

A detailed, dark-toned illustration of a bear mauling a man in a crowd. The bear is the central focus, with its mouth open, tearing at the man's chest. The man is lying on his back, his arms outstretched. The crowd around them is dense and chaotic, with many people looking on in shock or fear. The background is filled with more figures, some holding flags or banners. The overall style is reminiscent of a classic pulp magazine cover or a dramatic historical painting. The text is overlaid on the central part of the image.

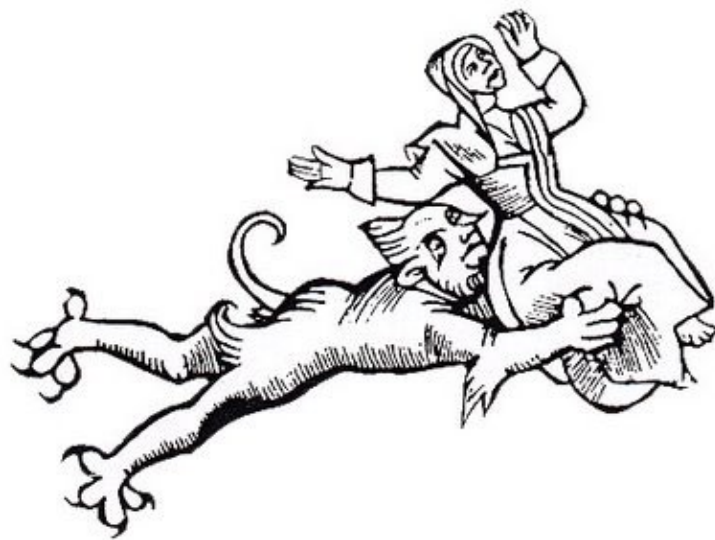
RAMPAGING MONSTERS

AN ADVENTURE TOOLKIT

by

ZZARCHOV KOWOLSKI

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This adventure toolkit is written assuming you already have the first of your players starting to arrive at your house and you've got nothing planned. All the existing hooks and interesting points have been exhausted and you haven't restocked anything. It happens, you're a busy person with many busy person things to do. That *Golden Girls* marathon wasn't going to watch itself. You know what always is guaranteed to be a good time though? A rampaging monster.

It is the perfect no prep setup. It doesn't matter where it came from because right now nobody knows. There is no real time to go investigating because it is in the middle of a rampage. It came out of nowhere and is destroying the countryside. If you slay it you'll be the hero of the region. If that doesn't get their attention remind them that the local nobility is in a panic and is offering crazy rewards. They have a limited time to claim said rewards before the nobles realize it is only killing peasants and think better of parting with their wealth. Also the monster's corpse is probably worth a lot of money.

HOW TO BUILD A MONSTER

As with all things in NGR, start with an average human and go from there. How much bigger than a human is the creature? How strong, quick, smart or the like would the creature be compared to a human the same size as it. How does it go about its day to day? Does it have any adaptations humans don't have? Does it have any supernatural powers?

SIZE

How many times bigger than a human is the monster? The creature has a size modifier equal to however many times bigger than a human it is. If in doubt for the monster, roll a d6 and add 4. There is your monster for the day's size modifier.

ATTRIBUTES

Much like a character, monsters are defined by their attributes. Always remember to scale the monster against a human of its size. A giant may be unimaginable strong compared to a regular human, but how strong would it be compared to a human if it was shrunk to human size?

If nothing stands out about an attribute, count it as 10. For each attribute that is abnormal in some way (weaker or stronger), use the following guidelines to quickly establish a score.

ADJECTIVE	WITH POSITIVE DESCRIPTOR	WITH NEGATIVE DESCRIPTOR
-	13	7
Very	16	4
Insanely	20	1

So a monster that is "Very Strong" would have 16 strength, while a monster that is "Very Weak" would have 4. An "Insanely Stupid" monster would have an intelligence of 1 while an "Insanely Smart" monster would have an intelligence of 20. If the description of a monster was "Very Strong but Insanely Stupid" it would have the following attributes:

STRENGTH: 16 **INTELLIGENCE: 1** **SPIRIT: 10**
AGILITY: 10 **AWARENESS: 10** **LUCK: 10**
HEALTH: 10 **SOCIAL: 10**

If you are in doubt, just roll 3d6 straight down and see what you get.



PIE PIECES

To follow a common theme, give a monster class breakdown just like any other character. This means you first need to think about how a monster solves obstacles. Usually this means how does a monster go about destroying villages and eating peasants.

👤 *If a monster stalks its prey consider making it part rogue.*

👤 *If a monster gets in head-on battles consider making it part warrior.*

👤 *If a monster uses terror and fear to scare off peasants (or corral them into feeding areas) make it part bard.*

👤 *If it is a plague sent to extract religious vengeance or punish blasphemers, consider making it part priest.*

👤 *If it unleashes magical destruction, consider making it part wizard. Be careful with this one though. If it just has some innate magical powers you might want to go that route instead (similar to an elven character). This also means wizard player characters are more likely to try and hunt down the monster, so they can study its remains to try and learn a spell from them.*

Some of the powers from each class may not seem immediately applicable to a monster, but they all are. While a monster may not have weapons, dual wield means it can strike with more than one limb at once. Parkour seems bizarre for a monster, but if you rename it “Rampage” and have it work mechanically the same it will fit much better. “Silver Tongue” can be renamed “Utterly Terrifying”. Interpret might be a bit of a stretch for a non-intelligent monster.

If you can't decide, roll randomly for class and powers.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment may or may not be a misnomer. A giant may legitimately have equipment such as a helmet or a club, a giant lazer-badger probably wont. It is very easy to begin classifying natural defences as equivalent to other equipment. Having tough leathery skin would count as light armour and a leather cap. Wool, or even thick layers of blubber would give the “Bulky” tag. A dragon's scales would count as mail armour, or partial mail armour if the neck and stomach is exposed. A massive turtle would have plate armour. A lobster would have reinforced plate. Unless the head is specifically vulnerable, consider it to have a helm type equal to the armour type. Having horns may count as an upgraded form of helm for the creature.

Natural weapons can also be counted as small, medium, or large. They can also be classified as slashing, piercing, or blunt weapons. Tags like “Vicious” or “Devastating” are also applied just as they are to normal weapons. Additional effects such as poison also transfer over directly (a poisoned tail is not much different than a poison tipped spear)

FLYING MONSTERS

If you are going to make a monster fly you should be aware not only of the vastly increased danger it poses but of the difficulty in tracking it down.

LEVELS

A general rule of thumb is to keep monsters at 0th level unless they have a name (or title) that people were already aware of. “Holy Shit! We're being eaten by a giant bear” means no level. “Holy Shit! We're being eaten by the Great Bear of Dunc's Folly!” means a level, though probably still only 1 level if it is wasting its time eating small little villages.

MONSTER COMBAT TRICKS

If you have a monster that is part warrior and choose the “Combat Tricks” power you can use existing tricks such as Coup de Grace, Brute Throw, Stomp or whatever else you can think of that fits. But you may also want some tricks that suit a monster's physiology. To that end, here are some sample tricks you could use:

JUMP UP AND DOWN

Difficulty: 0

Effect: 1 person per size modifier of the monster suffers a d6 damage (that is not modified by the monster's size) and is knocked off-balance.

Limitations: The monster must spend both actions using this trick and must be at least size modifier 8.

SHAKE VIGOROUSLY

Difficulty: 0

Effect: The monster costs an opponent all of the opponent's unspent actions remaining for the round.

Limitations: The monster must spend an action shaking an opponent the monster has already grappled. The opponent must be less than a third of the monster's size modifier.

SNATCH

Difficulty: 2

Effect: The monster can grapple an opponent by spending a single success.

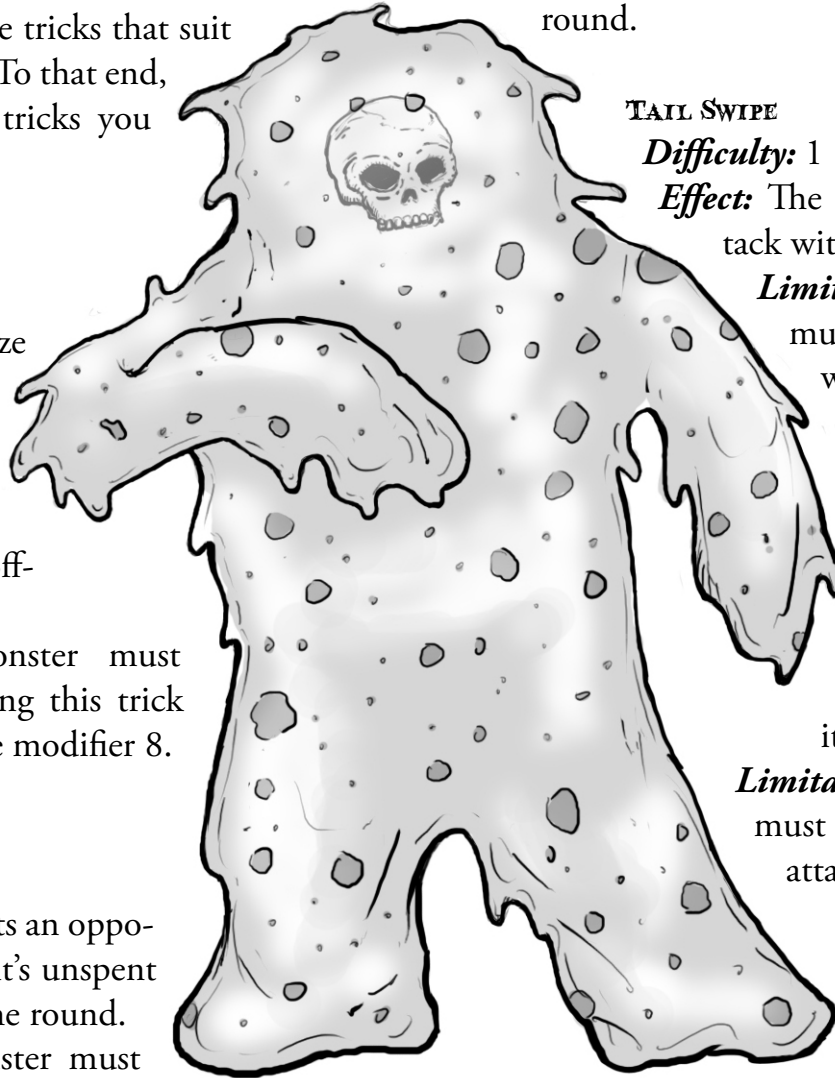
Limitations: The monster must have scored a critical hit on an opponent less than 1/5th the monster's size modifier. The monster cannot have been attempting a grapple with its first potential success.

STAMPEDE

Difficulty: 0

Effect: Everyone in the monster's area suffers trample damage.

Limitations: The monster must be moving this round.



TAIL SWIPE

Difficulty: 1

Effect: The monster gains a free attack with its tail.

Limitations: The monster must have just succeeded with a defence roll by 10 or more.

WING BLOW

Difficulty: 1

Effect: The monster gains a free knock-down attack with one of its wings.

Limitations: An opponent must have just fumbled when attacking the monster.

An important note is that in theory opposing warriors could learn any of these combat tricks.

They almost certainly couldn't perform them, but you never know what the future holds. Maybe the warrior will get polymorphed into a dragon or attack a nest of pixies.

SAMPLE INNATE MONSTER SPELLS

BREATHING FIRE

Template: Cone

Difficulty: 3 per power level

Cost: 3 per power level

Range: 5 feet per power level

Complexity (Memory): 1

Effect: Using the rules in 'Cone' deals 1d6 fire damage per power level, decreasing in damage by 1d6 every 5 feet and expanding outward to have a width equal to its length at any given point. If you are using abstracted distances the fire will either hit one person in the same area for 1d6 per power level or hit 1 person per power level in a neighbouring area for 1d6 damage. The results of any d6 can spread fires. Every type of monster with this ability has a different version of the spell (Breathing Dragon Fire is different than Breathing Gorgon Fire). This is a good way to represent the older style of fire breathing.

BREATHING EXPLOSIVE BALLS OF FIRE

Template: Bolt + Blast

Difficulty: 4 per power level

Cost: 5 per power level

Range: Long Missile Range

Complexity (Memory): 1

Effect: Caster fires a bolt of fire that explodes upon impact. The caster rolls an attack roll at -1 per power level to deal d6 damage times the spell's power level. Hit or miss, an explosion will then engulf those within its radius (5 feet per power level) for d6 damage. If using abstracted rules the explosion affects one person per power level. The d6 results can spread fires. Every type of monster with this ability has a different version of the spell. This is a good way to represent the style of "napalm missile" dragons seem to employ in more recent media.

LAZER-EYES

Template: Bolt

Difficulty: 2 per power level

Cost: 2 per power level

Range: Long Missile Range

Complexity (Memory): 1

Effect: Caster fires a beam of searing light from their eyes. The caster rolls an attack roll at +1 per power level to deal d4 repeating damage times the spell's power level. There is a +1 bonus to damage for every eye beyond the first on the monster or caster utilizing this spell.

RAMPAGE!

So you now have a giant monster ready to unleash Shavoc upon the region. Often the mere existence of a monster is enough of a hook to draw out the player characters even if it is just doing its own thing. That is far from a guarantee though, so it is time for the monster to go on a rampage.

Each monster has a motivation for going on a rampage. You can choose (or roll) one of the options below. Each motivation determines not only why they are wrecking hovels but when they will stop and what kind of specific mayhem they will be wreaking.

THE MOTIVATION

HUNGER (1)

Monsters gotta eat and its tummy's got a rumblin' that only peasants can solve. Peasants are less than thrilled with this situation. The monster will be destroying hamlets and eating all found within until it has destroyed one third of its size modifier (round up) worth of hamlets. It will be gorging itself on peasants and livestock.

GREED (2)

The monster wants treasure, or virgins, or maybe just stockpiles of rotting meat to keep in its lair. It wants to collect things to bring back to its lair is the important part. Its rampage will focus less on killing and more on the destruction of buildings to see what it hidden inside. After the destruction of each hamlet roll a d6. If the result is greater than the total number of hamlets the monster has so far destroyed on

its current rampage, the monster will move onto the next hamlet. The monster will otherwise return to its lair.

ANGER (3)

Something or someone has driven the monster into a murderous rage. Maybe someone killed one of its young, or played their music too loud, or maybe the monster just had a bad day. The monster has stopped caring about the source of the anger and has descended into rage. It will destroy buildings just for the joy of breaking them. It will kill anything it sees and always try to face challengers head on. After each hamlet that a monster destroys, roll a d6. On a result of 5+ the monster has calmed down and will end its rampage.

TERRITORIAL (4)

The monster has decided that its territory now encompasses the hamlets it is destroying. It will aggressively tear down structures and drive fleeing peasants into the distant hills. Any challengers will be attacked head on. The monster is unconcerned with eating the peasants, nor looting. It is determined that everyone must go and anything that stands in its way absolutely must wind up dead. The monster will destroy exactly 4 hamlets.

BOREDOM (5)

The monster is simply bored. Lacking anything better to do it will halfheartedly disassemble some hamlets and play with some peasants. Much in the same way a cat plays with a mouse until it dies. The monster will take quite a bit of time destroying hamlets and proceed at a leisurely pace. If it is ever harmed, roll a spirit check for the monster. If it succeeds its motivation has switched to anger. If it fails it will retreat to its lair. If that has not happened before it has destroyed 7 villages, it will get bored and return to its lair.

MALICE (6)

The monster has no purpose beyond causing suffering. It seeks to kill, maim, and destroy as much as possible. It will mangle peasants in cruel ways and leave them to slowly die in the raging inferno it will inevitably leave behind it. This creature will not stop destroying hamlets until it is slain.

BUILDING A HAMLET

Now that you both have a monster and know why it is going to try to destroy hamlets you will need a quick generator to make those hamlets. Assume each hamlet is full of regionally appropriate hovels (thatch roofed cottages, stone huts, log cabins, or whatever else local peasantry live in) and has between fifty and seventy five peasants living in there and tending to the fields or gardens. You will also need both a name and a couple distinguishing features about the hamlet.

To do this roll a d12 and a d8. The die that is further left denotes the first portion of a hamlet's name. The die that is further right denotes the second portion of the hamlet's name. Each portion of the name also says something about the character of the hamlet.

NAMING

	FIRST	SECOND
1	Mud	Keep
2	Dung	Church
3	Carp	Copse
4	High	Heath
5	Ferry	Fork
6	Apple	Bridge
7	Maple	Pit
8	Green	Shire
9	Abbots	Cliff
10	Grave	-on-the-hill
11	Cheese	Bog
12	Faerie	Barrow

MUD

Something is wrong with the drainage in the nearby soil. Barring this being a dry spell or drought the fields are nothing but thick mud that inhibits movement for human sized creatures. It takes two actions for size 1 and smaller creatures to move during the summer. In the winter it is an ice rink that gives -5 penalties to any agility checks (even for big monsters).

DUNG

The hamlet has a rank odour from the piles of pig shit that seems to coat everything. The village has a vast swine herd that has broken free and is causing panic in the streets. The village also counts as two hamlets for the purposes of a monster driven by hunger.

CARP

The hamlet is surrounded by artificial ponds used for farming carp. If the monster is destroying buildings it will almost certainly destroy a few dykes and flood the town under several feet of water. The ponds are about 5 feet deep.

HIGH

This hamlet is wealthier than normal. Most buildings are of sturdy construction, including the inn. If the second portion of the village name rolled 8 or higher there is a party of three 0th level would-be-heroes trying to save the hamlet. The heroes are armed with bows, swords and armour. This town counts as two hamlets for the purposes of monsters driven by greed.

FERRY

The hamlet abuts a small lake or river and has a ferry operating. The advancing player characters may need to use the ferry to make it into the hamlet if they wish to assault the monster directly.

APPLE

The hamlet is surrounded by apple orchards, providing excellent cover to move closer.

OAK

There is a massive oak tree in the centre of the hamlet.

GREEN

The hamlet is immediately surrounded by flat, wide open fields of grass. It will be very difficult if not impossible to sneak up on the monster.

ABBOTS

The hamlet is near by a secluded Abbey where monks brew delicious beers. The hamlet acts as a temporary storage point for shipping the beer to the city. There are several giant kegs of alcohol stored within the hamlet.

GRAVE

The hamlet is next to a sprawling cemetery that includes a small stone mausoleum and a small shrine or chapel. The area counts as holy ground.

CHEESE

The hamlet is famed for its cheese workshops. It is almost certain that in any monster fight in the hamlet proper there will be at least one dangerous avalanche of cheese wheels. There are also several dairy cows held in stables within the town.

FAERIE

An ancient set of standing stones casts long shadows over the hamlet. The standing stones are a place of power and are warded to count as +2.

KEEP

The hamlet surrounds a simple motte and bailey. The motte itself is only 10 or so feet in height, and the walls are a simple palisade. There is a single watch tower and a small wooden hall. If this was rolled on the d8 the noble in charge is an old miser who refused to flee. He sits in the hall clutching a chest with several hundred golden coins in it. If this was rolled on the d12 the noble in charge is a young and foolish knight. He is a first level warrior who is pre-

paring to ride out with lance and shield to do battle with the monster.

CHURCH

The hamlet is built around a church or chapel. If this result was rolled on a d8 it is a wooden church and will not resist the monster for long. If it was rolled on a d12 the church is built of stone and may be able to survive the monster's assault for some time.

COPSE

The hamlet is adjacent to a large woodlot. This makes it easier to sneak into or out of the hamlet, potentially even for the monster.

HEATH

The hamlet is adjacent to an expanse of heathland or moors. There are a large number of panicking flocks of sheep in the outskirts of the village. A hungry monster may delay assaulting the hamlet for a short while as it eats some sheep on the way.

FORK

The hamlet is built around a fork in the road to serve merchant traffic. If the total of both dice was even there is a merchant in town at the moment. The merchant is hiding in a building with his wagon and two guards armed with crossbows and swords.

BRIDGE

The hamlet has a river or chasm blocking off one side. There is a single bridge spanning it. If this result was rolled on the d8 it is a wooden bridge. If it was rolled on the d12 it is a stone bridge.

PIT

There is a large pit next to the hamlet, probably the remains of a quarry. Mostly it is just used as a garbage dump. It is over 40 feet deep. The bottom 10 feet is filled with fetid water.

SHIRE

This hamlet is really more of a village as it is heavily populated. It has twice as many buildings and people as normal. For any motivation, this village counts as twice as many as it would otherwise.

CLIFF

This hamlet is built on the edge of a steep cliff that drops over 70 feet onto broken rocks (and potentially also the sea).

-ON-THE-HILL

This hamlet is built on the top of a hill, granting visibility over the surrounding landscape.

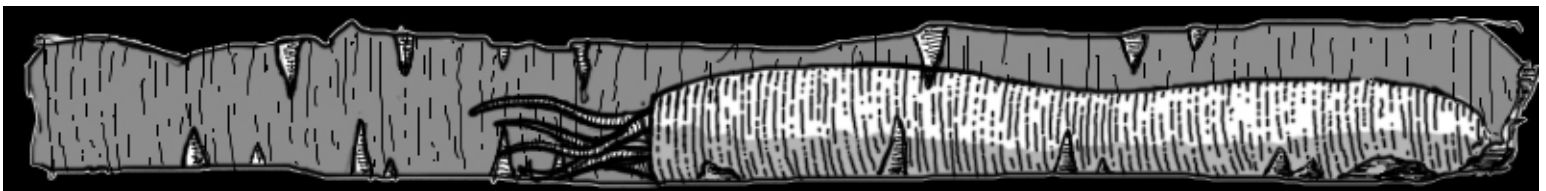
BOG

This hamlet is built upon a bog. This may cause difficulty moving, even for the monster. To move areas while engaged in conflict, an individual must make a strength check.

BARROW

The hamlet is built within site of an ancient burial mounds from before recorded history. Any unburied dead have a 1% chance per night of rising as the undead. The monster may trigger a larger problem.

So rolling the d12 and d8 I get a 3 on the left most



die (which happened to end up the d12) and 8 on the rightmost (the d8). I thus generate the hamlet of Carpsire. Looking above I see that it a large populated hamlet with twice as many people as normal (100 to 150). It also has several artificial carp ponds that may flood the town during the monster attack.

THE REWARDS!

So you've slain the beast and gained some experience and the adoration of the peasants! The exchange rate between peasant adoration and gold is pretty terrible at the moment. So what will the nobility give you?

GOLD (1)

A purse full of five hundred silver coins! A small fortune!

LIVESTOCK (2)

A rare gift, not only do you get 5 cows but your very own bull.

TITLE AND LAND (3)

The party can enter the ranks of the minor nobility. They are given their choice of any one of the destroyed hamlets. They become the lords and rulers of that hamlet.

A PRICELESS RELIC (4)

They are granted stewardship (not ownership) of a blessed or magical artifact from the nobles estate. It is probably either a sword or helm. It should either be a relic of a dead priest with a benefit level of 1d4 or a warded item from pagan days gone by. It would then be a +1 item with a name.

THE LAIR

If the monster wasn't summoned, it must have come from somewhere. That means a lair that may end up being vacant. Don't overdo it for creating a lair, a hole in the side of a hill is perfectly fine. Add some foul odours and a carpeting of skeletal remains and it

is good to go. If the monster gave up on its rampage (for whatever reason) this is where it will retreat to. A greedy monster will also store whatever it is looking for here. If the party picks through the skeletons they should also find d100 silver coins worth of assorted junk and minor treasure. After a rampage roll a d6. If you roll more than the number of rampages this monster has gone on since it moved into this lair, it will return to its lair. If you roll less than or equal to the number of rampages it has completed it will instead move on and find another lair. Each season roll a d6. On a 5+ the monster will go on another rampage.

SAMPLE MONSTERS

T-REX (1)

Its a Tyrannosaurus Rex. If you don't know what it looks like, I can only assume you skipped age 5 entirely.

SIZE MODIFIER: 6

STRENGTH: 16	INTELLIGENCE: 4	SPIRIT: 10
AGILITY: 13	AWARENESS: 10	LUCK: 10
HEALTH: 10	SOCIAL: 7	

LEVEL 0

1 part warrior, 1 part rogue. Powers: Combat Tricks, Rampage (aka Parkour). Trait : Thick Headed

NATURAL WEAPONS:

Bite (Large, Vicious, Devastating, Piercing)
Claws (Medium, Slashing)
Tail (Large, Blunt, Versatile)

TRICKS:

Stampede, Stomp, Coup de Grace, Tail Swipe

MOTIVATION:

Hungry

GIANT - "BILLIAM" (2)

Billiam is a marauding giant almost 60 feet in height. He smells bad and isn't too bright, but he does like to nick things that are shiny or marginally alcoholic.

SIZE MODIFIER: 10

STRENGTH: 10 INTELLIGENCE: 7 SPIRIT: 10

AGILITY: 10 AWARENESS: 16 LUCK: 10

HEALTH: 10 SOCIAL: 7

LEVEL 1

1 part warrior, 2 part rogue . Powers: Combat Tricks, Detect Traps, Rampage (Parkour), Expert

INVENTORY:

Uprooted Tree (Medium, Blunt weapon)
Pavilion Tent (counts as leather helm)
Ragged clothing made from sails(counts as partial light armour)
Giant Wicker Cage (counts as backpack)
Large Sack

TRICKS:

Stampede, Jump up and Down, Snatch,
Shake Vigorously

MOTIVATION: Greedy

HULKING STATUE (3)

A thirty foot tall marble statue that seems to be entirely mute. It appears to be a nude man in a gladiator helm holding a short sword. There is a sparkling glimmer emanating from the helms carved eye slits.

SIZE MODIFIER: 5

STRENGTH: 16 INTELLIGENCE: 13 SPIRIT: 20

AGILITY: 7 AWARENESS: 4 LUCK: 4

HEALTH: 20 SOCIAL: 4

LEVEL 0

1 part warrior, 1 part wizard . Powers: Weapon Specialist (Short Sword), Anti-Magic Counterspells)

MANA: 12

INNATE SPELLS:

Lazer-Eyes

NATURAL WEAPONS (CARVED)

Stone Short Sword
Stone Full Helm
Stone Skin (Counts as bulky plate armour)
Expensive Gems (in the eye sockets)

MOTIVATION: Anger

WYRM (4)

A long slender serpentine creature. Its head is that of a full dragon but it lacks limbs or wings. This particular wyrm is around sixty feet long, though much of that would simply be neck and tail on a proper dragon. It bears the mark of the beast and carries the stench of brimstone.

SIZE MODIFIER: 7

STRENGTH: 7 INTELLIGENCE: 13 SPIRIT: 13

AGILITY: 20 AWARENESS: 10 LUCK: 10

HEALTH: 10 SOCIAL: 4

LEVEL 0

1 part rogue 1 part priest . Powers: Rampage (Parkour), Fervour

MANA: 6

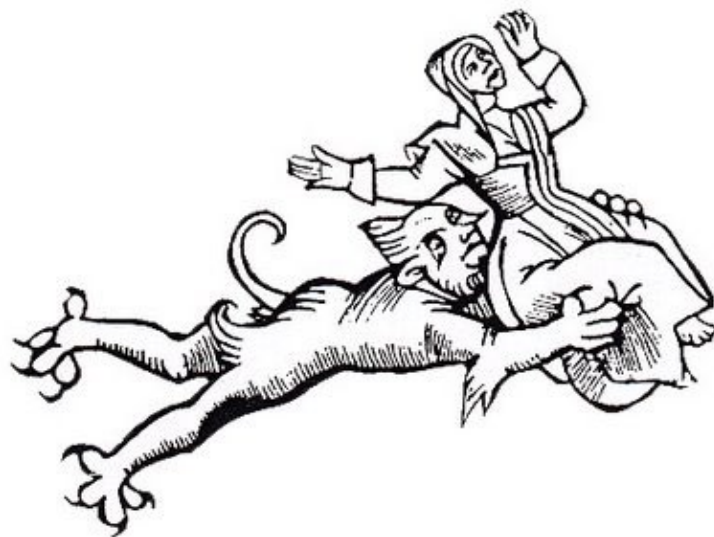
INNATE SPELLS:

Breathing Fire (Wym)

NATURAL WEAPONS

Bite (Medium, Vicious, Piercing)
Tail (Large, Blunt, Versatile)
Scales with exposed belly (Partial Mail)
Massive Gnarled Horns (Counts as Full Helm)

MOTIVATION: Malice



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