

THE TROLLGOD'S TERRIBLE TWENTY



BY KEN ST. ANDRE

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THE TROLLGOD'S TERRIBLE TWENTY

His Top 20
TUNNELS & TROLLS
Monsters



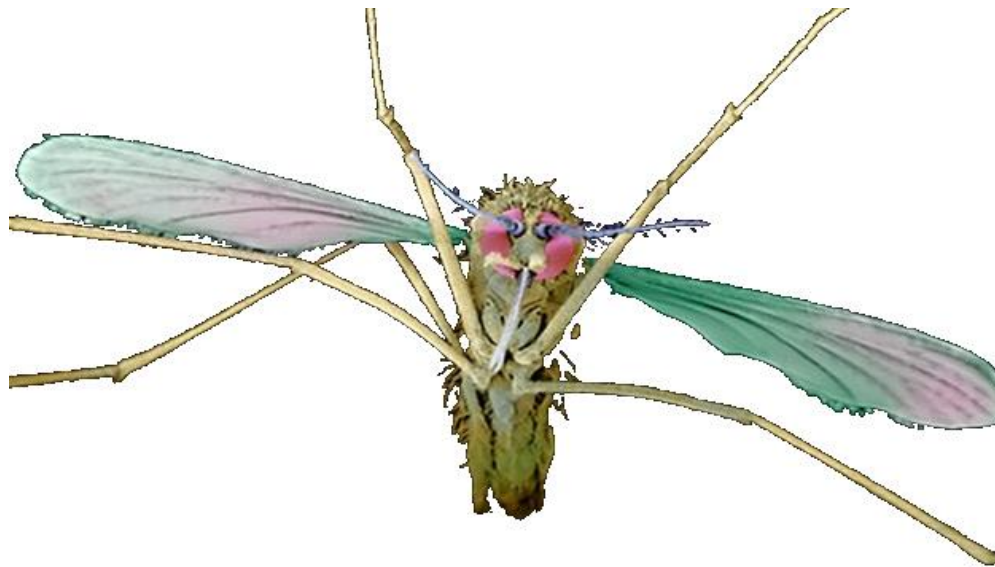
By Ken St. Andre

Illustrated by David A. Ullery

Ken's Explanatory Introduction

People keep asking for bestiaries and monster lists, but it seems to me that there are already innumerable monster lists. What is every Wandering Monster Table but another list of monsters to plague hard-working dungeon delvers? I kept trying to do it, but it just didn't seem like fun, and writing has to seem like fun to me, or else I fizzle out and never finish the job.

I do like monsters in role-playing games, but doubt if I would like them in real life. After all, what is a monster? To me, it is something that is trying to hurt me, eat me, or kill me. A mosquito is a monster, although a very small one, but if you made it big enough to really see, it would be as scary a monster as anything from horror or science fiction.



It occurred to me that it would be a lot more fun if the monsters I wrote about were MY monsters, creatures that I thought up to bedevil my players. So, that's what I'm going to do. The creatures in this document are all things that exist only because I imagined them in the first place. They may have been inspired by something that already exists, but these particular incarnations have been through the fires of my imagination. And they have all appeared in published T & T material.

THE MONSTERS

The monsters on this list will be presented in this format: Name, description, monster rating and a quoted description of it from a T & T product that I wrote.

1. **Skwonk.** Any being that walks on two legs and is not a goblin. Monster ratings vary widely. Text: “You have been friendly to us, for a skwonk (goblin term covering other beings that walk on two legs but are not goblins), but not so friendly that we would invite you into our homes.” (Bwa ha ha ha ha! We are all monsters to some creatures, people, or things, my friends.)¹

2. **Glikk.** An underground predator that looks like a gigantic centipede. Monster rating: 72 (8D6+36) Text: “The glikk is an underground predator that most nearly resembles an armored centipede. It is one of the stony lifeforms that survives on Trollworld. This one is about waist high on you and has 6 armored segments, each segment has two chitinous legs, one on either side, with each leg ending in a triple claw of what looks like obsidian. The final segment has a prehensile sting something like a scorpion’s. The head segment contains two large yellow multi-faceted eyes, two long, hard, and extremely sharp mandibles emerging from a toothless maw, and a fringe of brittle whiskers emanating in a star-like pattern around the mouth and eyes.”²



¹ Trollhammer. Paragraph 17, page 17. TexiCon, 2013.

² Ibid. Paragraph 47, pages 27-28.

3. Gakk. A furry spider-like beast with four legs that has a poisonous bite. It prefers to walk and hide on the ceilings of caves and drop on its prey from above. They sometimes move in packs, and it is suggested that there be one for each member of the party that runs into them. Monster rating: 44 (5D6 + 22) Text: " . . . you run into a multi-legged, furry-faced, poison-fanged gakk. They tend to hang on the ceilings of dark tunnels and drop on victims that pass below them. They avoid people carrying torches. The gakk will fight to the finish. If it scores any spite damage on you (it rolls a 6 on its combat dice), it poisons you. The poison is slow paralysis. For each combat turn you fight while poisoned, reduce your DEX by 1D6-1 points. If your DEX falls below 8, you will not be able to use your weapon. If it falls below 3 you will not be able to fight, and the gakk will win."³



4. Giant Devilfish. Something like a huge freshwater octopus, but it does not have a beak or suckers on its tentacles. Instead it has a large disk-like body with an oversized mouth full of dagger-like teeth and two large glowing red eyes. It moves by swimming instead of by jet propulsion. The devilfish can breathe equally well in or out of water. Smaller ones with monster ratings of 50 or less sometimes go hunting for their food on land. They can walk on

³ Ibid. Paragraph 61, page 34.

tentacles that each end in a bony claw. Larger ones generally remain submerged. The devilfish has a special ink attack that activates whenever it rolls 3 or more 1s on its combat dice. It sprays a thick black ink out of glands on its body that can reduce visibility in the water to zero, or if it hits a fighter in the face can blind him for 1D6 combat turns. If the devilfish sprays on land anyone fighting it must make a L1SR on Luck to avoid being temporarily blinded and rendered unable to fight; if it happens in the water, the fighter's combat total is halved for 1D6 combat turns. Monster Rating: Varies from as low as 16 to as high as 200. Text: “. . . a vast shadowy bulk below you and more tentacles coming up. It is a giant devilfish and you are on its menu.”⁴

5. **War Frog.** Oversized, carnivorous frog that has both talons and teeth. Regular ones are green. Larger ones that are albino white in color are called **Death Frogs**. Monster Rating: 88 (9D6+44) **Death Frogs** are truly gigantic with Monster Ratings of 176 (18D6+88) Both war frogs and death frogs have thick, slick skins that act as natural armor—4 points of armor for the war frogs and 16 points of armor for death frogs. Text: “GARRUMPH! Out of the deeper darkness behind the treasure leaps a giant guardian frog to attack you. It has talons on its front paws and a fanged mouth big enough to swallow a sheep at one bite.”⁵

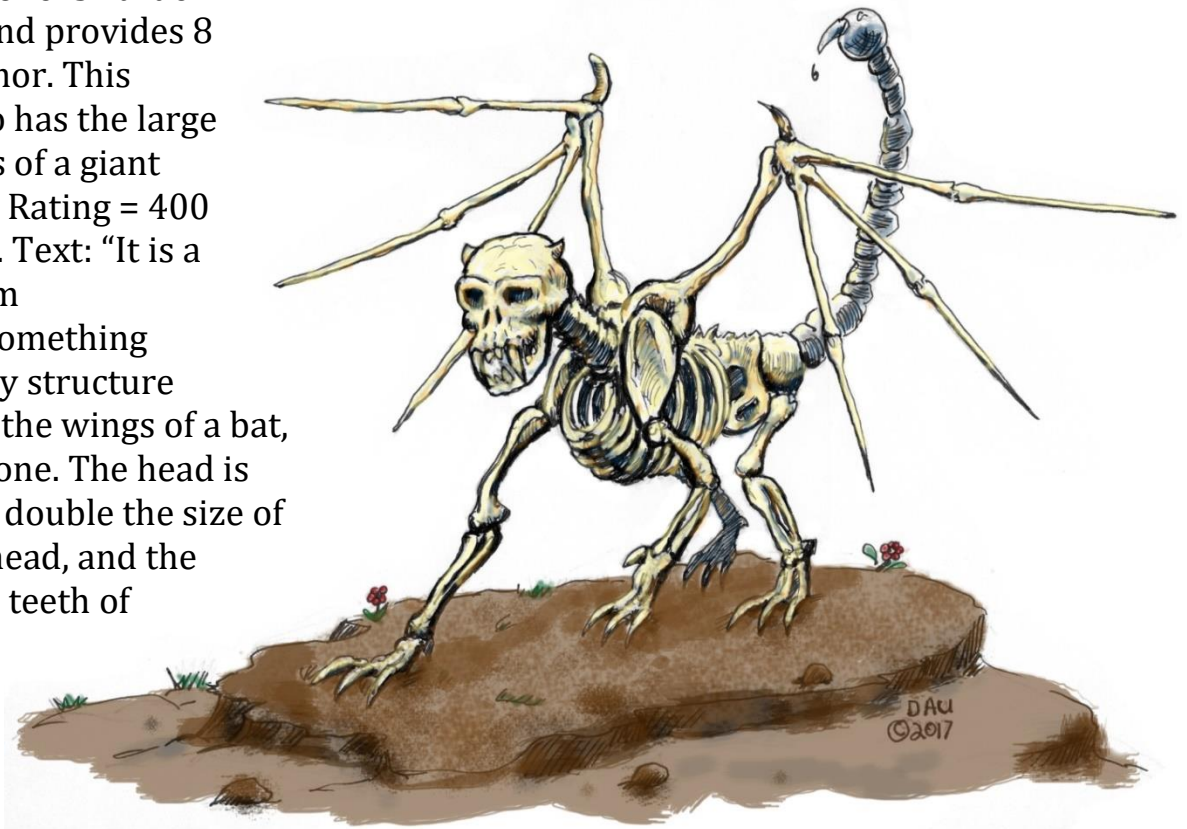


⁴ Goblin Lake. Flying Buffalo Inc. Paragraph 25A, page 29.

⁵ Ibid. Paragraph 17A, page 21.

6. **Ghoul.** Blue ape-like creatures of limited intelligence who prefer to eat dead, rotten meat. They are just smart enough to have language. They have formidable claws and teeth, but they like to fight with crude clubs. They often travel in packs of 2D6 ghouls at a time. Monster Rating: 16 (3D6+8). Text: “These ghouls . . . are baboon-shaped creatures that normally walk on all fours, but can rear up and stand on their hind legs sometimes. Their skin is pale blue, scaly, and hairless except for patches of heavy black fur around their shoulders and groin areas. They have catlike red eyes with vertical pupils that gleam in the firelight. . . . They gibber as they rush to attack—a kind of barking chorus of oohs and ah-ah-ahs.”⁶

7. **Manticore Lich.** An undead version of a typical manticore with an oversized human-faced head containing huge fangs and tusks, with the body of a lion or other large cat, and the tail of a scorpion. A living manticore would have a furry body, but the lich version seems to be all magically-animated bone. That bone is harder than wood and provides 8 points of armor. This creature also has the large flaring wings of a giant bat. Monster Rating = 400 (41D6+200). Text: “It is a creature from nightmare, something with the body structure of a lion and the wings of a bat, but it is all bone. The head is manlike, but double the size of any human head, and the teeth are the teeth of a lion. The claws are like short swords.”⁷



⁶ Saving Fang from the Pits of Morgul. Flying Buffalo Inc. Paragraph 11, page 13.

⁷ Ibid. Paragraph 93, page 38.

8. **Eyesaur.** A dinosaurian beast similar to an allosaurus, but it regenerates any wounds taken at a rate of 5D6 per combat round. They are pack animals and will always appear in groups of 2D6 creatures. Their scales are dark green, brown and pale yellow. It is smooth on its back and shoulders, but banded on the underbelly and throat. The tail ends in a spiked globe that can do massive damage. Monster rating: 150 (16D6+75) Text: "Eyesaurs are large ferocious reptiles. They are ten to twenty feet long, stretching from oversized, tooth-filled head to short spiky tail with a knob of bone at the end. Their scales are mottled brown, green, and sickly yellow. The fore-claws have four claws, while the feet have only three bird-like talons. They are fast, savage, and fearless, and worst of all they are known to regenerate their wounds with extreme speed. (Eyesaurs regenerate 5D6 per combat round.) These are some of the deadliest things you could ever run into in the Trollworld wilderness."⁸

9. **Trollworld Gargoyle.** These gargoyles are semi-magical creatures of living stone---one of the remnant beasts from the early days of Trollworld when there was no organic life and everything was living stone.

They most resemble a cross between a bat and a gorilla. Their stony skins serve as a natural armor that will take 10 points of damage. Cutting weapons have little effect on them—only smashing weapons can damage them. Monster Rating: 200 (21D6 + 100). Text: "Dark shapes are swooping out of the sky . . . Each one looks like a grotesque bat-winged gorilla with the face of a demon. Their hides are slaty blue and hard as stone (they are stone). Hammers can break them, but swords are useless."⁹



⁸ Hot Pursuit. Fiery Dragon. Second encounter, page 11.

⁹ Ibid. Death from Above, part 1, page 14.

10. **Snollygoster.** An intelligent beast that lives in deep forests and swamps and prefers to attack from behind. They range in size from 4 feet to 10 feet tall, and tend to run on their hind legs. They are mostly light to dark green in color. Monster Rating: 40 (5D6 + 20) to 100 (11D6 + 50). Text: “Picture a cross between a large cross-eyed dog and a truncated crocodile. Snollygosters are extremely clever and devote themselves to causing trouble and abducting children. They make excellent mounts for gremlins with whom they get along famously.”¹⁰



11. **Tsathogua.** A bat-winged venomous toad. Although these are relatively small creatures, their hides are armored so that they have as much armor as their monster ratings. They are generally gray in color. The Tsathogua has a special attack that activates on any roll of six when fighting—it will spit an

¹⁰ Monsters! Monsters! Monster Glossary, page 14.

acidic poison at its foe. The target must make a L2SR on Luck to avoid being struck. Poisonous acid is extremely painful. Although the damage is only 3 points, anyone struck by tsathogua poison must make a L3SR on CON to continue fighting during the next combat round. Monster Rating: 3D6 (TARO) (Triples add and roll over). Text: “these bat-winged venomous toads are descended from the patron of evil for which they are named.”¹¹

12. Talking Toadstools. Sentient, ambulatory mushrooms with a taste for living meat. Monster Rating: 2 (1D6 + 1) They can bite—they have teeth, and mushroom saliva is a weak poison. When spite damage occurs (a 6 is rolled) by the talking toadstool, the foe is poisoned. Toadstool poison clouds the brain while killing the body, inflicting one point each of CON and INT damage for each combat turn that lasts for 5 combat turns. The poison is cumulative. If bitten twice the character takes 2 points of CON and INT damage each turn. Toadstools generally move in packs of 2D6 + 10 creatures. Text: “In the depths of this forest, there is a kind of mushroom that has attained intelligence of a sort. . . . These mushrooms can pull their roots out of the ground and walk around. Unlike other fungi that are content to live on rotting tree trunks and rich soil, the talking toadstools prefer to live directly on decomposing animal matter. They have faces and can both see and talk, but they don’t know any humanoid languages. . . . They are a sickly green with bright orange stripes, and they look a lot like skinny mushrooms. They are poisonous.”¹²



¹¹ Ibid. Monster Glossary, p. 16.

¹² Grimtina’s Guard. Flying Buffalo Inc. Paragraph 2, pages 5-6.

13. **Redcap Goblins.** A particularly mean variety of a small, goblinsque, primitive humanoid. They prefer to live in dense forests near small streams and make their homes in hollowed out trees. Monster Rating: 22 (3D6+11) They always appear in groups of 2D6 goblins (DARO) (Doubles add and roll over) Text: “These little fellows stand about 3 feet tall and look very much like ordinary goblins except that from their eyes up, the tops of their heads are a bright red in color.”¹³ (Redcap goblins almost don’t qualify as monsters since they could be seen as a kind of playable kindred, but they don’t have attribute stats, and they’re too stupid to worry about self preservation in a fight—i.e. they always fight to the death—and that makes me treat them as a monster instead of a kindred.)

14. **Obsidian Spider.** A spider-like creature made of living obsidian. Their rocky bodies can take up to 1/10 their monster rating in hits before damage occurs. Unlike trolls, they regenerate very slowly. Monster Rating: 100



¹³ Ibid. Paragraph 41, page 17.

(11D6+50) to 400 (41D6+200). Text: “12-legged spidery horrors made of living obsidian—distant kin of rock trolls. Intelligent, malevolent, solitary. Their nourishment is primarily rock-based, but the calcium of bones and teeth, and the iron in blood is food for them.”¹⁴

15. **Cave Squid.** A variety of freshwater squid that lives in deep pools and underground streams. They can grow to considerable size and may be as small as a human hand or as large as a cave troll. They are generally found in water, but may sometimes go on dry land when hunting for prey. Monster Rating: 40 (5D6+20) to 160 (17D6+80). Text: “Amphibious, tentacled, beaked creature that haunts the streams and pools of Dwarf World (i.e. the deep tunnels where dwarves live apart from surface societies). These squids have anywhere from four to twelve tentacles (depending on their size)—if they lose one it will regrow over time and possibly branch into two appendages. Each tentacle ends in a chitinous claw capable of gouging iron. Their rubbery flesh has color-changing ability and they have excellent camouflage, almost always appearing to be the same color as whatever is behind or around them. These monsters are migratory and sometimes leave their home environment after stripping it of all suitable food beasts. That is when they can be found dragging themselves through the tunnels in search of another nesting place. Their general fighting style is to flail at things with tentacles until the prey stops moving, and then close in to finish eating. Number appearing: 1 or 2.”¹⁵

16. **Lasher Vines.** Half plant, half animal creatures that grow on cave walls and ceilings. They are most like gigantic bacteria with tentacles in place of cilia. Monster Rating: 40 (5D6+20) to 220 (23D6+110) Text: “These strange creatures are half plant, half animal and consist of a central spherical core from which grow thorny vines that have all the strength and flexibility of tentacles. The core has from one to twenty eyes, each associated with a vine that grows out adjacent to it, and one mouth with thorns inside it for teeth. Some vines may act as roots growing directly into the stone of walls, ceilings, or floors. The vines sometimes produce a large crimson flower (5% chance for any lasher vine to have one). These flowers are highly valued by dwarves—not only beautiful, but also have healing properties. (Roll 2D6 and multiply the numbers to see how many points of CON are gained when a red flower is eaten.) Lasher vines are predatory and will attack any warm-blooded creature that comes into reach. Roll 1D10+1 to see how many vine-tentacles each

¹⁴ Dwarf World. Trollhalla Press. Creatures You Might Meet. Paragraph 1, Page [10]

¹⁵ Ibid. Paragraph 5, Pages [10-11]

lasher has, and multiply by 20 for monster rating. These creatures can detach from their roots and move independently. Number appearing: 1 to 10.”¹⁶

17. Ice Dragon. A huge greenish-white flying dragon of the classical style that breathes out blasts of cold so intense that ice is hot by comparison (I admit this isn't a very original idea with me, but it is my version of an ice dragon, and what would this list be without an ultimate monster like a dragon of some sort on it?) Monster Rating: 5000 (501D6+2500) Text: “Out of the huge pile of gold and diamonds in the center of the cavern rises a mighty dragon whose scales glint with pale greenish-white luminance. It breathes a great gust of dragonfrost at you.”¹⁷



¹⁶ Ibid. Paragraph 9, Pages [11-12]

¹⁷ Deluxe Agent of Death. Flying Buffalo Inc. Paragraph 28, Page 9.

18. Ghast. 12 feet tall, part kangaroo, part squid, part shark, but not a water monster, these horrors lurk in remote caverns deep underground and prefer total darkness. They move by leaping from place to place. They attack by entangling prey in their tentacles, dragging it close to the shark-like mouth, and biting savagely. Monster Rating: 1D6 X 100 (11D6+50 to 61D6+300) Text: "... an enormous ghist leaps down on you out of the shadows. Although you managed to avoid being smashed flat by the enormous kangaroo-like hindlegs of the creature, you didn't evade all of its tentacles and now find yourself being squashed to death."¹⁸

19. Bloodbats. These would appear to be simply large bats ranging in size from a hawk to an eagle, but these do not eat insects. Their diet consists entirely of blood, preferably taken from living creatures. They are also called vampire bats in some adventures. They use their razor-sharp claws to tear open their victims and make them bleed, then cling to the bleeding target and lap up the fresh blood with catlike tongues. They live in caverns with easy access to the outside world. They attack in swarms ranging from 10 to 100 (or more) bats at one time. The bat saliva is a mild narcotic that will cause the victim to fall asleep for up to 6 hours at a time. Special attack: any spite damage caused by bloodbat attack injects the saliva, and may cause the victim to fall asleep—requiring a L1SR on CON the first time the target is affected---with the level difficulty going up by 1 each subsequent time they get bitten. Because bloodbats navigate by echo-location, they are extremely hard to hit with weapons in ordinary combat. To actually strike one and do damage a player must make a L2SR on either Luck or Dexterity. Monster Rating: 10 to 20 per bat. (2D6+5 to 3D6+10) Text: "Bloodbat Cavern: Several dozen bloodbats live here. Each character must roll 1 die to see how many (1 to 6) attack."¹⁹



¹⁸ Ibid. Paragraph 147, Page 27.

¹⁹ Tunnels and Trolls, 5th edition. Trollstone Caverns. Paragraph 11.

20. Silver Serpents: Come in different sizes, from small babies that are only one foot long, to gigantic monsters more than 6 feet in diameter and sixty feet long. No reptiles are as cold-blooded as the silver serpent---literally cold to the touch and capable of freezing water with its breath. Silver serpents are magical beasts that somehow have the ability to secrete silver metal as a waste product. They are always light gray to icy white in color. Small ones are relatively harmless and are sometimes kept as pets by wizards. Larger ones are much sought after by potentates and treasure hunters. Silver serpents are typically found in warm cave systems, often living on the offerings of primitive peoples that may worship them. Very large silver serpents can be incredibly dangerous when attacked. Monster Rating: 100 (11D6+50) Special Attack: Freezing breath or tongue. When a silver serpent rolls 6's in combat, the spite damage comes in the form of freezing damage to the target. Each 6 not only does a point of damage, but it also causes the loss of 1 point of DEX. The effect of such freezing damage will last for 1 complete game day. Text: "Here lives a giant silver-scaled serpent with a Monster Rating of 100. It exhales a blast of freezing cold air. To avoid freezing, anyone fighting it must make progressively higher saving rolls on CON (starting at first level) each combat round."²⁰



²⁰ Ibid. Paragraph 8.

This completes the list of my 20 favorite monsters. Each has its own place in the ecology of Trollworld. Some are fairly common (bloodbats) and some are incredibly rare (ice dragons), but all can be used against aggressive adventurers and dungeon delvers. Please treat my babies kindly.

--Trollgod (a.k.a. Ken St. Andre)



Appendix: The Legend of the Trollgod

Long, long ago in a different century, someone who didn't like me very much (and yes, there are plenty of people who don't like me) referred to me in disparaging tones as the trollgod. Rather than allowing myself to be hurt by the insult, I claimed it, and made it my title. I created the *Tunnels and Trolls* game, and if anyone wants to call me the Trollgod because of that, fine by me. And that went on for years with nothing really coming of it.

But then, in 2002 I decided to create an internet club for *Tunnels and Trolls* players. I called that club Trollhalla. Trollhalla lasted from 2002 until 2015, and finally failed because the version of PHP that my original programmer used to create the mechanisms that allowed me to run the site got to be obsolete and was superseded on the servers that supported the site.

Members of Trollhalla all had special avatars and Trollish names. I decided to be the Trollgod there too. Many of my fanclub members were highly talented and creative people who brought new art and new ideas to the group. At it's peak Trollhalla had around 400 members, of which only about 40 were actually very active. Over time we wrote stories and drew pictures to illustrate adventures created by the members of Trollhalla. I created a mythology that made Trollgod a personal friend of Lerotra'hh with headquarters in downtown Khazan. My friend, Jeff Freels created an avatar of the Trollgod that I used from time to time.



In 2017, the New Zealand miniature sculptor Darcy Perry created an actual mini-statue of the Trollgod using my face and hat as his inspiration.

As you can see, the Trollgod is a character with a life of his own, and he now has at least a semi-official reality as a major character in Trollworld. Is he a real god? No, of course not. He didn't create the trolls. Even Ken St. Andre did not create the trolls. They have always been with us. But, the Trollgod is a wizard of sorts, and that is rare among trolls. He makes magical things happen. He provides a sanctuary for monsters and the under-appreciated kindreds of Trollworld.

Perhaps the Trollgod will be remembered long after Ken St. Andre is forgotten. That would be kind of cool.

--Ken St. Andre
October 17, 2017.



THIS BOOKLET CONTAINS A MERE 20
OF THE TROLLGOD'S FAVORITE MONSTERS.
TAKE THEM AND USE THEM IN YOUR OWN
ADVENTURES IF YOU DARE!




TROLLHALLA
PRESS