

BDX1  
ACCESSORY

2401

# BLACK·DAWN

◀• ADVENTURES IN THE WORLD OF ATHAS •▶



## SANDS OF FEAR AND WONDER

Unleash the untamed fury of the scorched wastelands with this compendium of sinister new creatures and enigmatic artifacts of power in the treacherous world of Athas.





# Black Dawn, Dark Sun

In the harsh realm of Athas, the sun scorches the barren earth and ancient secrets whisper through the winds. Explore the hidden depths of this desolate world, where new horrors slither beneath shifting sands and long-forgotten treasures await the daring and the desperate alike. Within these pages lie creatures that defy the natural order, and magic items of untold power that may determine the fate of even the hardest souls. Do you dare brave these terrors, or will this unforgiving wasteland claim you as yet another victim of its merciless embrace?

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Terrors

Astarg .....	4
Defiled.....	5
Gorgonauth.....	6
Irin Flower .....	7
Kraal .....	8
Psalese.....	9
Scourgesoul.....	10
Talidak.....	11
Varn.....	12
Venom Fly .....	13
Xoll .....	14

### Treasures

Anthracite Sphere.....	16
Circlet of Kalidios.....	17
Cloak of Whispers.....	18
Helm of Argak .....	19
Sagacious Skull of Thaddigren Hylax.....	20
Tokomol's Blade.....	21
Valtha's Visage.....	22
Veridian Ring.....	23
Wand of Resonance .....	24
Yoke of Control.....	25

### Credits:

Design and layout: The Danger Forge  
Illustration generation: Midjourney AI  
Illustration Photoshop production: The Danger Forge  
Written by: The Danger Forge





• TERRORS •



# Astarg

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Stoney Barrens, Sandy Wastes  
FREQUENCY: Rare  
ORGANIZATION: Pack

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Day  
DIET: Carnivore  
INTELLIGENCE: Low (5-7)

TREASURE: F  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1-4  
ARMOR CLASS: 2  
MOVEMENT: 18

HIT DICE: 7+3  
THACO: 13  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 4

DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 1-6/1-6/1-10/1-12  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil  
SIZE: L (8')  
MORALE: Elite (13-14)  
LEVEL/XP VALUE: 3000

#### PSIONIC SUMMARY:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
7	1 / 2 / 4	- / -	14	90

Psychometabolism – *Sciences*: complete healing, energy containment; *Devotions*: biofeedback, body equilibrium, cell adjustment, displacement.

## General

Also known as Brutes of the Barrens, the Astarg is a terrifying creature that roams the wastelands of Athas. Measuring 8 ft. tall at the shoulder and covered with razor sharp spikes, these massive beasts pose a mortal threat to any that encounter them.

## Combat/Abilities

These ferocious creatures can attack using their foreclaws which cause 1d6 pts. of damage each, a bite that inflicts 1d10 pts. and a horn for 1d12 pts of damage. An Astarg can also forego its regular attacks and perform a roll instead. Any creatures within a 10 ft. radius of the beast suffer 3d8 points of damage unless a save vs. PPD is made. Astargs also have impressive psychometabolic abilities that allow them to displace, deflect damage and heal if grievously injured.

## Ecology

Astargs are highly aggressive and will attack most creatures on sight for food or to defend their territory. While they are usually encountered in small numbers, these beasts travel the barrens and wastes of Athas in packs numbering up to 20 Astargs. These are led by an alpha male or female, often the largest or most cunning of the group. Smaller hunting bands of up to 4 individuals roam their territory in search of prey which is then returned to the pack to be consumed by the alpha with what remains to be fought over by their subordinates.

Juvenile Astargs are even more aggressive than adults. While the creatures do not have societal rules as such, their young instinctively exhibit vicious behaviour in order to be both accepted by the older members of the pack and to defend themselves against them.

There is evidence that the armies of Urik once tried to use Astargs as war mounts but the violent nature of the creatures made them untameable and the attempt yielded disastrous results.





# Defiled

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Nil
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night
DIET:	Life Force
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi (2-4)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-8
ARMOR CLASS:	3
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	3 (Base)
THACO:	17 (Base)
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-6/1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See Below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See Below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Fearless (19-20)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	800



## General

The Defiled are the odious ashen remains those whose life force was stolen to power the psionic enchantments of the Sorcerer Kings. The Defiled retain the same general shape they had in life but are blackened and burned beyond recognition. Their bodies emit a stream of shadowy smoke and their movements produce billowing motes of ash.

## Combat/Abilities

The Defiled attack with their ashen claws, each of which causes 1d6 pts. of damage. Furthermore, each successful attack drains one level of life energy from the victim. This level is permanently transferred to the Defiled in the form of 1 extra d8 of hit points per level stolen. This also increases the hit dice of the monster so a 3HD Defiled becomes a 4HD creature after a successful attack with all the associated improvements to saving throws and THACO. The Defiled can be turned with the difficulty determined by their current hit dice. They are resistant to defiling magic and gain a +2 to savings throw vs. such attacks when applicable.

## Ecology

Not all whose life force was drained by the magic of the Sorcerer Kings becomes one of the Defiled. That transformation is fortunately very rare and only individuals possessing a strong will and physical attributes transition to unlife from this horrible death.

The Defiled are free willed undead but their only desire is to replace what was stolen from them. They are single minded in this purpose and are relentless in their pursuit of life energy.

The Defiled remember only fragments of their former lives and these memories serve only to intensify their torment.



# Gorgonauth

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Rocky Badlands, Mountains
FREQUENCY:	Unique
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Low (5-7)
TREASURE:	H
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	-4
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	18+3
THACO:	5
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	2-20/2-20/5-50
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See Below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See Below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50%
SIZE:	G (50' Tall)
MORALE:	Feraleless (19-20)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	16,000

## General

*“The sky will tremble, the ground will break and the mountains will be torn assunder. There is no shelter, there is no sanctuary. Only death awaits for the Gorgonauth comes.”* Thus reads a fragment of the ancient tablet of Sujat, inscribed during the tumultuous year of the King’s Contemplation (-1228) describing the last recorded awakening of this legendary creature. The Gorgonauth is a titan of flesh, earth, and stone. Measuring almost 50 ft. in height, with a maw that can swallow a kank whole, this monster is a rampaging nightmare of rage and destruction.

## Combat/Abilities

The Gorgonauth is almost unstoppable in combat. It attacks with two immense hands that cause 2d10 pts of damage each and a bite attack that inflicts 5d10 pts of damage. If the bite attack roll is 5 higher than what is required to hit, the target is swallowed whole and will die in the following round unless the Gorgonauth is brought to zero hit points or the victim is released through magical means. Once per day, the creature can stamp its foot and cause an *Earthquake*, as per the 7th level cleric spell cast at 18th level. In addition to its 50% magic resistance, it is immune to fire, cold and psionic attacks. It regenerates 4 hit points per round and can only be killed if fully immersed in acid.

## Ecology

The true origins of the Gorgonauth are lost in the depths of history. There are tales that it was created by early sorcerers at the dawn of the Time of Magic and was responsible for the mysterious destruction of the city of Celik. Others believe that it is the incarnation of the rage of Athas, exacting revenge for what the sentient species have done to the world.

What is known for certain is the Gorgonauth can sleep for millenia. While some claim that ancient arcane rituals are required to awaken the monster, the legends state that it comes forth of its own volition, following cyclical patterns or specific conditions that are not fully understood.

Regardless of the cause, the Gorgonauth’s rampage eventually comes to an end and the creature returns to its long slumber, once again retreating into myth and legend.





# Irin Flower

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Sandy Wastes, Rocky Barrens
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Nil
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi (2)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	7
MOVEMENT:	Nil
HIT DICE:	3
THAC0:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3-6
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-4 per available attack
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	L (5-6' tall)
MORALE:	Nil
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	800

## PSIONIC SUMMARY:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
5	1 / 1 / 4	-/MB	15	80

**Telepathy** – *Sciences*: domination; *Devotions*: attraction, contact, invisibility, mind blank.

## General

A common traveler's saying on Athas is "beware the seductress of the sands". The Irin Flower has earned its reputation as a peril to all who trek across the wastes. It is a carnivorous plant that stands roughly 6 ft. tall and is topped by a fleshy bloom that ranges in color from deep scarlet to vibrant purple. The main stalk is thick and fibrous and the flower also has up to 6 smaller vines with lavender petals that sprout from the main root.

## Combat/Abilities

When the Irin Flower senses prey approaching, it uses its telepathic abilities to draw its victim closer. Once the target is within 10 ft. it lashes out with its tendrils. The Irin has up to  $1d4 + 2$  tendrils that each cause  $1d4$  pts. of damage. Those struck must save vs. Poison or be paralyzed for  $1d8$  rounds. A save must be made for each successful hit. With its victim is paralyzed, the Irin proceeds to siphon its bodily fluids causing  $1d6$  points of

damage per round per attached tendril, until the creature is dead. A tendril can be physically removed from its prey but only destroying the plant will prevent additional attacks.

## Ecology

Information about the ecology of the Irin is scarce. Those who see it steer clear before it can deploy its psionic abilities. Most sightings have occurred to the east of the Tablelands but these reports do not include encounters where the victims did not survive.

There are tales that claim that the Irin can uproot itself and move for short periods of time in order to relocate to better hunting grounds.

It is a testament to the lack of cooperation between the cities and settlements of Athas that no concerted effort has been made to eliminate this insidious species.





# Krall

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Nest
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High (13-14)
TREASURE:	D
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-8
ARMOR CLASS:	2
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	6
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-10/1-10/2-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	30%
SIZE:	L
MORALE:	Very Steady (13)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	1800

PSIONIC SUMMARY:				
Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
6	2 / 4 / 8	PC/IF, MB	16	110

Psychokinesis – *Sciences*: detonate, disintegrate, telekinesis; *Devotions*: ballistic attack, control body, inertial barrier, molecular agitation, molecular manipulation  
Telepathy – *Sciences*: psychic crush;  
*Devotions*: intellect fortress, mind blank, psionic blast.

## General

With a huge brain-like thorax and a maw lined with razor sharp fangs, the Krall is a creature of nightmare. Its body is supported by 4 insectoid limbs while a cluster of prehensile pseudopods at the rear of the monster are used to carry their victims back to their lairs.

## Combat/Abilities

The Krall have an impressive arsenal of weapons at their disposal not the least of which are their psionic abilities. Their preferred strategy involves weakening their opponent with their mental skills and then engaging in close combat using their bite and armored forelimbs. The bite of a Krall causes 2d6 of damage while each limb inflicts 1d10. The creature is very mobile and can negotiate any type of solid terrain without suffering movement penalties. The Krall are also prodigious jumpers and can leap up to 60 ft. forward and 30 ft. vertically in a single attempt.

## Ecology

Kralls live in deep underground nests. The entrance to their subterranean domains are cleverly hidden and heavily guarded. The nests are a series of labyrinthine tunnels that open into vast halls some of which are used as slave pens or to rear their young.

The egg chambers of the Krall are considered holy to these creatures which is ironic given the general disdain in which adult Krall hold others of their kind. Captive and weak slaves are brought to these chambers to feed the wriggling hatched larvae. Once satiated, the larvae mature quickly with the typical young Krall growing to full size within a few days of consuming its first meal.

Krall are sadistic and cruel. They take pleasure in the suffering of others and particularly enjoy torturing their captives.





# Psalese

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Sandy Wastes  
FREQUENCY: Very rare  
ORGANIZATION: Community

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any  
DIET: Moisture  
INTELLIGENCE: Average (8-10)

TREASURE: E  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral Evil

NO. APPEARING: 1-4  
ARMOR CLASS: 4  
MOVEMENT: 12

HIT DICE: 3  
THAC0: 17  
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 1-4/1-4  
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below  
SPECIAL DEFENSES: See below

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil  
SIZE: M  
MORALE: Steady (11-12)  
LEVEL/XP VALUE: 750

## General

The Psalese are insidious creatures that live in the sandy wastes and deserts of Athas. They are tall, thin bony humanoids with a textured skin like rough sand. The Psalese have no mouth or nose and their multi-faceted eyes are deeply set in their elongated skulls.

## Combat/Abilities

The Psalese are stealthy hunters that prefer to stalk their prey in small groups. They can move silently over sandy terrain and are 90% invisible when motionless in that environment. They attack with their sharp claws that cause 1d4 pts. of damage each. But the Psalese do not hunt for meat but for moisture. In addition to the damage caused, a successful Psalese attack drains the moisture from its victim. This moisture drain reduces the target's constitution by 1d4 per successful hit. Death occurs if the victim is brought to 0 constitution. Lost points are regained at the rate of 1 per hour if the individual is regularly and generously re-hydrated.

## Ecology

There is much mystery surrounding Psalese society and habits. What little is known is mostly rumors and superstition. Tales speak of Psalese colonies beyond the Sea of Silt and that the origins of these creatures dates back to the year of Guthay's Reverence (FY -4976), when Rajaat emerged from the Pristine Tower to teach magic to the rebirth races. Some ancient writings claim that the Psalese are the result of these early arcane experiments.

What is known for certain is that Psalese communities are made up of up to 40 individuals and are usually located underground near rocky outcroppings in sandy wastelands. They do not seem to exhibit much regard for members of their communities and sightings of young Psalese have never been recorded. There are stories of Psalese performing bizarre rituals over their drained victims and that the corpses have been dragged to their subterranean lairs to be transformed into new Psalese.





# Scourgesoul

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Nil
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi (2-4)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-6
ARMOR CLASS:	2
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	5
THAC0:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	2
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	2-8/2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M
MORALE:	Fearless (18-19)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	1200

## General

These terrifying undead creatures are the remains of evil clerics who have died in the service of their fire elemental masters. Perpetually wreathed in flames, Scourgesouls appear as a mummified version of their former living selves.

## Combat/Abilities

In combat Scourgesouls attack with their fiery hands causing 2d4 pts of damage each. They also radiate intense heat and any creature within a 10 ft. radius must save vs. Spells or suffer 1d6 pts of damage per round spent within that area. The heat is intense enough to ignite flammable materials and any such item must also save vs. magical fire or burst into flames. Clerics can turn Scourgesouls but do so at a -2 penalty unless they worship the Sphere of Fire in which case turning attempts occur normally.

## Ecology

When an evil cleric of the Sphere of Fire dies, a powerful being from that elemental plane can reanimate the deceased worshiper into a Scourgesoul. The transformation is very rare and it remains a mystery if it is a reward for faithful service or punishment for disloyalty.

Scourgesouls are considered free willed undead but usually act to further the goals of the fire elemental spirits that created them. In fact, a Scourgesoul's purpose is to perform a specific task, be it an act of revenge or one of wanton destruction. They are focused on this goal until their task is complete and some witnesses have claimed that Scourgesouls combust into nothingness once their mission is accomplished.





# Talidak

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Stone Barrens, Rocky Badlands
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Hive
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Very (11-12)
TREASURE:	B
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-4
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	15 (FL 36 D)
HIT DICE:	11+2
THAC0:	9
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-12/1-12/3-18
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	H (12' Tall)
MORALE:	Very Steady (13-14)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	6000

PSIONIC SUMMARY:				
Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
9	2 / 2 / 10	PC, EW/IF, MB, TS	15	135

**Telepathy** – *Sciences*: Psychic Crush; *Devotions*: contact, ego whip, inflict pain, intellect fortress, mind blank, synaptic static, thought shield.  
**Psychometabolism** – *Sciences*: life draining; *Devotions*: displacement, double pain, ectoplasmic form.

## General

These huge moth-like creatures are mercifully only rarely seen in the Tablelands. They can grow up to 12 ft. tall and have powerful limbs that support their heavily armored bodies. While they are not graceful fliers, the Talidak's large leathery wings can carry them great distances in search of prey.

## Combat/Abilities

Talidaks are cunning hunters that judiciously use their abilities in combat. Their physical attacks consist of a bite that delivers 3d6 pts. of damage and two claw attacks that cause 1d12 pts of damage each. They

can also call upon their psionic abilities to complement their offensive skills. Additionally, Talidaks can accumulate heat in their vast wings which they can then release as a scorching blast of hot air. This breath weapon is shaped like a cone that is 80 ft. long and 30 ft. wide at the base. Any creature within that area of effect suffers 8d6 pts of damage unless a saving throw vs. Breath Weapon is made. Success reduces the damage by half. A Talidak may use this attack up to 2 times a day.

## Ecology

Talidak society is dominated by a queen, a female specimen of monstrous proportions that lives deep within their hive. The queen's sole purpose is to give birth to the next generation of Talidaks, a duty she performs only once after which she is killed by one of her offspring who then assumes her role.

They have only one hive and its location is a closely guarded secret. There is speculation that it is located on a rocky island in the vastness of the Sea of Silt.

Despite their monstrous appearance, Talidaks have a sophisticated class structure. Workers rarely leave the hive and attend to the queen and their community's needs. Most encountered Talidaks are warriors who have come to hunt and gain reputation within their caste.





# Varn

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Rocky Badlands, Mountains
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Flock
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8-10)
TREASURE:	C
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Good
NO. APPEARING:	1-6
ARMOR CLASS:	1
MOVEMENT:	18 (FL 48 C)
HIT DICE:	6+6
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-6/1-6/4-16
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	H
MORALE:	Steady (11-12)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	1500

## PSIONIC SUMMARY:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
5	1 / 2 / 5	-/MB	15	90

Telepathy – *Sciences*: ejection, mindlink; *Devotions*: contact, daydream, empathy, mind blank, truthhear.

## General

These magnificent beasts are among the fiercest aerial predators on Athas. With its vividly colored scales and majestic horned mane, the Varn strikes the perfect balance of power and grace. A fully grown Varn has a wingspan of almost 30 ft. and it is not unheard of for some specimens to measure 50 ft. in length from snout to tail.

## Combat/Abilities

There are few creatures on Athas that can match a Varn in flight. It is swift and maneuverable even while carrying a rider. Whether in the air or on the ground, a Varn attacks with both fore claws which deliver 1d6 pts of damage each and a powerful bite that inflicts 4d4 pts of damage. A Varn can perform a dive attack at a +2 bonus to hit. The creature must be at least 100 ft. above its target and if both claws strike successfully, a Varn can carry off a human sized creature or smaller. Varns also possess psionic abilities which they use to coordinate attacks and distract their enemies and prey.

## Ecology

Centuries ago, Varns were highly valued as aerial combat mounts and the cities of Tyr and Urik were known for their squadrons of Varnriders. What those who captured and trained the creatures failed to realize was that Varns were not the dumb beasts they imagined them to be. Over time it became apparent that cruelty and intimidation were becoming less effective in controlling the proud creatures. In what can only be described as an organized rebellion, the Varns freed themselves from their captors and returned to the wild. No mass domestication of Varns has been attempted since.

Varns live in the high peaks of the Ringing Mountains where they gather in small groups known as flights. They are very territorial, particularly when rearing their young. A mated pair of Varns can have up to three varnlings, which remain with their parents for up to a year before venturing out on their own.

It is possible to ride a Varn, but only if it allows it. They are noble beings but naturally suspicious of other species. However once a Varn's trust is earned it is a loyal a dependable friend.





# Venom Fly

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Silt Sea
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Swarm
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Non
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	3-30
ARMOR CLASS:	6
MOVEMENT:	3 (FL 36 B)
HIT DICE:	2+1
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	T (6")
MORALE:	Nil
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	125



## General

These hideous little creatures are the bane of those who travel along the fringes of the Sea of Silt. Venom flies have a wingspan of roughly 6 inches and their sickly grey bodies are covered with spines and barbs. Despite their size, they have painfully sharp fangs and cruel horns on their tiny heads. They are very difficult to see when resting on the grey silt and only become more easily visible after feeding when their engorged wings turn red with blood.

## Combat/Abilities

Venom flies are known to congregate on the surface of silted areas where their natural coloring provides near perfect camouflage. As such they gain a +2 bonus to surprise (1-5 on a d10). They attack with a bite that delivers 1d6 pts. of damage. Victims of their bite must roll a saving throw vs. Poison or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds. Venom flies will continue to feed on paralyzed victims for 1d4 rounds automatically inflicting 1d6 pts. of damage per round unless forcibly removed. There is a 10% chance that the bite of a Venom Fly contains a deadly toxin. In those instances, the victim must roll a second saving throw vs Poison. Failure results in death within 1 turn unless treated by a *Neutralize Poison* spell.

## Ecology

Venom Flies infest the borders between the Sea of Silt and the Tablelands, preying on those foolish enough to venture near that desolate area. Occasionally the storm winds that carry silt into inhabited areas also carry swarms of these vile creatures, endangering encampments and settlements alike.

The life cycle of a Venom Fly is mercifully short. From larva to adult, its lifespan rarely exceeds 6 weeks. They plant their eggs in the dry husks of their victims where the larvae can feed on the corpse, sheltered from the burning sun. They emerge as fully mature adults and immediately begin their search for prey.

The beating of the wings of an airborne swarm of Venom Flies emits a strangely soothing hum that belies the approaching danger.



# Xoll

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Sandy Wastes, Rocky Barrens
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Supra Genius (20)
TREASURE:	G
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful Evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	-3
MOVEMENT:	18
HIT DICE:	16+3
THAC0:	5
NO. OF ATTACKS:	8
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6/1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	40%
SIZE:	H (25' Tall)
MORALE:	Fearless (19-20)
LEVEL/XP VALUE:	14,000

## PSIONIC SUMMARY:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
15	4 / 7 / 17	EW, PsC/M-, MB, TS	17	150

**Telepathy** – *Sciences*: mind link, mass domination, psychic crush; *Devotions*: awe, contact, ego whip, esp, inflict pain, mind bar, mental barrier, mind blank, thought shield.

**Psychometabolism** – *Sciences*: death field; energy containment; *Devotions*: cell adjustment, double pain, ectoplasmic form.

**Psychokinesis** – *Sciences*: disintegrate; *Devotions*: control body, intertial barrier, molecular agitation.

**Psychoptortion** – *Sciences*: teleport; *Devotions*: dimension walk, time shift.

## General

The Xoll is an unspeakable horror that roams the wastes and barrens of Athas. Standing up to 25 ft tall, it has a massive dome shaped skull covered in leprous chitin from which sprout 8 tentacle-like limbs. Two huge, unblinking baleful eyes are set above a patch of wriggling, pulpy cilia that serve as the creature's mouth.

## Combat/Abilities

A Xoll is able to engage multiple targets with its 8 appendages with each hit causing 1d6 pts. of damage. The Xoll can also constrict its victims with an attack roll of 18 or higher. A constricted creature suffers 1d8 pts of damage per round until it is released either with a successful strength check or by magical

means. More often than not however a Xoll will attack using its vast psionic abilities. It is not unheard of for a Xoll to mentally control its opponents and force them to attack their companions.

## Ecology

Much about Xolls and their society is a complete mystery to the other sentient races of Athas. Their language is indecipherable, their thought patterns completely alien and while it is clear that they are supremely intelligent, their motives and desires are enigmatic to say the least.

Xolls are solitary creatures and two Xolls are just as likely to kill each other as pass by without notice. Xolls never sleep and are equally active in day or night.

There are many who believe that Xolls are not native to Athas but are a race of travelers from beyond the Gray that came to this plane before it was cut off from the rest of the multiverse.







• MAGIC •



# Anthracite Sphere

## History

Knowledge is a closely guarded secret in the harsh world of Athas. The Sorcerer Kings and their attending Templars do not willingly share their lore and look unkindly upon those who gather learning for their own purposes. Writing is a crime punishable by death and there are few that have defied that edict.

One who did was the figure known to history only as the Dweller in Light. This semi-mythical Dweller was responsible for the clay tablets that clandestine circles of Athasian sages call the *Codex of Kalidnay*, named after the location where the first tablets were unearthed. Later discoveries revealed the Dweller had hidden his writings in secret caches across the Tablelands, no doubt to keep them from the clutches of the Sorcerer Kings.

On one of the recovered tablet fragments, there is mention of peculiar item the Dweller calls an *Anthracite Sphere*.

According to the Codex, the spheres were first discovered in the mines of Tyr, but were dismissed by those more interested in iron than unusual rock formations.

The discarded spheres found their way into the hands of the preserver Cefias who immediately recognized their potential. Through study and experimentation, Cefias realized that the *Spheres* possessed unique qualities compatible with specific magical effects. Once perfected, he set about creating more examples from the specimens collected from the mines with the intention of selling them to the highest bidder.

The fragments of the Codex do not detail how many *Spheres* Cefias created, but it is assumed that he was able to produce enough to distribute to potential buyers and draw the attention of the Templars of Tyr. Cefias was eventually captured and led to his all too predictable end. What happened to the *Spheres* he sold is not explained in the Dweller's account and their fate remains a mystery.

## Powers

*Anthracite Spheres* are rough orbs approximately 3 inches in diameter. Their black and uneven surface is cracked and pitted and run through with shiny silver veins. The cracks expose a crystalline core that glows with a blue luminescence when the spheres are in use.

When a charge is expended, the spheres create a 20 ft. radius magical field that hampers movement. Any creature within the area of effect must make a saving throw vs Spells or be immobilized for 1d4 rounds. Even those making a successful save have their movement rate cut by half and their AC and attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

*Anthracite Spheres* can be thrown and activated from up to 30 yards away. They hold up to 20 charges and can be recharged by a preserver of 12th level or higher.





# Circlet of Kalidios

## History

The cities of Athas boast many fine universities and colleges for students of the Way, not the least of which is the Cerebran. Situated on the outskirts of Balic, this school trains those with psionic potential, but favors the elites of the city.

One such student was the patrician Kalidios. Born to a noble house of Balic, Kalidios showed great potential at a young age. Contrary to some of his more dissolute contemporaries, he was focused on his studies and showed great aptitude for multiple disciplines.

After successfully completing his studies, the young Kalidios unexpectedly set out for a life of adventure. As the years passed, his notoriety grew but it was his creation of the circlet which became synonymous with his name that cemented his reputation.

Now armed with his masterpiece, Kalidios' career climbed to new heights. His defeat of the psionist-priest Jelim-Tha is still required study at the Cerebran and his feats during his adventures beyond the Ringing Mountains are a testament to the versatility of his talents.

Sadly, it was his over confidence that eventually led to his demise. He unwisely challenged the Sensei Darsilla to a duel, but even his formidable powers were no match for her combination of martial and mental abilities.

The fate of the *Circlet of Kalidios* remains uncertain. Recently, merchants in Tyr claimed to have seen the item in the possession of a mysterious figure in the Raam area while elven traders reported encountering a group of adventurers crossing the Estuary of the Forked Tongue with the *Circlet* in their possession. But the motives of elves are hard to fathom and their testimony demands skepticism.

## Powers

At first glance, the *Circlet of Kalidios* appears to be a rough collection of crystals mounted on a ring of dark mineral. But on closer inspection the true craftsmanship of the item is revealed. The *Circlet* is made from a single piece of shaped obsidian, the vertical crystals teased out of the circular base and colored to a striking crimson by the power of Kalidios' mind.

When worn the *Circlet* provides several advantages to psionists. Firstly it provide a +2 bonus to power scores across all disciplines and devotions the user has mastered. Secondly, it increases a user's psionic strength points by 10%, rounding up. And lastly it accelerates PSP recovery, doubling the normal rate.

Note that if the *Circlet* is removed or destroyed, all these benefits are immediately lost.





# Cloak of Whispers

---

## History

There are many versions of the Tales of the Shadow Wing. The oral traditions vary from city to city. In Tyr, she is a trickster hero fighting against the templars of the Sorcerer King. In Raam, the Shadow Wing is a figure of fear, come to steal children in the dead of night. One thing the stories all have in common is the Shadow Wing's *Cloak of Whispers*.

The first stories of the Shadow Wing date back to the decades after the rise of the Sorcerer Kings, when the followers of Rajaat established their rule over the cities of Athas. During that tumultuous time, bards began to sing of a mysterious folk hero who thwarted the plans of the rich and powerful. Portrayed as a thief or an avenger and in some of the darker tales, an assassin, the tales grew in popularity among the free citizens and slave populations.

It is unclear if these stories are based on the exploits of a real historical figure and what little is known is now mostly myth. Consistent details across all the songs and tales point to the fact that the Shadow Wing was a female, was most likely either human or an elf and bore a magical cloak to aid her in her adventures.

New stories of the Shadow Wing continue to be told to this day. If there ever was a real person behind the legends, then this individual has long since perished. But perhaps some other brave or foolhardy soul has donned the fabled *Cloak of Whispers* and taken on the mantle of the Shadow Wing once again.

---

## Powers

This garment appears at first to be made of an unremarkable rough canvas. But when activated, the *Cloak of Whispers* transforms into a magnificent mantle made of inky black feathers that sway and ruffle of their own volition as if moved by a gentle wind.

When worn in near darkness or shadowy conditions, the *Cloak* grants the wearer complete invisibility. It also bestows the ability to move silently with a 70% chance of success.

Lastly, when garbed in the *Cloak*, the user can cast a *Feather Fall*, *Jump* and *Clairaudience* spell once per day at his/her own level.





# Helm of Argak

## History

This magical helm takes its name from the famed Mul gladiator Argak who first wore it in the arena of Tyr in the year of the Wind's Fury (-417). On that day, he strode onto the sands of combat, with his helm and harness for protection and defeated three foes, not the least of which was the notorious half-giant Tiran.

Already boasting a list of impressive victories, Argak's career soared to new heights. As his successes mounted, he became a favorite of the citizens of Tyr, his name celebrated by nobles, free citizens and slaves alike. After years of bloody contests, Argak earned his freedom and walked away from the arena for the last time in -408. History does not record if Argak's masters released him as a reward or out of fear, but the legends say that on the day of his manumission, Argak saluted his fellow gladiators and left his stable, leaving his weapons and the helm behind.

What happened to Argak is unknown. Some say he crossed the Ringing Mountains to live a life of solitude. Others claim he embarked on further adventures under an assumed name. He never divulged how he obtained the helm or if he knew who created it. The whereabouts of the helm are currently unknown.

## Powers

This fearsome looking helm is composed of pieces of chitin that have been magically molded together. The various sections range in color from deep red and vivid orange to iridescent gold and dusty blue. The angular cheek guards provide good facial protection without obstructing vision. Nested segments cover the rear of the neck and two impressive horns complete the aggressive design.

The *Helm of Argak* would be desirable to any warrior based on its protective qualities alone, but it is its magical properties that make this a truly unique piece of armor. When worn, the Helm transforms the wearer's skin into



a chitinous exoskeleton that provides a base armor class of 3. This transformation does not affect movement or increase encumbrance.

In addition the *Helm* bestows additional protection against fire. Small fires, such as torches and campfires have no effect on the wearer. Intense sources of heat such as lava, forges etc. cause half damage. Magical fires or dragon breath causes full damage but the *Helm* provides a +1 to saving throws when applicable.

The *Helm* can be worn by all classes that allow armor and by all species except, thri-kreen and aarakocra.



# The Sagacious Skull of Thaddigren Hylax

## History

Thaddigren Hylax lived during the early days of magic on Athas, when Rajaat freely taught his new art to any who wished to learn it. A natural adept, it wasn't long before his powers grew and he too began to teach others the intricacies of arcane power.

Thoughtful and cautious by nature, Thaddigren began to sense a change in how magic was being perceived by others. He became troubled by nightmares of death and persecution. In -4274, a year before Rajaat's jihad against the preservers of Athas, he gathered his students and followers and together they fled into the barrens to the north of the Tablelands.

There they established a hidden community where he and his acolytes could continue to explore the secrets of magic, safe from Rajaat's jihad.

After a long life of isolation and study, Thaddigren died and his followers reverently took his body into the sandy wastes. They collected his bleached bones and imbued them with magical power. After his death, Thaddigren's community of preservers was abandoned. What became of his followers and Thaddigren's other bones is unknown.

## Powers

The *Sagacious Skull of Thaddigren Hylax* is the only known surviving artifact created from the famed preserver's remains. It is a human skull, intricately carved with arcane bas-reliefs and mystical symbols. Despite being immensely old, the skull is sturdy, albeit stained and discolored by age.

Time has ravaged the *Skull* in other ways as well. The magic that still clings to it is undoubtedly weak in comparison to the power it contained when it was created. Regardless, the *Skull* still possesses useful and potentially even life saving abilities.

When activated, the *Sagacious Skull* can cast a *Detect Magic* and *Identify* spell once per day as if cast by a 15th level preserver. In both instances, the skull will rise from the hands of the user, glow with a brilliant blue flame and declare its findings in a clear and commanding voice.

What other powers the *Skull* may have had in the past is unknown. Legends claim that they could be restored if reunited with Thaddigren's other bones but the location of these lost artifacts is a mystery that remains unsolved.





# Tokomol's Blade

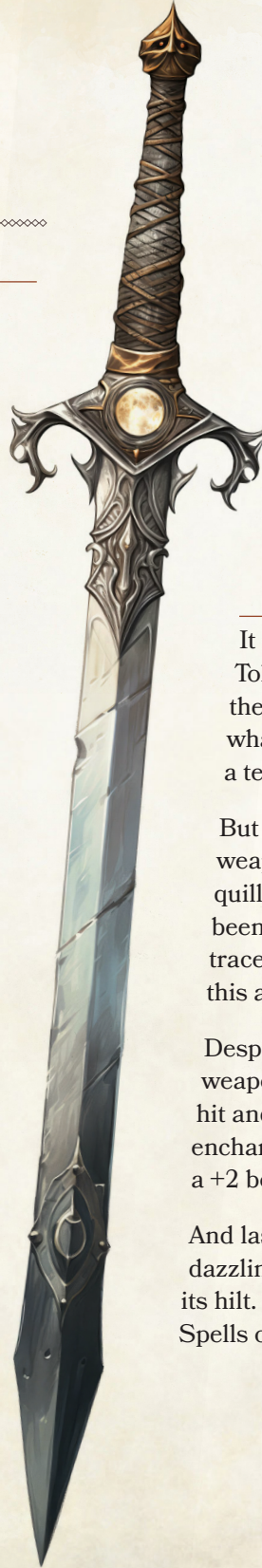
## History

Slave. Fugitive. Warrior. The exploits of Tokomol are legendary. Along with his companions, the thri-kreen priest K'lak and the elf thief Rhayn, Tokomol traveled the length of Athas in search of adventure.

The details of his career are well established. He was born in the city of Draj, a slave soldier in the army of Tectuktitlay. After years of fighting for the Sorcerer King, Tokomol made his daring escape across the mudflats surrounding the city. He was wounded in the attempt and surely would've perished were it not for a chance encounter with K'lak and Rhayn. With their help, Tokomol recovered from his ordeal after which they made their way toward Raam in search fortune and glory.

Amongst Tokomol's greatest deeds are his defeat of the defiler Grezhar, the battle of Eldaarich against the forces of Ushak the Flayer and his rescue of the druid Ilatrin at the gates of the Nameless Temple in the Isle of Bones.

But perhaps his greatest adventure was the exploration of the mines of Dar in the White Mountains in -1548. It was there, deep within bowels of Athas that he discovered the ruins of a lost stronghold and found the ancient blade that now bears his name.



The sagas do not say what eventually became of Tokomol and his loyal friends. Later poems recite that they set across the Sea of Silt in search of other adventures, never to be seen again. Others believe that Tokomol died in battle and that his body was taken to be buried in a secret location. Of his blade no record remains but some say that it lies in the wastes waiting to be lifted once again by one bold enough to write their own destiny.

## Powers

It is not known who wielded this sword before Tokomol's discovery in those forlorn ruins nor is there any indication if it bore any name other than what history has given it. That it has survived at all is a testament to its enduring power.

But time has not been kind to this once magnificent weapon. The blade is chipped and discolored and the quillons and pommel which once shone brightly have been dulled by dust and grit. There is the faintest trace of a lost language etched into the pitted steel but this ancient message is now worn beyond recognition.

Despite all this *Tokomol's Blade* is still a formidable weapon. It is a steel longsword that provides a +1 to hit and +3 damage per attack. The sword has been enchanted to be swift and nimble and as such grants a +2 bonus to initiative.

And lastly, once per day, the sword can produce a dazzling flash of brilliance from the amber disc set into its hilt. Any creature within a 15 ft. radius must save vs. Spells or be blinded for 1d6 rounds.



# Vathla's Visage

---

## History

Practicing magic is a risky endeavor on Athas and no more so than in Balic. The Templars of Andropinis are notoriously zealous in their pursuit of defilers and preservers alike. It was under this harsh rule that Vathla discovered her aptitude for magic. Born to a merchant family, she was drawn to the art at a young age and learned its mysterious ways in secrecy from the few defilers living in the back alleys the city.

Her powers grew but unfortunately her discretion did not keep in step. Known for her short temper, Vathla was provoked into an open display of magic in Balic's Elven Market. While she was able to escape, her parents were less fortunate. They were killed when Templars stormed their premises searching for Vathla.

She fled Balic and vowed to return to exact her revenge. Being a wanted fugitive however made this task difficult. Marshalling her considerable power, she devised an item that would let her enter the city unnoticed. After months of research and effort, the device was complete and Vathla returned to wreak her vengeance.

Within a week, all the Templars who had searched her parent's home were hideously murdered. Not trace of the culprit was found although witnesses testified seeing someone lurking nearby when the crimes were committed, but no two descriptions of the individual were the same.

There is one story that claims that an ornate mask was recovered where the final Templar was killed. Whether rumor or fact, the mask in question has never been seen again.

---

## Powers

This life-like mask is carved from rare Athasian drake bone and inlaid with polished and molded chitin filigree. The mask is human sized and will fit most species including elves, dwarves, muls and halflings, but not thri-kreen, aarakocra or half-giants.

Until it is activated, it appears as a fine example of the kind of ritual or festival mask worn by the elites and nobles of Athas. As such, it can provide an adequate level of mundane concealment.

When *Vathla's Visage* is activated, the mask merges with the wearer face and can transform his or her features as desired. The Visage, can alter an individual's hair color and length, skin tone and eye color and also make minor changes to the shape and size of the eyes, nose, ears and mouth. These changes are usually enough to fool all but the user's closest associates.

There are limitations however. The *Visage* cannot alter a person's height or weight, nor can it change the individual into another species or gender. The transformation can be used once per day and lasts for one hour per level of the user.





# Veridian Ring

---

## History

“Athas does not give what is desired. Athas gives what is required”. It is an ancient saying that athasians know well. A reminder that though life is harsh, there are lessons to be learned and treasures to be found if one knows where to look.

It was on the road to Nibenay, that the priest Jushur discovered such a treasure. After days of travel across the Tablelands, Jushur came upon a band of elven traders in dire need of assistance. Their caravan had been attacked by raiders and though they survived the assault, many were injured. Jushur provided aid and as payment, the elves gave Jushur a large jade crystal acquired from a halfling tribe in the Jagged Cliffs.

It was clear the elves valued the mineral for decorative reasons only but Jushur immediately sensed something special about the material. He continued his journey to Nibenay and upon his arrival studied the jade more closely. His examinations revealed the crystal possessed intrinsic magical properties beneficial to Jushur’s calling.

Inspired by his discovery, Jushur commissioned artisans to craft rings from the mineral. As an act of gratitude for his good fortune, he gave the rings to other worthy priests, so that they may also help others in their time of need.

One ring Jushur kept for himself and he used it during his long life to lessen the burden and suffering of others. It is said the ring accompanied him to his final resting place. Very little is known of what befell the other rings, but it is believed that they are destined to fall into the hands of those who would put the needs of others before their own.

---

## Powers

*Veridian Rings* are a fine example of the highest level of artistry the slaves of Urik can produce. They are made of finely carved jade and feature 8 inset emeralds, each positioned in a setting decorated with mystic runes.



While their beauty alone makes them highly desirable, their true value is the magic they contain. The jade from which the rings are made contains a minuscule amount of the essence of Athas in the Green Age when the fertile valleys and forests were peopled by the new races. And while this old essence is but a flickering ember, it is enough to provide benefits to any cleric or druid who wears the ring.

When worn, a *Veridian Ring* bestows a boost to spells cast by a cleric or druid. Casting times are reduced by one, but never lower than one. Spell effectiveness is increased by +1 per die rolled where applicable. And saving throws made against spells cast by a wearer of a *Veridian Ring* are made at a penalty of -1.

Templars gain no benefit from a *Veridian Ring*.



# Wand of Resonance

---

## History

There is much debate amongst the members of the Veiled Alliance as to the source of these unique wands. Palsis of Tyr believes that they were created somewhere beyond the Hinterlands, perhaps even in the Dragon Crown Mountains. Whereas Volass the Sighted insists that their unmatched design points to the ancient thri-kreen preserver Kitka, who produced similar artifacts in the time of Guthay's Slumber.

Whatever their origin, it is clear that some have endured to this day. Recent sightings place at least one of these unmistakable devices near Bodacy south east of the Mekillot Mountains. And some traders tales claim that a band of adventurers recently destroyed a sand bride with the aid of one of these magic crystals. Unfortunately, the secrecy which surrounds magic and its use makes it difficult to ascertain where and how many of these items remain.

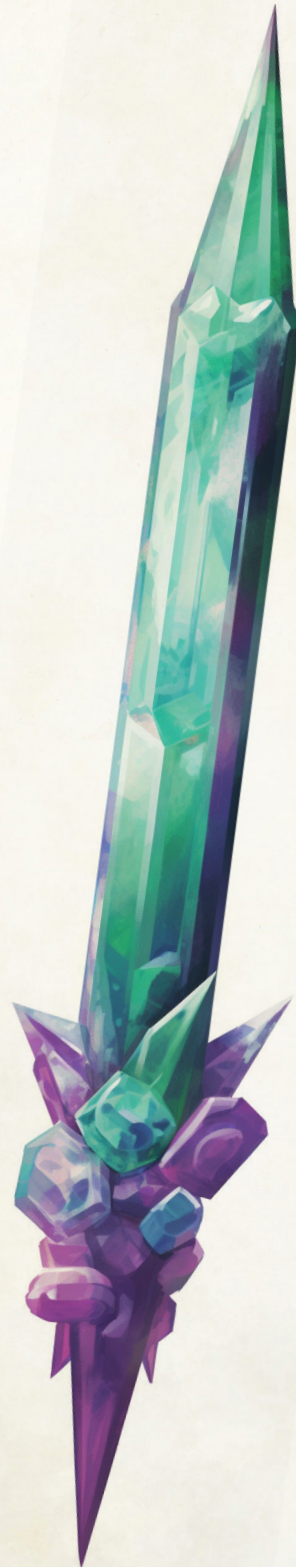
---

## Powers

With their beautiful array of colors and exquisite gem-like quality, it would be easy to mistake these crystalline wands as ornaments worthy of the richest palaces in Nibenay. Although every surviving wand is different, they are all roughly a forearm in length, with a dense cluster of faceted crystals at the base that serve as a handle for a long multi-hued shard.

Despite the variations in color and geometry, *Wands of Resonance* all operate in the same manner. By expending one charge, the user can direct a powerful wave of resonance at a single target within 60 ft. which inflicts 6d6 pts. of damage. A successful saving throw vs. Wands reduces that total by half.

If two charges are spent, the resonant wave affects any creature in a 20 ft radius up to 30 yards away. In this case the damage is 5d6 and a failed saving throw vs. Wands also stuns the victim for 1d4 rounds. A successful save avoids the stun effect but half damage is still incurred. *Wands of Resonance* have a maximum of 25 charges and can be recharged.





# Yoke of Control

## History

Shullat was ambitious even by Templar standards. According to the official records of Urik, he entered the service of Hamanu, King of the World, King of the Mountains and the Plains, King of Urik in the year of Silt's Defiance (-798). Within a few years of donning the yellow cassock, he had climbed to the upper echelons of the Templar hierarchy.

His ambition was matched only by his desire for control. Exercising his authority over the rabble of Urik was hard enough, but when students of the Way were also included, the task became perilous indeed. To resolve his dilemma, he petitioned his Sorcerer King to grant him a boon. With his favor he would create a device that would empower him and his subordinates to better enforce his sovereign's divine will.

After weeks of rituals and meditation, Shullat's prayers were answered. Now armed with his new *Yokes of Control*, he and his underlings wielded their power with impunity and he rose even higher within the ranks of his order.

But what Shullat failed to realize was that ambition is not a rare trait amongst the Templars of Urik. His new fame also drew the attention of

those whom Shullat had trampled in his rush to power. It was not long before Shullat mysteriously disappeared. The official account laid the blame on his subordinates who had also conveniently vanished after murdering their "merciless taskmaster".

The fate of the Yokes of Control is unknown. Perhaps they were destroyed by the Templars of Urik, wary of a repeat of Shullat's rise. Or perhaps they are hidden away, deep within the forbidden vaults of Hamanu. Or maybe, just maybe, they really were taken from Urik by Shullat's treacherous acolytes.

## Powers

These ornate collars are fashioned from cured Pterrax hide and intricately tooled and adorned with lacquered bone and polished stones. The decorations vary from collar to collar but most Yokes are colored with a greenish blue stain.

A *Yoke of Control* is most effective when worn by a non-psionist. For those who are not students of the Way, the *Yoke* provides protection against unwanted mental *Contact* as per the telepathic devotion. Psionists attempting to use that ability against wearers of a *Yoke* suffer a -4 penalty to their power score. If the wearer is actively resisting contact that penalty increases to -6.

A *Yoke of Control* also allows the user to cast *Command* and *Hold Person* spells once per day, the latter of which is cast as if by a 10th level Templar.







# BLACK·DAWN

◀ ADVENTURES IN THE WORLD OF ATHAS ▶

**TDF**  
THE DANGER FORGE

BE SURE TO VISIT [WWW.TRAILSANDTALESGAMES.COM](http://WWW.TRAILSANDTALESGAMES.COM) FOR MORE GREAT OSR ADVENTURES AND ACCESSORIES

