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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A legend is a story that has many forms, handed down through the years—perhaps centuries or millennia—and that is compelling enough to be retold, reworked, reimagined again and again. Something *legendary* is larger than life: first, because it takes on a life of its own, beyond its first incarnation, as it is retold and recontextualized. And second, because it extends beyond realism, often incorporating some element of the fantastical or supernatural: sirens and cyclopes in the *Odyssey*, Merlin and Morgana in the legends of King Arthur, the demons and dervishes throughout the recursive tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*, to name but a few.

Yet these legends are still grounded in things that are familiar, historical, and recognizable: a hero of the Trojan War, a king of Britain who defeated the Saxons, and a young woman who tells stories to her husband, the king of Samarkand. Legends combine real places or events with a hefty dash of the extraordinary to become *epic*—often in all senses of the word.

In our games, we get to *be* legendary heroes (or villains, or morally gray mercenaries) for a little while. We get to do extraordinary things and go on epic adventures and feel *awesome* when we travel through an ancient bone forest, take down an undead dragon, and swashbuckle across the land on a magic skyship. At the risk of stating the obvious, that's pretty cool! It's not the only reason why fantasy RPGs are fun, but it's certainly a big one.

Granted, not all fantasy RPG characters have to be legendary. It can be just as interesting to tell a story of unsung heroes or a mediocre warrior who bumbles their way from quest to quest, somehow succeeding (or dramatically failing) despite their incompetence. But also, legends aren't about facts. That bumbling warrior could be hailed as the greatest hero in the land because people *think* all their deeds were accomplished through great skill and bravery. That's some classic dramatic irony!

Legends lean heavily into drama, narrative resonance, and even humor. They're memorable because they go all out. Likewise, the most memorable moments in RPGs are often when we go all out, make big choices, succeed through unexpected and humorous means, or defy the odds in a climactic moment. As designers, the MCDM team wants to provide game mechanics that help make these moments happen naturally—not despite the mechanics, but *because* of them. We like it when monsters, rules, and magic items provide opportunities for tense, exciting moments and incentives for making big, dramatic choices.

So on that note, I'm pleased to say that this month's articles go *hard*. When I put out the call for pitches last year, I told authors, “We want to focus on cool, original creatures, not remixes of existing stat blocks—give us the weird and the wondrous!” And *oh boy* did Sam Mannell deliver with “Malevolent Forces”! The dreameater is *wonderfully* horrifying, and the vespergriff is the perfect danger-sensing bat-jaguar companion for any adventurer willing to embrace a weird new friend.

In a radically different genre, Imogen Gingell makes her *ARCADIA* debut with style, zooming onto the scene with “Quick, Take My Spellsled!” This zany one-shot has it all—fantasy hoverboards, a racetrack marked by arcane graffiti, and a colorful band of bullies your players will love to beat.

And last but *certainly* not least, Steve Fidler's “Legendary Inspiration” is an absolute feast of new options for gaining and spending inspiration in exciting, meaningful, and—you guessed it—legendary ways. Pick your favorite combo of these rules for a little extra spice that'll make your whole game more fun and dramatic.

Without further ado, I leave you to dive into the pages ahead and shape your own weird and wondrous tales. Wherever your adventures take you, may they be legendary.

*De somnio ad itinere,*  
Hannah Rose  
Managing Editor

# LEGENDARY INSPIRATION

NO MORE TIRED INSPIRATION RULES—THESE ARE JUST INSPIRED RULES!

by Steve Fidler

**I**nspiration is a way to reward strong roleplaying, encouraging players not just to think outside the box but to act in accordance with their character. At the same time, it can also serve as a tool to reinforce cinematic gameplay. This article provides players and GMs with new ways of making use of inspiration, promoting the mechanic from something players often forget they have to something they beg for more of.

The GM and the players will want to work together to decide which of these options would be the most benefit to the characters, and would best suit the tone of the campaign. Each character should have a way to spend inspiration that's useful for them. However, because too many choices can be overwhelming and might affect the flow of combat, try starting with one or two rules for new ways to gain and spend inspiration (including the default use of inspiration, if you keep that as an option).

In addition to presenting new rules for gaining and spending inspiration, this article introduces party inspiration—a way for all characters to share in each other's heroic endeavors. Additionally, a number of new wondrous items known as magic banners interact with the inspiration of their wielders and other party members in interesting and new ways.

## GAINING INSPIRATION

The base guidelines for handing out inspiration say to do so when a player roleplays their character well. Unfortunately, it's easy for GMs to forget about awarding inspiration for good roleplay, and sometimes hard to establish consistency and fairness. The options in this section focus on more objective and clear methods of gaining inspiration, so that players can seek out and spend inspiration more regularly.

## BONUS CONTENT

When spelunking in a dungeon, exploring a cave, or traveling through a spider-infested forest, the opportunity for adventure outside the characters' main objective might come up. This could take the form of rescuing a prisoner from a dungeon, taking a moment to mine an untapped vein of mithral in a cave, destroying a clutch of mutant spider eggs the characters come across by happenstance, or a particularly lethal random encounter.

Although such tasks often reward the characters with a sum of gold or a magic item, the GM can also grant inspiration to each character as a bonus for straying from the path and completing the task.

## CRITICAL INSPIRATION

Whenever a character rolls a d20 for an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check, they can potentially gain critical inspiration. This rule can make use of two options—critical success and critical failure—and it's recommended that your table choose one or the other. Critical success emphasizes a team-based reward for characters performing heroic deeds, while critical failure helps to mitigate the feeling of loss associated with rolling low, and creates a “failing forward” mechanic.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS

When a character makes a d20 roll and the result is a 20, they can choose to have another creature that can see or hear them gain inspiration. This might represent how the first character's success leaves an overwhelming impression on the other character, or helps the other character overcome any doubts plaguing them.

## CRITICAL FAILURE

When a character makes a d20 roll and the result is a 1, they gain inspiration as a response to a sense of urgency, or from a desperate desire to prove their worth and push themselves. A critical failure that grants inspiration can't be rerolled with any use of inspiration.

## PUSHING THE LIMIT

When a character spends their last use of a limited-use class feature, they gain inspiration. This can include such scenarios as using the last spell slot granted by the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the last ki point granted by the monk's Ki feature, a cleric's final use of Channel Divinity, and so on.

Once a character gains inspiration in this way, they can't gain do so again until they finish a long rest.

## SPENDING INSPIRATION

In the game's core rules, inspiration can be used when a character makes an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check, letting them make that d20 roll with advantage. The value of using inspiration in this way to help ensure success on a task can't be understated—but this section presents a number of even more legendary ways players can use inspiration.

As with the "Gaining Inspiration" section, these optional ways to use inspiration are available to add to your game à la carte. A little goes a long way, though, so picking one or two of your group's favorite options, or tailoring your choices to the benefit of the player characters, is recommended. Your group can decide whether these options replace the standard use of inspiration or add to it.

Spending inspiration doesn't require an action unless otherwise specified.

## DO-OVER

A character can spend inspiration after making an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw to reroll each d20 used. When they do so, they can use either the original roll or the reroll.

## KNOW SOMEONE

When a character gets stuck and is unsure of what to do next, they can spend inspiration to bring to life an entity in the world that can guide them. For example, a character newly arrived in town and unsure of where to meet their contact can spend inspiration to come across a familiar NPC the party has encountered before, or from the character's own backstory, who can assist them. Likewise, a character waking in a dark prison and

isolated from their party can spend inspiration to have a long-term prisoner in the next cell explain the guard rotation, where the keys are located, and who the character's captors are.

The player suggests who this entity is, and the GM determines what kind of help they can provide—typically just enough to get the character or the party moving again.

If your table is using the party inspiration rules (below), a character can spend additional inspiration from the pool to increase the amount of help the entity provides.

## LEGENDARY ACTION

At the end of another creature's turn, a character can spend inspiration to take one of the following actions and move up to their speed (in either order):

- Attack (one weapon attack only)
- Cast a Spell (a cantrip with a casting time of 1 action or 1 bonus action only)
- Disengage, Hide, or Use an Object
- Move up to the character's speed again

If multiple characters want to take a legendary action at the end of another creature's turn, they take their legendary actions in initiative order.

A character can spend inspiration in this way a number of times equal to half their proficiency bonus rounded down. When a character rolls initiative, they regain any expended uses of this option.

## LEGENDARY HEALING

As a bonus action, a character can spend inspiration to spend one or more Hit Dice (up to their proficiency bonus). For each Hit Die spent this way, the character rolls the die and regains hit points equal to the number rolled + their Constitution modifier.

Additionally, as an action, a character can spend inspiration and touch another creature, allowing that creature to roll one Hit Die of their own and regain a number of hit points equal to the number rolled + the creature's Constitution modifier.

## LEGENDARY RESILIENCE

When a character fails an ability check or saving throw to end an effect or condition affecting themselves, they can spend inspiration to automatically succeed.

## LEGENDARY TALENT

When a character makes an ability check using a skill they are not proficient in or a tool they are not proficient with, they can spend inspiration to add their proficiency bonus to the roll.



## PLENTIFUL POCKETS

A character can spend inspiration when reaching into a container to have one mundane item worth 25 gp or less—a length of hempen rope, a flask of holy water, and so forth—be present in the container as though it had always been there. The item must be generic, so that a character can't pull out a specific book or the exact key to open a locked door.

## RESOURCEFUL

Characters can spend their inspiration to push features they've gained from their class beyond their limits. Be aware, though, that characters of certain classes using this option will find that not all resources are created equal. If your table uses this rule, you should also have another way that characters can spend inspiration outside of these situational circumstances.

**Barbarian.** A barbarian with no uses of Rage remaining can spend inspiration to use that feature. At 20th level, they can instead spend inspiration to use Rage at any time (no action required).

**Bard.** If a bard has no uses of Bardic Inspiration remaining, they can spend inspiration to use that feature.

**Beastheart.**<sup>1</sup> If a beastheart's companion spent ferocity on their previous turn, the beastheart can spend inspiration to grant the companion 2 ferocity. At 6th level, the beastheart can also spend inspiration to use Rejuvenating Ferocity when they have no uses of that feature remaining.

**Cleric.** If a cleric has no uses of Channel Divinity remaining, they can spend inspiration to use that feature. Additionally, they can spend inspiration to cast a 1st- or 2nd-level spell from their chosen domain's spell list if they have no spell slots remaining of the spell's level.

**Druid.** If a druid has no uses of Wild Shape remaining, they can spend inspiration to use that feature. At 20th level, they can instead spend inspiration to use Wild Shape at any time (no action required).

**Fighter.** A fighter who has already used their Second Wind feature can spend inspiration to use it again.

**Illrigger.**<sup>2</sup> If an illrigger has already placed the maximum number of seals using their Baleful Interdict feature, they can spend inspiration to place a seal on a creature.

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<sup>1</sup> The beastheart class is available in [Beastheart and Monstrous Companions](#).

<sup>2</sup> The illrigger class is available in [The Illrigger](#).

**Monk.** If a monk doesn't have enough ki remaining to use a feature that would normally cost 2 or fewer ki points, they can spend inspiration to use that feature without spending ki.

**Paladin.** A paladin who has no uses of Channel Divinity remaining can spend inspiration to use that feature. Additionally, if a paladin has no hit points remaining in the pool of healing from their Lay on Hands feature, they can spend inspiration to use Lay on Hands as if they had spent a number of hit points equal to half their Paladin level.

**Ranger.** If a ranger has no spell slots remaining, they can spend inspiration to either cast a 1st-level spell they know or use Primeval Awareness as if they had expended a 1st-level spell slot.

**Rogue.** After rolling damage for their Sneak Attack feature, a rogue can spend inspiration to reroll any number of the Sneak Attack dice and use the new rolls.

**Sorcerer.** If a sorcerer has no sorcery points remaining, they can spend inspiration to use a metamagic option that costs 1 sorcery point.

**Warlock.** When a warlock has no spell slots remaining, they can spend inspiration to cast a 1st- or 2nd-level spell they know at its base level. Additionally, they can spend inspiration to use an invocation feature that has no uses remaining.

**Wizard.** A wizard can spend inspiration to cast a 1st- or 2nd-level spell they know if they have no spell slots remaining of the spell's level.

Once a character has spent inspiration to use a feature in this way, they can't spend inspiration to use that same feature again until they finish a long rest.

## WAND OF PLENTY

A character can spend inspiration to temporarily regain some of a wand or other magic item's expended charges. When they do, they roll a d3 and the item regains that many expended charges. At the end of the character's next turn, whether or not they use the item, all of its charges are expended. This counts as expending the item's last charge.

A character can use this option only on a magic item that regains charges at dawn or dusk, when its wielder finishes a long rest, or a similar daily recharge.

## PARTY INSPIRATION

Party inspiration is a pool of inspiration that can be drawn upon by any character. Whenever a feature or rule says a player can spend inspiration, they can spend it from this pool. Each character can still gain and use their own inspiration, but if they gain inspiration while they already have it, they contribute it to the party inspiration pool instead.

The maximum amount of inspiration that can be held in this pool is equal to the number of player characters in the party. Nonplayer character party members such as companions, mounts, and retainers can also contribute to or spend inspiration from the pool, but they don't count toward the maximum.

## QUICK REST

When the party inspiration pool is at maximum, the players can collectively decide to spend all the inspiration in the pool to allow their characters to take a quick rest. A quick rest is a brief respite lasting 1 minute, during which a character can do nothing more strenuous than conversing, catching their breath, or stretching. Taking a quick rest grants each character the benefit of a short rest.

A character can't benefit from more than one quick rest between short or long rests.

## INSPIRATIONAL ITEMS

Magic banners are wondrous items that utilize a character's inspiration, and which build upon the optional rules in this article to grant you more new ways of utilizing inspiration.

Each banner takes the inspiration of a single creature and expresses that inspiration in the area around them. Some banners take the standard form of a flag on a pole, perhaps displaying an emblem to rally troops, but these items aren't limited to this style. A banner could also be a ring that projects an image of light above the inspired wielder, or a helmet that generates a halo of power. No item presented in this article must take the form described, so feel free to change any item to fit a character's aesthetic or to better match the story of the object.

The following banners are presented in alphabetical order.



## ARMY STANDARD

*Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This flagpole standard bears the recognizable emblem of a standing army. While you carry the standard, other friendly creatures within 30 feet of you have a +1 bonus to attack rolls while you have inspiration. This banner can be held in your hand, affixed to a shield you are wielding, or strapped to your back, any of which count as carrying it.

If you are attuned to the standard and don't have inspiration, you gain inspiration when you roll initiative and are not surprised.

**Rallying Aura.** As a bonus action, you can spend your inspiration to end the frightened condition and the charmed condition on all friendly creatures within 30 feet of you. Once you use this property of the item, you can't use it again until the next dawn.

## BATTLE STANDARD

*Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This flagpole has a small flag bearing the emblem of a fist. The *battle standard* functions as a magic halberd. You have a bonus to damage rolls made with this weapon equal to the number of allies within 30 feet of you who have inspiration (to a maximum of +3).

**Punishing Aura.** When you hit with this weapon, one other creature within 30 feet of you who has inspiration can spend that inspiration to have the weapon deal an extra 2d8 force damage.

## ELEMENTAL WARDING BAND

*Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This ring bears a gem that shifts hue to match the environment, turning blue when sailing over open ocean, dark green while deep in a jungle, and so forth. While wearing the *elemental warding band*, you have resistance to one damage type of your choice: acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder. You choose this damage type when you attune to the ring, and can spend your inspiration to choose another damage type.

**Warding Aura.** As an action, you can spend your inspiration to create a shimmering barrier in a 10-foot radius around you, which moves with you and remains centered on you. You must concentrate to maintain this aura, as if concentrating on a spell. Creatures and objects in the aura have immunity to damage of the type this ring grants you resistance to. Spells and projectiles that deal the specified type of damage can't pass through the shimmering barrier. This effect lasts for 1 minute, or you can end it early (no action required). Once you use this property of the item, you can't use it again until the next dawn.

## GOD BONE

*Wondrous Item, Legendary (Requires Attunement)*

This oversized finger bone is said to have been harvested from the body of a dead god, and is regarded with wonder and fear across numerous realms. While attuned to this banner, you have a +3 bonus to saving throws. If you have inspiration, you also confer this bonus to allies within 30 feet of you that can see you.

Additionally, the first time you succeed on a saving throw each round, you can choose one of the following effects:

**Forgiveness.** If an ally's actions forced you to make the saving throw, you grant that ally temporary hit points equal to your level.

**Strike Awe.** If you were forced to make the saving throw by a Construct, Dragon, Giant, Humanoid, or Monstrosity you can see within 120 feet of you, you can force that creature to make a DC 19 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the target is stunned for 1 minute. A stunned target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on themselves on a success.

**Turn Interloper.** If you were forced to make the saving throw by an Aberration, Celestial, Elemental, Fey, Fiend, or Undead you can see within 120 feet of you, you can force that creature to make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target is turned for 1 minute or until they take any damage. A turned creature must spend their turns trying to move as far away from you as they can, and they can't willingly move within 30 feet of you. They also can't take reactions. For their action, the turned creature can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents them from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

You can use each of these effects once, and can't do so again until the next dawn. If you have no uses of an effect remaining, you can spend inspiration to use that effect.

## MEDIC'S FLAG

*Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This flag bears the symbol of a guild of healers. While holding the flag, when you see an ally take damage, you can use your reaction to reduce that damage by 1d10 + your proficiency bonus.

**Healing Aura.** As an action, you can spend your inspiration to create a healing aura around you. Each ally within 10 feet of you regains 5 hit points at the start of each of their turns. This effect lasts for 1 minute, and ends early if you are unconscious. If the flag leaves your possession, the effect is suppressed but the duration continues until the flag is in your possession again.

## UNIFYING MIND HELMET

*Wondrous Item, Very Rare (Requires Attunement)*

This smooth metal helmet has a multifaceted ruby set in the forehead. The helmet has 6 charges for the following properties, which you can use while you are wearing the helmet. The helmet regains 1d4 + 2 expended charges daily at dawn.

**Telepathy.** As a bonus action, you can create a telepathic link between you and a number of creatures of your choice that you can see by expending one charge for each other creature. For the next minute, you and each of the chosen creatures can communicate telepathically with one another. If any linked creature becomes incapacitated, you must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the link is broken for all creatures, and you take 2d6 psychic damage.

**Inspiring Aura.** As a bonus action, you can spend 3 charges to create an inspiring aura around you, which lasts until the start of your next turn. Allies other than you who are within 15 feet of you, or who are linked to you with the Telepathy property of the helmet, start their next turn with inspiration if they didn't already have it. Inspiration gained this way is lost when the aura ends.

# MALEVOLENT FORCES

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING STRANGE AND TERRIFYING TO PIT AGAINST YOUR PLAYERS?

by Sam Mannell

**Content Warning:** This article contains a creature who buries its victims alive and an insectoid creature who devours live victims. We suggest using the [MCDM Tabletop Safety Toolkit and Checklist](#) and adjusting as needed to ensure everyone has a good time.

Sam here, back from another trip down into the stat block mines. This time I emerge bearing weird and wonderful monsters, designed with the hope that they'll be unlike anything your players have ever faced before!

But originality is a funny thing, isn't it? These creatures might seem solely like the product of my frenzied scribbling, but they are not—they're inspired by things from all over the place! You may recognize a glimmer of something you've seen before, but hopefully I've covered my tracks well enough that they still hit the table like a ton of bricks.

And of course, you have my permission to pass them off to your players as your own. Game recognize game.

## CONTENTS

As always, you can click through directly to the stat block you want to use on the table to the right. They appear in the article alphabetically, but they're arranged here by challenge rating and include the role for ease of use. You can learn more about creature roles in the free preview packet for [Flee, Mortals! The MCDM Monster Book](#).

MONSTER	CR	ROLE
Skull Hound	CR 3	Skirmisher
Vespergriff	CR 4	Controller
Vespergriff Companion	CR 4	Companion
Gravedigger	CR 5	Soldier
X'ek Drone	CR 6	Skirmisher
Shard	CR 7	Ambusher
Coldshell	CR 8	Brute
X'ek Queen	CR 8	Leader
Dreameater	CR 11	Solo

# COLDSHELL

Soft chittering echoes off freezing rock. Damp light flutters against the dark. The coldshell plods after its prey. The monster doesn't care that you know it's coming. Run all you like.

The coldshell breeds as far away from sunlight as possible, most commonly in deep caves or

unfathomable seafloor ravines. The creature looks crustacean from a distance, but it's more like a mollusk, clad in a suit of armor made of shells. The fleshy, tentacled body glows from beneath the thick carapace it cultivates for protection, eyestalks retracting during combat. Even the creature's limbs are caged in sleeves of interlocking chitin, leaving only the underbelly vulnerable—but getting close enough to stab it is risky business.

## COLDSHELL CR 8 BRUTE (3,900 XP)

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 22 (natural armor), 14 while prone

**Hit Points** 190 (20d10 + 80)

**Speed** 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (-1)	19 (+4)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	4 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Str +8, Con +7

**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +5

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Damage Resistances** acid, poison

**Damage Immunities** cold

**Condition Immunities** frightened, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** —

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Amphibious.** The coldshell can breathe air and water.

**Bioluminescent.** The coldshell's flesh sheds dim light in a 30-foot radius.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, the coldshell has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Weak Spot.** The coldshell has a weak point in their armor that can only be targeted up close. Creatures who are within 5 feet of the coldshell roll to hit against the coldshell's prone AC.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The coldshell makes three attacks using Crushing Embrace, Tentacles, or a combination of them. They can replace one attack with a use of Devour.

**Crushing Embrace.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Large or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 15). The coldshell can grapple only one creature at a time.

**Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Large or smaller creature, they are pulled up to 15 feet toward the coldshell.

**Devour.** The creature grappled by Crushing Embrace takes 27 (4d10 + 5) piercing damage.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Freezing Spit.** The coldshell targets one creature they can see within 60 feet of them. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) cold damage and have their speed halved until the start of the coldshell's next turn.

## DREAMEATER

Only the fey could create such a thing.

By dissecting how the imagination can turn against itself, the star elves created a waking nightmare to haunt and kill enemies of the court. No one is sure if there is one [dreameater](#) or many. Scattered lore implies the creature hunts by following the scent of dreams themselves, and the only way to escape is to avoid sleep at all costs. Those who do sleep while hunted by the fell thing rest fitfully, beset by terrible visions of a creeping shadow following them, always just out of sight, relentless.

There are few eyewitness accounts of the dreameater, given that the creature permanently emanates a shroud of velvety darkness. Those who are unlucky enough to have beheld it speak of two large, bulbous eyes, a butterfly-like proboscis, tattered and useless wings on a giant arachnid body, and a mass of spindly limbs tipped with human hands.



# DREAMEATER CR 11 SOLO (7,200 XP)

Large Fey (NIGHTMARE), Neutral EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL EVIL

**Armor Class** 15

**Hit Points** 195 (23d10 + 69)

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +9, Con +7, Int +8

**Skills** Acrobatics +9, Perception +8, Stealth +13

**Damage Resistances** psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 18

**Languages** all but speaks only in unintelligible whispering, telepathy 60 ft.

**Proficiency Bonus** +4

**Mindthirst.** If the dreameater knows the name and appearance of another creature, they are aware of when that creature takes a short or long rest and the direction to that creature while they are resting.

**Nightmarish Nature.** The dreameater doesn't require air, food, or sleep.

**Shadowshroud.** Magical darkness emanates from the dreameater, filling a 20-foot-radius sphere that moves with them and disappears when they die. The darkness spreads around corners. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and nonmagical light can't illuminate it. If any of the dreameater's darkness overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell that created the light is dispelled. When the dreameater takes damage, the darkness created by this trait becomes an area of dim light until the end of their next turn.

**Spider Climb.** The dreameater can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Supernatural Resistance.** The dreameater has advantage on saving throws against spells, powers, and other supernatural effects.<sup>1</sup>

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The dreameater makes two Strangle attacks and one Proboscis attack.

**Strangle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (1d10) psychic damage.

**Proboscis.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The dreameater regains a number of hit points equal to half the amount of psychic damage dealt.

## BONUS ACTIONS

**Disquieting Murmurs.** Each creature within 60 feet of the dreameater must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or take 7 (2d6) psychic damage. If this deals damage to a creature concentrating on a power, spell, or other feature, that creature has disadvantage on the saving throw they make to maintain their concentration.

## VILLAIN ACTIONS

The dreameater has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy creature's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can only use one per round.

**Action 1: Always Hungry.** The dreameater's proboscis supernaturally extends to reach out of the dark. One Large or smaller creature the dreameater can see within 60 feet of them must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 60 feet directly toward the dreameater.

**Action 2: Thimbleric.** The dreameater teleports to an unoccupied space they can see within 40 feet of them and takes the Hide action. Immediately after, two 20-foot-radius spheres of magical darkness appear, centered on two different points the dreameater can see within 40 feet of them. This darkness lasts 10 minutes and spreads around corners. A creature with darkvision can't see through this darkness, and nonmagical light can't illuminate it. If any of this darkness's area overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 4th level or lower, the spell that created the light is dispelled.

**Action 3: Gathering Gloom.** Each area of magical darkness within 300 feet of the dreameater increases in size by 10 feet. Each creature in an area of magical darkness after it increases must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one, as the shadows gnaw at creatures caught within.

<sup>1</sup> "Supernatural" is a new game term in the upcoming *The Talent and Psionics* and *Flee, Mortals!* that describes an effect or item that is either magical or psionic. In this case, it means that the dreameater has advantage on saving throws against spells, psionic powers, effects caused by magic or psionic weapons, and so forth.

# GRAVEDIGGERS

At first glance it's easy to mistake the gravediggers for Undead—reanimated knights clad from head to toe in grimy plate armor, walking with a strange staccato twitch, regurgitated by a graveyard that could no longer stomach them.

Few learn the truth. The gravediggers are actually a complex fungus that grows loamy, clay-like bodies, directing them to capture other creatures and feed them to the earth. Rather than lurking in existing tombs or

mausoleums, the gravediggers build their own. They fall upon a town in the dead of night and, by sunrise, leave behind an expansive cemetery of fresh graves, newly filled. Gravediggers are more than capable of killing, but they have a clear preference for burying their victims alive.

When a gravedigger is killed, it turns into a mass of loose mold and dirt, leaving behind its armor, which is produced by the fungus as a thick keratin. Wearing the armor is known to fool other gravediggers into thinking that you're one of them. Some say if you wear it longer than a few days, you won't be pretending anymore.

## GRAVEDIGGER CR 5 SOLDIER (1,800 XP)

Medium Plant, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 93 (11d8 + 44)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Con +7

**Skills** Athletics +6, Perception +6

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** understands Sylvan but can't speak

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Unusual Nature.** The gravedigger doesn't require air or sleep.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The gravedigger makes three attacks using Hook and Chain, Keratin Sword, or a combination of them. They can replace one attack with a use of Command Earth.

**Hook and Chain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and if the target is a Medium or smaller creature, they are grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the gravedigger can't use their hook and chain on another target.

**Keratin Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

**Command Earth.** The gravedigger extends their fungal network into a patch of earth that they are touching, commanding it to move in one of the following ways:

- A 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-deep pit appears within 5 feet of the gravedigger.
- A pit within 5 feet of the gravedigger that is no larger than 5 feet wide and 10 feet deep becomes loose earth. Each creature in the pit when it closes is buried and begins to suffocate. A creature can use their action to dig free by succeeding on a DC 15 Strength check.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Reel.** The gravedigger pulls the creature grappled by Hook and Chain up to 15 feet toward itself.

### REACTIONS

**Sleep Spores (3/Day).** When the gravedigger takes damage, they release a cloud of spores in a 15-foot-radius sphere centered on themselves. The radius of this sphere doubles to 30 feet when the gravedigger has 46 hit points or fewer. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall asleep and remain unconscious for 1 minute. Creatures that don't need to breathe automatically succeed on this saving throw. A sleeping creature awakens if they take damage or another creature uses an action to wake them.

# SHARDS

Attempting to reason with the shards is inadvisable. While clearly intelligent, these crystalline constructs show interest in only cold, mechanical murder, seemingly intent on the vivisection of living things, as though gathering data. They also display a strong drive for self-preservation and vanish rather than take heavy losses.

The diamond-like material they consist of is unlike anything in the mundane world, leading sages to believe they originate from some other dimension. No one knows exactly who or what made them, but evidence suggests the shards have long outlived their

architects—or at least have been forgotten by them. Adrift without direction, the shards search for a way to create more of themselves.

Shards are resistant to many forms of damage, but surprisingly brittle against blunt trauma. They use their own sharpened limbs as glittering, needle-keen lances. Moreover, their crystalline forms are utterly transparent, rendering the shards invisible unless splashed with dye or paint. Or blood.

Perhaps their strangest trait is their ability to pierce spacetime. Like a sliver of glass perforating an intestine, they bisect the planes as naturally as breathing, stepping out of a pocket manifold in an instant to surround their victims.

## SHARD CR 7 AMBUSER (2,900 XP)

Medium Construct, Lawful Evil

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 81 (18d8)

**Speed** 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Str +7, Dex +7, Int +7

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +10

**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning, force, thunder

**Damage Resistances** fire, piercing, psychic, slashing

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Constructed Nature.** The shard doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

**Immutable Form.** The shard is immune to any spell or effect that would alter their form.

**Magic Weapons.** The shard's weapon attacks are magical.

**Translucent.** The shard is invisible unless covered by a visible material (such as paint or fabric), or after being splattered by blood when they score a critical hit against a creature who isn't a Construct or Undead or reduce such a creature to 0 hit points. The shard can't clean themselves or remove materials covering them.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The shard makes four Sharpened Arm attacks.

**Sharpened Arm.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. The first time on a turn the shard hits a creature when they have advantage on the attack roll or the target is within 5 feet of one of the shard's allies, the attack deals an extra 17 (5d6) piercing damage.

**Pocket Manifold (2/Day).** The shard disappears from view, storing themselves in a pocket manifold that exists only while it contains them. While in the pocket manifold, the shard can't attack or move, but they can see as if occupying the space they vanished from. They can leave the pocket manifold as a bonus action, reappearing in the space they vanished from or in the nearest unoccupied space if that space is occupied.

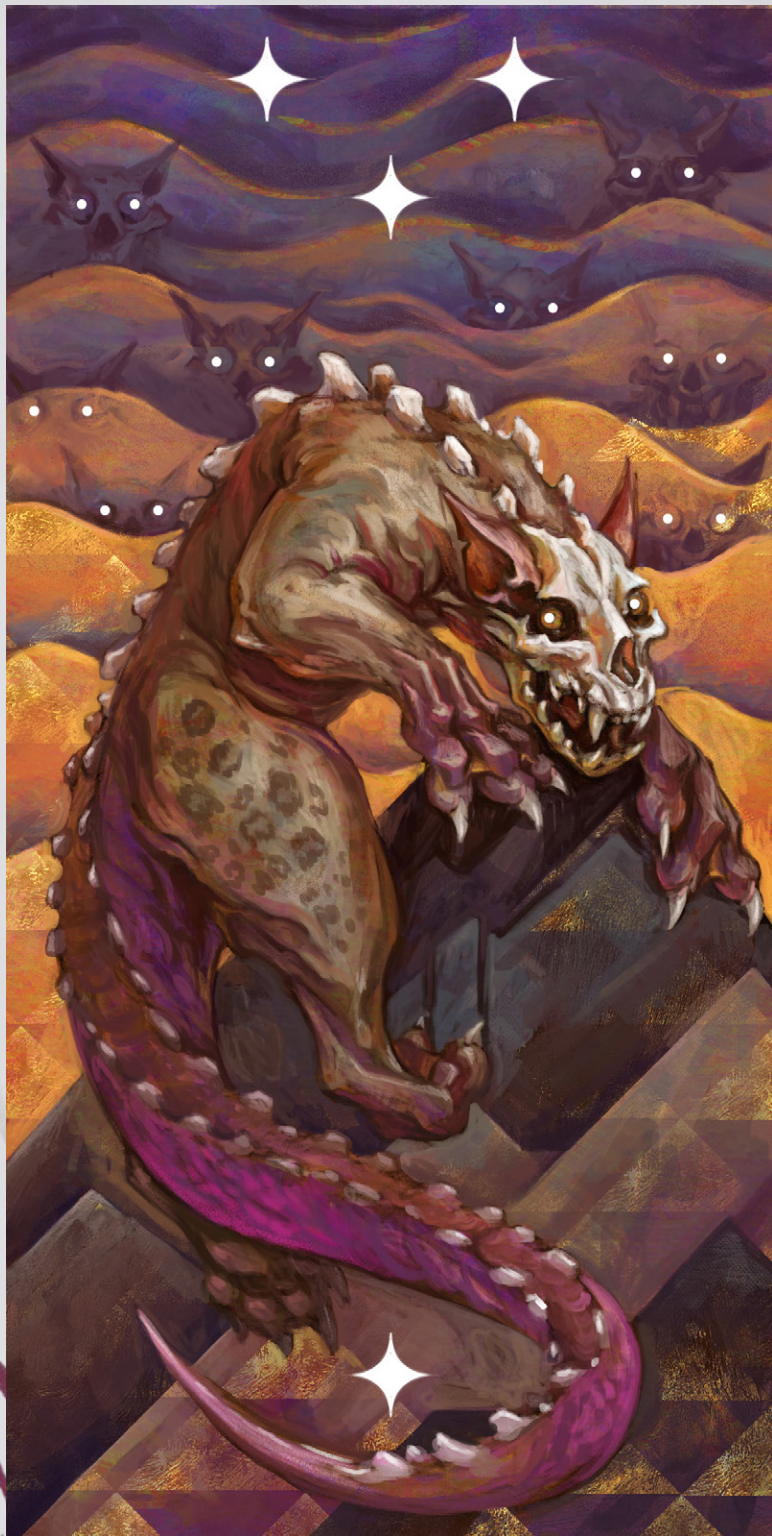
**Shift (2/Day).** The shard teleports themselves to another plane of existence. They can either appear in an exact location they have been before, or a general location they are aware of.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Splice.** The shard teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see, and then can take the Hide action.

### REACTIONS

**Split.** When the shard takes damage, they teleport 30 feet to an unoccupied space they can see.



## SKULL HOUND

Skull hounds are named for their grim, skeletal countenance and canine bodies, but they possess reptilian traits, too. They have adapted to extreme climates at either end of the spectrum, hunting in either freezing snow or baking sand with coloration differences helping them blend in. They camouflage themselves beneath a thin layer of loose ground, telepathically bait their prey into position, then strike like lightning to take down their mark. Each hound in the pack hides in a different location—each one a living land mine ready to cut off any escape from the ambush.

As psionic creatures, skull hounds lure their prey by projecting disembodied voices, often of lost loved ones calling for help. When caught in open combat, they can also use psionic illusion to distract and confuse the enemy.

Remarkably, they can be bargained with. Each pack shares a decentralized mind, and as long as the pack survives, the packmind is functionally immortal. Some are very old indeed. The packmind speaks in unison when bargaining, using plural terms like “we” and “us” to refer to itself. Typically, a pack of skull hounds wants food, but survival is their number one goal—they may instead ask a party of heroes to eliminate another nearby threat for them.

# SKULL HOUND CR 3 SKIRMISHER (700 XP)

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 49 (9d8 + 9)

**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6, Int +4

**Skills** Perception +5, Stealth +8

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common plus two other languages, telepathy 60 ft.

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Packmind.** The hound has advantage on attack rolls while another member of their pack can see them. If the hound takes psychic damage, this trait is disrupted until the end of their next turn.

**Psionic Mimicry.** The hound can unerringly replicate the voice of another creature, and can glean voices from the memories of other creatures who they can see.

**Telepath-Ventriloquist.** The hound can psionically cause their voice to originate from a point within 60 feet of them.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The hound makes two Bite attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, they can make one additional Bite attack against that target.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

**Camouflage.** The hound buries itself under a thin layer of snow or sand, taking the Hide action and making the Dexterity (Stealth) check with advantage. The hound is revealed if they move or attack.

## REACTIONS

**Psionic Mirage.** When a creature makes an opportunity attack against the hound, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw or the attack misses.

## VESPERGRIFF

Once native to the Sea of Stars, but now bred as beasts of prestige in cities beyond the Mundane World, the vespergriff is a batlike creature with huge leathery wings, a long snout, tapered ears, and the hindquarters of a jaguar.

Vespergriffs have exceptionally sharp vision and can see through illusions. Their large eyes flash constantly, rapidly cycling through pale cyan, magenta, and yellow—many creatures find this unusual display entrancing.

But vespergriffs are most prized by their owners for their intrinsic ability to sense danger, even if they can't see it. Thanks to this uncanny warning system and their other natural defenses, they make great security. No self-respecting palace should be without one.

## MYSTIC CONNECTION:

### VESPERGRIFF

If you're playing a beastheart and have a vespergriff companion, you gain the following benefit at 9th level when you gain the beastheart's Mystic Connection feature:

**Limited Prescience.** You gain a psionic sense that warns you of danger. You have advantage on initiative rolls, and you can't be surprised while you aren't incapacitated.

## PSIONIC POWERS

The upcoming *The Talent and Psionics* and *Flee, Mortals! The MCDM Monster Book* introduce psionic powers.

A power is a specific psionic effect created by energy drawn out of the manifester's body. Every power has an order, from 1st to 6th, that gives you an idea of its effectiveness compared to other powers. The higher the order, the stronger the power.

Powers aren't magical. Effects and spells that affect or interact with magic, including *counterspell* and *antimagic field*, have no effect on psionic powers. Unlike spells, powers have no components.

If you have a talent in your game, they can learn the Mind-Piercing Scream power using the rules in *Talent and Psionics*. Its description is included at the end of the article.

# VESPERGRIFF CR 4 CONTROLLER (1,100 XP)

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 110 (17d10 + 17)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +7

**Senses** truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 17

**Languages** understands Common but doesn't speak it

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Bewildering Gaze.** When a creature who can see the vespergriff's eyes starts their turn within 30 feet of the vespergriff, the vespergriff can psionically force the creature to make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw if the vespergriff isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. On a failure, the creature becomes charmed by the vespergriff until the start of the vespergriff's next turn. While charmed in this way, the creature has a speed of 0 feet. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to any vespergriff's Bewildering Gaze for the next 24 hours.

**Keen Sight.** The vespergriff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Warning.** The vespergriff knows the location of each creature within 60 feet of them, even if the creature is invisible or hidden. When the vespergriff senses a creature with this trait, they know if that creature is hostile, neutral, or friendly toward them.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The vespergriff makes two Claw attacks.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

**Mind-Piercing Scream (1/Day; 3rd-Order Power).** The vespergriff unleashes a scream imbued with psionic energy in a 30-foot cone. Creatures in that area must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 16 (3d10) psychic damage and can't take reactions until the start of the vespergriff's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and can use reactions normally.

# VESPERGRIFF COMPANION COMPANION

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 12 plus PB

**Hit Points** 6 + six times caregiver's level (number of d8 Hit Dice equal to their caregiver's level)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 10 × PB

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

**Saves** Str +3 plus PB

**Skills** Perception +2 plus PB

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12 plus PB

**Languages** —

**Proficiency Bonus (PB)** equals the caregiver's proficiency bonus

**Keen Sight.** The vespergriff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Learning to Fly.** The vespergriff has a flying speed of 10 × PB feet.

## ACTIONS

**Signature Attack (Claws).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 plus PB to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6 plus PB slashing damage.

**1st Level: Overwhelming Attack (2 Ferocity).** The vespergriff makes a signature attack. On a hit, the attack deals an extra PB damage, and the target can't take reactions until the start of the vespergriff's next turn.

**3rd Level: Mind-Piercing Cry (5 Ferocity).** The vespergriff targets one creature within 30 feet of them. The target takes PBd4 psychic damage and has disadvantage on attack rolls until the start of the vespergriff's next turn.

**5th Level: Hypnotic Gaze (8 Ferocity).** One creature within 10 feet of the vespergriff who can see the vespergriff's eyes must succeed on a DC 10 plus PB Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the vespergriff until the start of the vespergriff's next turn. While charmed in this way, the target has a speed of 0 feet.

## BONUS ACTIONS

**Psychic Ping (2/Long Rest).** The vespergriff sends out a wave of psionic energy, becoming aware of each creature within 60 feet of them, even if the creature is invisible or hidden, and revealing the locations of such creatures to their caregiver.

## X'EK

Seasoned travelers of the Timescape know well that when the cloying smells of cinnamon and burnt tree sap waft across your camp, it's time to move. The telltale scent of x'ek pheromones means they're close and they're coordinating. Leave everything. Just run.

The x'ek (pronounced ZECK) are a species of human-size insectoids. They mercilessly descend on a target from above and sting until their prey is sapped of strength, then transport victims back to the hive to be devoured alive.

They are easily identified by the pungent scent of the pheromones they use to communicate, but only other x'ek can decipher what the olfactory cocktail means. These pheromones can communicate complex ideas as easily as any spoken language, and in high concentrations, they can disorient other creatures.

X'ek hives are best avoided, but this wisdom often goes unheeded. The x'ek's bodies are coated in tessellating, scale-like gemstones, each one a fist-sized fortune. They shed these gemstones as they grow new ones, and piles of gem-scales build up in their nests, making them attractive targets for looting.

Any survivor of such an excursion will quickly tell you it's not worth all the money in the world. X'ek larvae grow inside eggs of an amber-like substance, shaped almost identically like their gem-scales. More than a few adventurers have returned with a haul of precious stones, only to find that a few of them are starting to hatch....



# X'EK DRONE CR 6 SKIRMISHER (2,300 XP)

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 16 (see Ablative Armor)

**Hit Points** 99 (18d8 + 18)

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Wis +5

**Skills** Perception +5

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** X'ek pheromones

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Ablative Armor.** The drone's AC is 16. The first time the drone is hit by a critical hit, the hit becomes a normal hit, and for the next 7 days, their AC is reduced to 14 and this trait doesn't function.

**Erratic Flight.** While flying, the drone has advantage on Dexterity saving throws, and creatures have disadvantage on attack rolls against them.

**Tarsal Claws.** The drone can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The drone makes two Bite attacks and one Enervating Sting attack.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Enervating Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or have their speed reduced by a cumulative 10 feet for 1 hour.

## BONUS ACTIONS

**Sudden Escape.** The drone takes the Disengage action.



# X'EK QUEEN CR 8 LEADER (3,900 XP)

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

**Armor Class** 16 (see Ablative Armor)

**Hit Points** 180 (24d10 + 48)

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)

**Saving Throws** Str +6, Wis +7

**Skills** Insight +7, Perception +7

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** X'ek pheromones

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Ablative Armor.** The queen's AC is 16. The first time the queen is hit by a critical hit, the hit becomes a normal hit, and for the next 3 days, their AC is reduced to 14 and this trait doesn't function.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The queen makes two Claw attacks.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage.

**Viscid Spit.** The queen chooses a point they can see within 60 feet of them. Each creature within 20 feet of that point must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have their speed halved until the start of the queen's next turn.

**Feed.** The queen feeds on one willing or prone creature within 5 feet of them, dealing 21 (4d8 + 3) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, they die and the queen regains a number of hit points equal to the piercing damage dealt.

## REACTIONS

**Emergency Orders.** When the queen takes damage, each x'ek drone within 60 feet of the queen can move up to their speed or make one attack.

## VILLAIN ACTIONS

The queen has three villain actions. They can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy creature's turn. They can take these actions in any order but can only use one per round.

**Action 1: Noxious Swarm.** Each x'ek within 60 feet of the queen can move up to their speed, creating a surge of pheromones in the air. Each creature within 60 feet of the queen must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become dazed until the end of their next turn. X'ek and creatures who don't need to breathe automatically succeed on this saving throw. While dazed, a creature can only do one of the following things on their turn: move, use an action, or use a bonus action.

**Action 2: Imperious Pheromone.** Each creature of the queen's choice within 60 feet of them must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed by the queen for 10 minutes. Creatures that don't need to breathe automatically succeed on this saving throw. A charmed creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of their turns, ending the effect on themselves on a success. While charmed in this way, a creature can understand the x'ek pheromone language.

**Action 3: Amber Glob.** The queen spits a glob of sticky amber-like saliva at a point within 60 feet of them, and a 30-foot-radius area centered on that point becomes difficult terrain. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone and restrained. A restrained creature can use their action to make a DC 15 Strength check, freeing themselves on a success. Another creature can use their action to free a restrained creature.

## NEW PSIONIC POWER

A talent can learn the following power from a vespergriff using the rules in the upcoming [The Talent and Psionics](#).

### MIND-PIERCING SCREAM

*3rd-Order Resopathy Power*

**Manifestation Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (30-foot cone)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You unleash a piercing scream imbued with psionic energy in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 4d10 psychic damage and can't take reactions until the start of your next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and can use reactions normally.

**Increased Order.** When you manifest this power, you can increase its order by 1 or more. The damage increases by 2d10 for each increase of 1.

# QUICK, TAKE MY SPELLSLED!

RADICAL ARCANA IN THE STREETS OF SILVERSIDE

by Imogen Gingell

**Content Warning: This article contains a scene where a teenage boy is physically threatened.**

THESE DELINQUENTS ARE A BLIGHT ON THE SACRED STUDY OF ARCANA! IF I HAD MY WAY, I'D BAN THEIR PRECIOUS "SPELLSLEDS" AND EXILE THE LOT OF THEM!

—ZARELLON, PROFESSOR OF ABJURATION

This one-shot adventure, designed for 2nd- to 4th-level characters, is a chance to have fun with a nontraditional fantasy aesthetic, showcase a new magic item, and take on some bullies in a thrilling street race. It takes place in the city of SilverSide, a new location that can stand on its own for this adventure, fit in a setting with a similar aesthetic, or be expanded further as a delightfully strange place in a traditional fantasy world.

## CRAZE ARCANA

Several years ago, within the ivory towers of Universitas Arcanum, a researcher of the arts of transmutation and artifice devised a convenient spell to permanently enchant a small platform to levitate. As the story goes, Professor Iris Mistral intended to use her "spellsled" to move books, potions, and her coffee pot around campus without having to lift a finger. One fateful afternoon, Iris's teenage daughter Epiphany stole the *spellsled* and embarked on a joyride through the university's ancient halls and carefully manicured gardens. Eyewitnesses reported Epiphany's misadventure to be "rad," "totally cool," and "worth the spell slots I had to spend to cure all those wounds." From that moment on, the *spellsled's* legacy was sealed in the hearts and minds of misfits and delinquents across the land.

*Spellsleds* are now a common sight in Universitas Arcanum and the surrounding city of SilverSide, despite attempts by members of the faculty to ban them outright.

The original *spellsled*, perhaps unfairly known as *Epiphany's Spellsled* for its transgressive first rider rather than its creator, is enshrined above the lounge of the UA junior common room. As the *spellsled* phenomenon spread beyond the university campus itself, sledders frequently boast of one day liberating *Epiphany's Spellsled*



from the university to find a home for it in Silverside as an icon of counterculture. To date, no sledder has bested the university's wards.

A traveler lucky enough to win the trust of the sledders might find themselves in possession of a rare treasure, and an entrepreneurial adventurer might be able to negotiate an auspicious distribution deal. Of course, every would-be merchant or artificer needs to know their goods—and that's where the race comes in.

## SPELLSLED

*Wondrous Item, Uncommon*

A *spellsled* is a 4-foot-long, 1-foot-wide board made from enchanted wood or metal weighing up to 10 pounds, decorated with unique arcane glyphs on its underside. When you use a bonus action to speak the *spellsled's* command word, the *spellsled* levitates 1 foot off the ground and remains suspended until you speak the command word again. The *spellsled* can carry one Medium or smaller creature and any objects worn or carried by them. It can levitate over a liquid surface but it can't travel up a surface with a gradient greater than 60 degrees or cross a gap larger than 5 feet wide. While mounted on the *spellsled*, you can use its magic to propel you. Your speed while mounted is 30 feet, and difficult terrain doesn't cost you extra movement. If the *spellsled* falls more than 10 feet, creatures and objects on it take falling damage as normal.

When you make a Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check while mounted on a *spellsled*, if you are proficient with land vehicles, you can add your proficiency bonus to the roll even if you aren't proficient in Athletics or Acrobatics.

## ACQUIRING A SPELLSLED

At the GM's discretion, a character who can create or replicate magic items can learn to make a *spellsled* by studying the unique techniques of Silverside's arcanists. In addition, arcane crafters based in Silverside are willing to make *spellsleds* for only 300 gp (or 350 gp for a custom decal). The recipe for creating *spellsleds* has not yet made it out of Silverside, and the faculty members of Universitas Arcanum are keen to keep it that way.

## SLEDDER GANGS

Silverside's sledder gangs are either the city's scourge or its saviors, depending on who you ask. Most sledders roaming the streets are enthusiastic hobbyists, thrill seekers, or excitable artificers, but others use *spellsleds* to support more violent activities. More virtuous sledder gangs are willing to risk the ire of Universitas authorities to seek the wonders the wizards have squirreled away in their towers and distribute their secrets among the populace.

In the years since the *spellsled's* invention, the sledder gangs have made Silverside a monument to their new

sport. Many streets double as racing circuits, and spectacular competitions between (or within) sledder gangs spring up out of the slightest disagreement. The influence of Universitas Arcanum is felt strongly in the races, too. Entrepreneurial students, university dropouts, and talented commoners keep the circuits well maintained with magical signs, obstacles, and even specialized *glyphs of warding*, all adding an extra level of excitement (and danger).

One of the most notorious sledder gangs in Silverside calls themselves the Cantrips. Under the leadership of a callous young elf named Color Spray, the Cantrips have harassed and bullied their way through scores of rival sledders to name themselves champions of their territory. Unlike many other antiestablishment sledder gangs, the Cantrips have few allies among Silverside locals after turning to muggings and race-rigging rather than honoring the spirit of spellsledding.



## COLOR SPRAY, SLEDDER BOSS CR 3 LEADER (700 XP)

Medium Humanoid (Elf), Chaotic Neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather jacket)

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +3, Cha +5

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Arcana +2, Athletics +4, Intimidation +5

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Elvish, Undercommon

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Expert Spellsledder.** Color Spray carries a *spellsled*. While mounted on it, she levitates 1 foot off the ground and her speed is not reduced by difficult terrain.

**Fey Ancestry.** Color Spray has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

### ACTIONS

**Sled Spikes.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Chromatic Blast.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) force damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be blinded until the end of their next turn.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Sledder Slide (2/Day).** Color Spray takes the Disengage action.

### REACTIONS

**Sabotage.** When a creature Color Spray can see enters a space within 5 feet of her (or within the same race segment; see "Tracking Race Positions" later in the article), she makes a Sled Spikes attack. If the attack hits, the creature is knocked prone.

### VILLAIN ACTIONS

Color Spray has three villain actions. She can take each action once during an encounter after an enemy creature's turn. She can take these actions in any order but can only use one per round.

**Action 1: Cheater's Start.** Each creature of Color Spray's choice within 60 feet of her who can hear her can attempt to grapple another creature within their reach (no action required).

**Action 2: Light 'Em Up!** Each creature of Color Spray's choice within 60 feet of her who can hear her can make a melee attack against another creature within their reach (no action required).

**Action 3: Rallying Taunts.** Color Spray chooses any number of creatures within 90 feet of her who can hear her. Each chosen creature can make an opposed Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check against one enemy they can see and who can see them. If one of Color Spray's chosen creatures wins their opposed check, they gain advantage on ability checks and saving throws until the end of their next turn. A creature who loses their opposed check is frightened of Color Spray until the end of their next turn.

## SPELLSLEDDER CR 1/4 SKIRMISHER (50 XP)

Medium Humanoid, Any Alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (leather)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Intimidation +3

**Senses** passive Perception 9

**Languages** Common

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Spellsledder.** The spellsledder carries a *spellsled*. While mounted on it, they levitate 1 foot off the ground and their speed is not reduced by difficult terrain.

### ACTIONS

**Shocking Grasp (Cantrip).** *Melee Spell Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) lightning damage, and the target can't take reactions until the start of their next turn.

### BONUS ACTIONS

**Sledder Slide (1/Day).** The spellsledder takes the Disengage action.

### REACTIONS

**The Boss Always Wins.** When a creature the spellsledder can see within 60 feet of them is reduced to 0 hit points, they can move up to twice their speed toward that creature. If the spellsledder ends their turn next to that creature, the creature regains 10 hit points, and the spellsledder is reduced to 0 hit points.

## SILVERSIDE RACERS

The adventure takes place at dusk, and begins shortly after the characters arrive in Silverside. Read or paraphrase the following:

The streets of Silverside are densely packed with crowds and vendors packing up for the evening. Magical signs illuminate the town with a colorful glow, and even in the growing night, the distant towers of the university are visible peeking above the tops of the buildings.

Shouts from a branching alleyway catch your attention. "Give it up, kid. You and your Featherheads owe us."

A young elf woman dressed in black leather, her hair dyed in prismatic shades, looms over a scrawny teenage boy. Her half-dozen lackeys step in to surround him. Everyone in the alley clutches boards decorated with eclectic paintings and stickers.

"There's no one left to help you, Sparrow," the woman says, gripping his shirt and pressing him against the alley wall. "Meet us on the track or—"

The boy's eyes dart nervously around the alley, snap to you, and widen at the sight of your gear. His expression turns from panic to pleading. "They will! They'll race you for us. And they'll win."

"Quick," he says, holding out his board to you. It thrums with arcane energy. "Take my *spellsled*!"

Sparrow is a young, human Silverside native and ardent spellsledder who has been accosted by Color Spray and her sledder gang, the Cantrips. Sparrow leads a small crew of aspirant sledders, the Featherheads, who have bitten off more than they can chew. The Featherheads are no match for Color Spray, but Sparrow is willing to bet everything on a kind stranger ... or at least one with an appetite for a thrill.

If the party agrees to represent them in a race, Sparrow gladly offers up the Featherheads' *spellsleds* for the characters to borrow. He leads the characters to the starting line, where the other Featherheads have already gathered. On the way, Sparrow can explain the following:

- The Featherheads owed the Cantrips money after betting on sled races—but when they couldn't come up with the money in time, the Cantrips decided to humiliate them on the racetrack instead.
- The race isn't confined to a pre-built track; it takes place through the streets of Silverside.

- Sledders race dirty, using any means to come out on top—the player characters should, too. However, a character reduced to 0 hit points is knocked unconscious and stable, even if dealt damage by a ranged attack or spell. Sledders are prepared for a rough ride, but outright killing a racer will have dire ramifications.
- Silverside mages have cast magical glyphs throughout the circuit. Some are helpful, and some are harmful.
- The sled race winner can claim a *spellsled* from the losing team.

## RACE OF A LIFETIME

Once Sparrow has brought the characters to the starting line and the Featherheads' *spellsleds* have been distributed, read or paraphrase the following:

With a buzz of anticipation, crowds of onlookers start to gather in the streets. You are hustled along to an open plaza where a makeshift banner is strung between two crumbling statues of long-forgotten wizards. Grinning in anticipation, Sparrow steps up to offer some last pointers.

"The race starts at and ends at this banner. Follow the painted green arrows—they mark the circuit. Good luck!"

As your competitors array themselves at the starting line, Color Spray and the Cantrips shoot you a sneer and a rude gesture.

When the characters are ready, a plucky half-orc approaches the characters and asks for their individual names. They're also welcome to come up with a sledder group name, in which case they'll be racing "on behalf of the Featherheads." The half-orc then ascends one of the statues with a tattered flag in hand and announces the racers, starting with the Cantrips. You can generate names for the Cantrips sledders by rolling 2d6 on the Cantrips Sledder Names table below, or create your own combinations.

Once the half-orc announces the names of the characters, the crowd erupts into cheers. Read or paraphrase the following:

The half-orc lifts the flag to the night sky, commanding the attention of the throngs of spectators, then look down at the racers with a tusk grin.

"On your mark, set ... GO!"



### CANTRIPS SLEDDER NAMES

D6	FIRST NAME	SECOND NAME
1	Thorn	Whip
2	Eldritch	Blast
3	Shocking	Grasp
4	Vicious	Mockery
5	Poison	Flame
6	Frost	Strike

### STRUCTURING THE ENCOUNTER

The characters' opponents in the race are **Color Spray**, **Sledder Boss**, plus enough Cantrips **spellsledders** to make the total number of opponents equal to the number of player characters racing. Under the Cantrips' influence, *spellsled* races in Silverside are wild, dangerous, and far from honorable—racers are expected and encouraged to use all their combat abilities to ensure their victory. As noted above, you should assume that nonplayer characters reduced to 0 hit points are knocked unconscious, even if dealt damage by a ranged attack or spell.

**Starting the Race.** Roll for initiative as normal to determine the turn order. Everyone begins at the starting line in the first segment of the racetrack (see "Tracking Race Positions").

**During the Race.** Whenever the player characters and Color Spray move on their turn, they face a hazard (see "Race Hazards"), resolve the consequences, advance a segment if able, then continue their turn as normal.

**Finishing the Race.** When any racer advances to the eighth segment of the track, the race concludes at the end of the current round, and the winner is decided (see "Winning"). Move to "Victory" or "Defeat" to determine the rewards.

### TRACKING RACE POSITIONS

Since *spellsleds* all travel at the same speed, this race tracks positions using an abstracted system consisting of 8 segments of the racetrack. The racers begin at the starting line in the first segment and can advance to further segments of the track by moving, taking certain actions, and successfully dealing with hazards as detailed below.

You don't need a map for the race, but you can use a visual aid like minis or tokens on a virtual tabletop to help everyone keep track of which segment each racer is in.

### ADVANCING

The first time a player character or Color Spray moves on their turn, they must face a hazard (see "Race Hazards" below). If they succeed in besting the hazard, a racer advances one or more segments. Failing to best a hazard can cause a racer to be knocked prone, grappled,

or unable to move. The rest of the Cantrips spellsledders automatically advance a segment when they move, without facing a hazard.

In addition, the following circumstances affect movement between segments:

- **Dash.** A racer advances a segment if they take the Dash action. A racer can gain this benefit only once on their turn.
- **Grappled.** A racer who is grappled moves with the creature grappling them and can't move between segments on their own.
- **Prone.** A racer who is prone at the start of their turn must stand up before facing a hazard. Due to the time spent standing, the racer advances one fewer segment when they move, even if they automatically advance (see "Falling Prone" for more details).
- **Frightened.** A frightened racer cannot willingly move into the same segment as the source of their fear.

As the GM, you can adjudicate whether other effects let a racer move an additional segment or prevent them from advancing.

## ATTACKS AND AREA EFFECTS

Racers must weave through the mazelike streets of Silverside, contending with other sledders in their own segment or firing at racers far ahead. Adjudicate ranges and distances as follows:

- **Melee Attacks.** A racer can target creatures in their segment with melee attacks.
- **Ranged Attacks.** For the purposes of ranged attacks and abilities, a racer is considered to be within 30 feet of another racer if they are in the same segment. Each further segment they are separated adds an additional 30 feet of distance. For example, a racer in the fourth segment is considered to be within 90 feet of a racer in the second segment.
- **Line of Sight.** The race takes place in the twisting streets of Silverside; a racer can't see creatures or locations more than one segment away from them.
- **Area.** Area effects with a size or diameter of more than 10 feet are assumed to affect all creatures in a given race segment. Area effects with a size or diameter of 10 feet or smaller instead affect one creature of the user's choice.
- **Opportunity Attacks.** A racer who advances a segment without using the Disengage action provokes only one opportunity attack, made by the hostile racer in the original segment who is highest in the initiative order. That racer can choose to allow the next hostile racer in the initiative order to make the opportunity attack instead.

## FALLING PRONE

During the race, racers are likely to be knocked prone by hazards and their opponents' abilities. The prone condition represents a racer losing their balance and falling off their *spellsled*, but it's only a minor setback. A prone racer's *spellsled* comes to a stop within 5 feet of them. On their turn, a prone racer can stand up as normal and mount their *spellsled* as part of their movement. If they continue to move forward after mounting their *spellsled*, they must face a hazard as normal.

As noted in the "Advancing" section above, a character who starts their turn prone is assumed to use part of their movement to stand and mount their *spellsled*, so they advance one fewer segment when they move on their turn.

Additionally, whenever a creature causes another racer to move against their will (such as if they cast the *thunderwave* spell), they can choose to knock the racer prone instead.

## WINNING

The first time a racer advances to the eighth segment, the race concludes at the end of that round. That racer and any other racer who advances to the eighth segment before the end of the round must wrestle for leadership with a contested Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. The racer who advanced to the eighth segment first has advantage on the check. The racer who wins the contest crosses the finish line first and is declared the winner!

## RACE HAZARDS

The first time a player character or Color Spray moves on their turn, roll a d12 to determine the hazard they face. The DC of any ability check or saving throw required by a race hazard is 13. On a success, a racer gains the corresponding benefit listed in the table. On a failure, a racer suffers the consequence listed in the table—usually falling prone or otherwise being unable to automatically advance. All ability checks to deal with race hazards rely on sight; a blinded character automatically fails the ability check.

**Creative Racing.** If a player suggests a way of overcoming a hazard that is different from the method in the Race Hazards table, you can ask them to make a different ability check or saving throw. If the suggested check is particularly risky or a bit of a stretch, increase the DC to 16. The consequences of success and failure are usually the same, but you can take inspiration from a different hazard if it's more appropriate.

## RACE HAZARDS

d12	HAZARD (DC 13)	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	<b>Half-Pipe.</b> A dried-up sewer pipe might not be the most direct route, but it's definitely the most stylish! Succeed on a Dexterity (Performance) check to wow the crowd with a stunt.	The crowd goes wild. You have advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws until the start of your next turn. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	You fail the trick and land heavily. You do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
2	<b>Shortcut.</b> The streets are a maze of mismatched roofs and alleys. Succeed on a Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a shortcut.	You advance two segments as part of your movement this turn.	Your potential shortcut took you the wrong way! You fall back a segment as part of your move this turn.
3	<b>Makeshift Ramp.</b> An upturned cart makes the perfect ramp to leapfrog the competition. Succeed on a Strength (Athletics) check to throw all you have into the jump.	Choose a racer in the segment ahead of you, and switch places with them.	You bail from the ramp and fall prone. You do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
4	<b>Cabbage Cart.</b> An oblivious merchant hasn't moved his goods out of the circuit in time. Succeed on a Charisma (Intimidation) check to startle him and scatter his merchandise.	A racer of your choice in your segment or any segment behind you falls prone. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	Undeterred, the merchant throws a cabbage under your <i>spellsled</i> . You do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
5	<b>Smoke Screen.</b> A bucket of ash teeters at the edge of a street vendor's grill. Succeed on a Constitution saving throw to resist the heat of the embers and throw up a cloud of concealing ash.	Racers in your current segment have no way to anticipate what's coming. They have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of their next turn. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	The smoke fills your lungs and eyes. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your next turn. You do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
6	<b>Rowdy Crowd.</b> These spectators are little more than a mob, willing and eager to interfere with the racers. Succeed on a Charisma (Persuasion) check to turn them on a rival racer. Color Spray has disadvantage on this check.	One racer of your choice within one segment of you is grappled by the spectators (escape DC 13). They cannot advance segments until they escape. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	The crowd turns on you instead. You are grappled by the spectators (escape DC 13), and you cannot advance segments until you escape.
7	<b>Unsecured Stables.</b> In the chaos of the <i>spellsled</i> race, the horses are in a panic! They dart across the circuit without a care for what's coming. Succeed on a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to predict the animals' movements and slip through.	Another racer of your choice in your segment is trampled under the horses' hooves. They take 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and fall prone. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	You misjudge the horses and sled into their path. You take 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. You do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
8	<b>Slipstream Maneuver.</b> You spy a chance to slip between a group of racers while taking advantage of their positioning. Succeed on a Dexterity (Stealth) check to break through the gap before the other racers see you coming.	You advance two segments as part of your movement this turn. You have advantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your turn.	The racers see you coming and sabotage your maneuver, leaving you off-balance. You have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of your turn. You still advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.
9	<b>Speeder Glyph.</b> A glyph of glowing arrows promises a timely boost! Succeed on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to maneuver into place to use it.	You advance two segments as part of your movement this turn. If the check succeeds by 5 or more, you can Dash as a bonus action this turn.	The glyph sends your <i>spellsled</i> flying ... without you on it. You do not advance a segment this turn, and you can't advance a segment until you use an action to retrieve your sled from the crowd.
10	<b>Vitality Glyph.</b> A glyph of a glowing potion bottle promises to soothe your pain. Succeed on a Constitution saving throw to resist the side effects of the sudden rush of magical vitality.	You gain 2d4 + 2 temporary hit points. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	The bootleg healing magic sickens you. You take 7 (2d4 + 2) necrotic damage. You still advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.

## RACE HAZARDS (CONTINUED)

d12	HAZARD (DC 13)	SUCCESS	FAILURE
11	<b>Oilslick Glyph.</b> A glyph has summoned a pool of shimmering liquid. Succeed on a contested Strength (Athletics) check against another racer in your segment to shove them into the oil.	Your opponent slides off course and falls back a segment. The racer and their <i>spellsled's</i> propulsion glyphs are covered in grease, and they can't take the Dash action until they use an action to clean the grease off. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	You slide off course and fall back a segment as part of your move. Your <i>spellsled's</i> propulsion glyphs are covered in grease, and you can't take the Dash action until you use an action to clean the grease off.
12	<b>Explosive Glyph.</b> A flashing red-and-yellow glyph no doubt releases a powerful arcane explosive. Succeed on an Intelligence (Arcana) check to remotely trigger the blast at just the right moment.	Each racer in your segment other than you take 7 (2d6) force damage. You advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.	You take 7 (2d6) force damage from the blast, and do not advance a segment as part of your movement this turn.

## VICTORY

If a player character wins the race, read or paraphrase the following:

The crowd erupts in cheers.

"The challengers win!" the half-orc flag bearer cries out, nearly falling from their perch.

Sledding up to you, Color Spray spits on the ground at your feet. She wrests one of the Cantrips' sleds from their hands and shoves it at you with little ceremony.

"You must have cheated." She sneers and returns to the other Cantrips, throwing one last taunt over her shoulder. "You better watch your back!"

As a reward for their victory, the winner has earned the right to take one of the Cantrips' *spellsleds*. Sparrow and any of the other Featherheads who have lent out their sleds ask for them back, but they offer the winner a magical decal to match the decorations on their sleds. The sticker resembles a stylized falcon and functions as a *spell scroll* of *feather fall*.

Additionally, news of the victory travels fast in Silverside. A grateful Sparrow also offers to introduce the characters to an arcane crafter who can create new *spellsleds* for them for a significantly discounted price: only 200 gp. Additionally, the winner has advantage on Charisma checks made against anyone with a favorable opinion of spellsledding in Silverside or Universitas Arcanum for the next 72 hours.

## DEFEAT

If one of the Cantrips wins the race, read or paraphrase the following:

The spectators gasp.

"The Cantrips win," the half-orc flagbearer announces to the crowd sadly.

As the locals quietly disperse, the Cantrips chant and roar in celebration. "I'd say better luck next time," Color Spray spits, "but after that performance, there won't be a next time!"

She holds out her hand expectantly. With eyes downcast, Sparrow sighs. "She's earned the right to take my *spellsled*. You should give it to her. Thanks for trying, I guess."

According to the traditions of the Silverside racers, Color Spray takes Sparrow's *spellsled* with her. If the characters try to resist handing it over, even Sparrow encourages them to comply. The other Featherheads collect the *spellsleds* they loaned to the party. Despite the characters' loss, Sparrow is grateful for the help and offers to introduce the characters to an arcane crafter who can create *spellsleds* for a slightly discounted price: 250 gp.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Many more adventures await in Silverside. Keep the spirit of the races alive with these plot hooks:

- Emboldened by victory or shamed by defeat, Color Spray and the Cantrips ramp up their shakedown of Silverside. Sparrow suggests they rally the other sledder crews to put a stop to the Cantrips once and for all.
- To bolster the reputation of the Featherheads, Sparrow suggests the characters help them finally liberate *Epiphany's Spellsled* from Universitas Arcanum.
- After their race, a local artificer approaches the characters about becoming the face of a new brand of *spellsleds* as they expand their business beyond Silverside.
- A Universitas student claims to have developed an experimental *spellsled* design that will crush the competition. She asks the characters to test it.

# RESOURCES

MCDM TABLETOP SAFETY TOOLKIT

<https://mcdm.gg/SafetyToolkit>

You can find all issues of *ARCADIA* on [Patreon](#) and in the [MCDM shop](#).



**STEVE FIDLER** (he/they) runs the publisher outlet Vorpaldice Press where he creates other 5th Edition material through DMs Guild and the Open Game License, such as the best selling *Amarune's Almanac* line and *Mythic Encounter* books; as well as the Warden and Prism classes. In addition to being a prolific game designer, they are a graphic designer freelancer. He's a proud parent to twin daughters who inspire all of his work and share in his love of stacking dice. You can follow them for design insights (or perhaps rants) on Twitter at [@vorpaldicepress](https://twitter.com/vorpaldicepress) and find links to their work at [vorpaldicepress.com](https://vorpaldicepress.com).



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