs. If starved for long periods, they tend to devour paralyzed prey.



Spider, Subterranean

	Hairy	Hunting	Sword	Watch
CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any non-arctic/any	Any/Any subterranean	Any/any (prefers jungles)	Any temperate/any
FREQUENCY:	Common	Rare	Very rare	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	swarms	Solitary	Solitary	As trained and deployed
ACTIVITY CYCLE:		Any		
DIET:	Omnivore	Omnivore	Carnivore	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)	Average (8-10)	Average (8-10)	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	Nil (except as familiars)	Nil	Nil	All possible (guardian)
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil	Lawful neutral	Chaotic evil	Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1-20 (familiar: 1)	1	1 (2-5 in drow pens or emplacements)	Varies; usually 1-6
ARMOR CLASS:	8	4	3	6
MOVEMENT:	14, Wb 9	8, Fl 10	6, Wb 8 (also in trees)	18
HIT DICE:	1-1	3+3	5+5	2+2
THACO:	20	17	15	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1	1	9	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK;	1 (bite)	1-3	2-8 (bite)/2-12x8 (legs)	1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Poison	Poison	Leap impalement	Poison (see below)
SPECIAL DEFENSES:		Nil		
MAGIC RESISTANCE:		Nil		
SIZE:	T (6" or less in diameter)	L (10' in dia.)	L (12' in dia.)	M (6' in dia.)
MORALE:	Average (10)	Elite (13)	Elite (13)	Fanatic (17)
X.P. VALUE:	65	650	2,000	420

This entry details four arachnid species common in the Underdark, or at least in drow habitations there. The reverence of most drow for Lolth causes them to at least refrain from attacking spiders out of hand, and this relative safety, plus the large amounts of ready food that large settlements generate, has caused spiders to gather and live in the drow communities and drow-controlled areas all over the Underdark.

Hairy Spider

"Hairy" spiders get their name from their appearance: they're the little, hand-sized, viciously biting hairy black things found in jungles, the Underdark, tombs, and caverns all over the Realms. They bite chunks out of victims' flesh as they crawl and swarm (hunting in groups). They can't spin webs, but can readily move in the webs of other spiders. They are immune to all known spider venoms.

Their weak venom (save at +2, to avoid all effects) causes a temporary l-point armor class penalty to the victim, as well as -1 on attack rolls, and -3 on dexterity scores when checks are made. These effects take hold on the round after a bite, and last for 2-5 rounds.

Hairy spiders are sometimes used by wizards (especially drow mages) as familiars, as they are able to carry small items, walk on walls and ceilings, have no fear of fire, and have 60' infravision. Some (40%) of hairy spiders can *detect invisibility* (a 4 in 6 chance, each round).

Up to forty hairy spiders can swarm on an average-sized human, all biting at +5 to hit, once attached. Hairy spiders are remarkably resistant to crushing damage; to be detached, they must be individually struck or tom away—rolling or crashing about into walls, et cetera is usually ineffective at removing or destroying clinging spiders.

Hunting Spider

Hunting spiders, also known as "Chasm spiders" in the Underdark due to the usual location of their lairs, are giant versions of the flying spider known in Undermountain (beneath the city of Waterdeep). Like their smaller cousins, hunting spiders have translucent, gossamer wings. They can use these to aid and steer in prodigious leaps, traveling up to 70' horizontally, and can fall any distance without harm upon landing (so long as their wings are intact, and have room to beat).

Hunting spiders never sleep, and are never surprised. Their vision gives them the natural ability of *true seeing.*

The bite of a hunting spider forces a save against ("Type A") poison at +2. If the throw fails, the victim takes 15 hp of damage, 1 per minute, the loss starting 10-30 minutes after the bite. If the save is made, no damage is suffered.

A hunting spider can be trained as a guardian. If fed regularly, it need not use its poison to hunt prey, and can remain in one place—a patient, alert and attentive guard, which can recognize a master (and other approved persons) by smell, voice, and gestures, and will remain loyal. Many serve wizards (especially drow mages) as familiars.

Spitting Crawler

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any non-arctic/subterranean
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (7)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	6
MOVEMENT:	16
HIT DICE:	2
THACO:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-2
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Acid spit
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	cling to vertical + upside-down surfaces
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	30%
SIZE:	S (averages 3' long)
MORALE:	Steady (12); see below
X.P. VALUE:	175



Spitting crawlers are lizards of the Underdark, often used as familiars by subterranean-dwelling wizards (such as the mages of the drow). Subterranean crawlers are slim, lithe, darting lizards with frog-like toes on their feet—they rather resemble the surface-dwelling skink, equipped with a creeper frog's large, splayed, bulbous toes. These sticky toes enable a spitting crawler to silently climb and walk on ceilings, to better reach food. Spitting crawlers are gray-green in hue, with a lighter, mottled grey underside. They can remain motionless for long periods if being watched, to appear part of the rock they are clinging to.

Combat: A spitting crawler can run about on walls and ceilings at a movement rate of 12, in silence. Its toothed bite does only 1-2 points of damage, but three times a day, a spitting crawler can spit a stream of acid up to 20' with great accuracy (+5 to hit).

Its green, acrid discharge is corrosive to metal and flesh alike, and does 2d4 hp of damage to any creature hit, as well as causing skin disfigurement and an ongoing, itching burning (victim suffers -1 on attack rolls, a 1-point armor class penalty, and cannot rest or study, for 3d12 turns). If diluted with water or wine within 4 rounds of striking, the duration of its effects drops to 2d8 turns.

Against metal, the acid burns an ever-widening hole. If not diluted with water or wine, this reaction will continue, until a shield, for example, is reduced to powder. Affected metal spreads the reaction to adjacent, touching metal—a chainmail shirt to gauntlets, for example. If the affected armor is removed, and a Dexterity Check succeeds, the reaction does not spread to other metal worn or carried. (The victim's armor class suffers by at least 1 point, depending on the severity of the acid's destruction.) Water or wine halts the metal-destroying reaction immediately.

Spitting crawlers cannot be stunned or affected by *charm, sleep,* or *hold.* They are immune to all known spider and insect venoms, and to the attacks of all known oozes, slimes, jellies, and mold spores (including deadly, monstrous sorts).

Spitting crawlers who serve as familiars gain the morale of their companion wizard if it is greater than their own. Over time, they become close to their masters, and will fight to the death to protect or avenge them. Spitting crawlers can tolerate a wide range of temperatures, but enjoy soaking up the body heat of a master by riding about against the master's skin, curled up around the back of the neck, or perched inside a shirt or tunic. An angry spitting crawler hisses loudly; cunning crawlers can also mimic human coughing or muttering noises, to lead beings away or lure them into traps.

A spitting crawler can leap upwards 10 plus 1d4 feet, and spring horizontally up to 18'. Crawlers have elastic bodies, which absorb the shock of landing—if a crawler falls or leaps down 30' or less, it takes no damage; if it falls a greater distance, apply 1d4 falling damage per 10' fallen only in addition to this 30' "safe" distance.

Habitat/Society: Spitting crawlers avoid larger creatures, lurking in fissures and cracks until such dangers have passed. Their favorite food is sleeping bats, and their most common fare the centipedes and other insects that scuttle and roam through the Underdark. Spitting crawlers usually come in contact with adventurers only through a wizard's use of a *find familiar* spell. Spitting crawlers and the most intelligent sorts of spiders are perhaps the most highly prized familiars of drow wizards.

Ecology: Spitting crawlers eat lichens, slimes (including the deadly green slime, and monstrous oozes such as the grey ooze), small rodents, and insects. They can go for long periods without eating. If a master keeps a spitting crawler well fed, gives it lots of water to drink and the occasional treat (strong-smelling cheeses are a favorite), it will not be distracted from assigned tasks by food.

Spitting crawler toes are a spell ink ingredient and alternative material component for *spider climb* spells, and a distillate from their acid glands, mixed with water, yields enough acid to fill one glass canister ("grenade-like missile," as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide)* of acid.

Yochlol



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any/any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare (common in Abyss)
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High (13-14)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING:	1 (1-4 in Abyss)
ARMOR CLASS:	10 (10 when materialized)
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	6 (10-sided dice)
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	See below
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	See below
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50%
SIZE:	M (or L, as giant spider)
MORALE:	Champion (15-16)
X.P. VALUE:	6,000

Yochlol, "the handmaidens of Lolth," are denizens of the Abyss. All known yochlol serve the Queen of Spiders, and appear on the Prime Material Plane only at her command, when summoned by rituals of worship to her.

Yochlol normally appear as misty columns of ale-brown or (more rarely) dark red, emerald, or violet gas. In this form, they are AC -10, appear as hazy, mobile smudges in the air, and have a strong, acrid, disgusting odor. They can extend pseudopods of their form or change the shape of their gaseous cloud to better hide, reach prey, or compress themselves to fit through thin apertures.

Yochlol must materialize to carry items or to make physical attacks, into one of three forms: an amorphous, one-eyed column resembling a roper or a half-burned brown candle, with eight pseudopods; a giant spider; or a beautiful female human or elf.

Combat: In its gaseous form, a yochlol can be struck only by +1 or better magic weapons, and its touch affects others as if they had suffered the effects of a *stinking cloud* spell. It cannot carry, move, or use physical items in this form—such things simply fall through it.

While in gaseous form, a yochlol will be healed (gaining 3d4 hp) if a *stinking cloud* spell is cast on it. A *gust of wind* spell that overcomes its magic resistance deals it 6d6 points of damage, but this spell must be delivered by "touch" (i.e. the caster must move or reach into an area occupied by the gaseous yochlol, suffering its harmful effects upon him, to deliver the magical attack).

A *wind walk* spell will destroy gaseous yochlol automatically (regardless of their magic resistance), if they are "touched" (as described above) by the caster. A priest able to affect multiple persons with his *wind walk* spell can destroy the same number of yochlol, so long as the priest can "touch" them all on the round the spell is cast, or on the next round (this touch attack prohibits further spellcasting in that round).

In elven or human form, a yochlol is AC 10, but can wear armor, and use weapons and magic items normally employed by priests or fighters. Yochlol act as sixth-level fighters, including the ability to employ a melee weapon in 3 attacks every 2 rounds if they have specialized in its use—and most yochlol have had centuries of practice in butchery, if they care to master a single weapon.

In spider form, a yochlol is AC 10, but otherwise conforms to a giant spider (as described in Volume 1 of the *Monstrous Compendium,* under "Spider") in all respects. The poison of its bite causes death at the end of the same round if the victim's save fails, but otherwise has no effect.

In its "amorphous column" form, a yochlol has up to 8 pseudopods, each of which does 1d4+3 damage per blow. These appendages are fully prehensile, but lack the dexterity and grasping strength to use weapons properly in combat.

In all of their forms, yochlol have 18/50 strength, 160'-range infravision, and take only half damage from cold, electricity, and fire-based attacks of all sorts, and from corrosive or poisonous gas effects.

The gases and fires of a summoning ritual do not harm a yochlol, but feed it, giving it a focal presence on the Prime Material Plane, and if it fully materializes, fuelling its journey from one plane to the other. Except in a summoning ritual, a yochlol in fully gaseous form takes no damage from gases or acids, but takes full damage from fire. If a yochlol is attacked with fire on the Prime Material Plane while it is still surrounded by the fires of its summoning, it can direct that fire right back at the source, taking no harm from it.

Most fires on the Abyss feed a yochlol's substance with noxious gases, and therefore harm a yochlol little or not at all. In the Abyss, yochlol take no damage from poisonous or corrosive gas effects. Fire magic directed at a yochlol in

the Abyss will do half damage to it, as the flames will be magical, not fuelled by substances native to the Abyss, and linked to the yochlol's essential nature.

In all forms, a yochlol can use the following spell-like powers, one at a time and once per round: *domination, mind blank* and *plane shift.* Except as noted, these powers are all identical to known priest and wizard spells. Use of one power negates or ends the effects of previously-activated powers. A yochlol can also choose (as its power use for that round) to alter its own alignment aura to that of any other chosen alignment. This disguise is effective against all known forms of non-divine detection.

In human or elven form, a yochlol can exercise one other spell-like power: it can *cure light wounds* (1d8+1 hp) on itself or another touched creature. This ability can only be used twice per turn.

A yochlol can perform an action, change its form, and carry out another activity all in the same round. It can never change its form twice in the same round, or make more than one use of a spell-like power.

If a yochlol uses armor in human or elven form, it must become gaseous before changing to another physical form, causing the armor to fall away. If it does not, the armor will be rent and twisted during the transformation, doing the yochlol 4d6 damage in the process. Such armor is ruined, although it may be salvaged and repaired by a skilled smith.

Habitat/Society: Yochlol take pleasure in dominating and inflicting cruelty on lesser creatures. They enjoy a good fight, exulting in the rage that defiance awakes in them. All known yochlol serve Lolth, and by her command do not engage in any treachery or combat against her or each other. Yochlol hiss, sneer, and shriek a lot when dealing with other creatures; they share an unlimited-range telepathy with Lolth whenever they are on the same plane as the Spider Queen, or even when partially materialized on the Prime Material Plane (use of this communication prevents the exercise of any spell-like power during the same round, and is impossible once a yochlol has materialized fully on the Prime Material, even if it subsequently changes its form back to gaseous). Yochlol share a telepathy with other yochlol when within 90' of each other, and readily work together in combat to more effectively defeat foes.

Among themselves, yochlol have few rivalries, and cannot be tricked or coerced into attacking each other or working against Lolth in any way. They do, however, enjoy making their own mark—especially on the Prime Material Plane.

Yochlol delight most in escaping from those who have summoned them (whom they must serve faithfully in one action, by Lolth's command) and wandering at will in the Prime Material plane, working mischief. A "free" yochlol will use its various forms as disguises, and use cunning ploys and subterfuges to turn evil beings to its ends, working damage by intrigue, murder and deception. It will not go on an open killing spree unless enemies of its summoners or of Lolth menace it during the ritual of its summoning, and are present for it to battle. Yochlol like to terrorize lesser beings, whispering their names so that survivors will remember and fear them.

On many occasions, yochlol have used their human or elven forms to befriend, love, and aid beings of Faerun in tender and kind ways, or to set right one being's injustices and wants with a seeming disregard for the being's alignment—or the yochlol's own cruel nature. Most sages believe this sort of behavior is a result of a yochlol's innate capriciousness and need to do something different, as well as a desire to let others know of its existence, power, and name. Lolth seldom lets such independent jaunts last long, but rarely punishes yochlol for them; they appear to be an accepted, necessary "safety valve." They also serve as a way of gathering information about the Prime Material plane, checking on the loyalty and doings of Lolth's faithful, and spreading rumors of her gathering power.

Ecology: In gaseous form, yochlol absorb needed nutrients from gases and liquids (such as water or blood). In physical forms, yochlol eat the flesh of living things with their mouths, or by flowing to envelop the body of chosen prey (usually after it has been disabled or slain). They must eat at least once every 20 days. Prey that are within, or partially within, a yochlol are bitten by many tiny sucking mouths, which collectively deal the victim 10d4 damage per round. Yochlol typically devour all matter except bones. These they exude through their bodies in a harmless but disgustingly spectacular spray, or leave behind in a collapsing heap when they become gaseous.

Yochlol essence (derived by heating collected portions of a yochlol's gaseous form in a closed vessel, or boiling portions of one of its physical forms) is a valued ingredient in spell inks, preparations, and castings involving *mind blank, shape change, stinking cloud* and *wraithform* spells or item effects.

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