

NIGHT'S BLACK AGENTS: A LOOK INTO THE DARK REALMS OF THE ABYSS.

by R. N. Bailey

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A letter by the ever-busy and most sagely wizard, Maelcwyn the Fastidious, to a querying practitioner of the arcane arts:

To Locia o' the Nobwizzen'd, sorcerer of Nyel Castle,

Dear friend and colleague, it is good to hear from you as usual. I'm glad the ointment I recommended worked for you. And, yes, I do believe it a poorly reasoned idea to have a magman give you a foot massage — even if they do work for a mere pittance.

Anyway, I was previously informing you of the new high-powered magic mirror I developed for prying into the goings-on of the far-flung planes of existence — specifically the lower planes. For the sage, as you know, research on the even the most trivial morsel of information from the occultly lower planes is laden with the most unimaginable danger known to us mere mortals. Firstly, this involves summoning nefarious demons for intelligence. This, in of itself, is foolhardy in extremis. These demons delight in telling the most carefully spun, yet utterly swollen, lies to ever to reach sagely ears. Luckily for me I have this new scrying device and a small fire mephit informant who willingly divulges even the most sensitive of demonic intelligence but for the cost of a sack of coal. Well, I'll bore you no longer — here is what my most resent

many hours of diligent prying have dredged up from the darkest recesses of the deepest pits of that most execrable of outer planes, the Abyss.

Firstly, I present to you a truly quality account of the 178th layer of the Abyss, a dark and shadowy realm wherein none other than Aseninoth, the demon prince of shadows, dwells. Don't go looking for this chap too hard — you might have to pay with your sanity.

Secondly, I am proud to announce the discovery of three new types of demon-kind. The first is a bellicose, four-armed brute; another is a mischievous terror with a penchant for starting fires; the last is foul bird with a shabby appearance and bad attitude. Oh yes, I grew tired of the chaos of the Abyss and took a short poke into Hades. I found a heretofore unknown type of daemon. This fellow seems a bit prickly and quite unlikable. (Can you believe some unschooled, feckless hoddypeaks can't tell the difference between a daemon and demon?)

In this letter I have detailed as much as I could of the dread demon prince and his realm along with the descriptions of these new-found denizens from the pits of flame. Good reading and good luck.

Maelcwyn the Fastidious, most eminent wizard and scholar of the Kingdom of Essemia.

THE FORLORN REALM: THE 178TH LAYER OF ABYSS

Portals to the Forlorn Realm

The demon prince, known as Aseninoth, controls the entire 178th layer of the Abyss. Only two permanent portals exist to enter or exit this layer. The first portal is a conduit to the 1st layer of the Abyss, Pazunia. It appears triangular archway made of two long, flat stones that lean against one another. This portal continually shifts, moving randomly to a new location every 2-24 (2d12) hours. Aseninoth and any demon with an Intelligence rating of “very” or greater (11+)

knows where the portal's location at any given moment. (And these monsters will never tell mortals where to find them.) The other portal — a conduit to Pandesmos, the first layer of Pandemonium — lies within Aseninoth's cave system lair (see below for a description).

Travel & Terrain

Travelers have reported encountering many different sights, landscapes, and landmarks, but there always seems to be two common factors. First, the land is always seeped in perpetual twilight. No source for the light can ever be seen, and it seems to diffuse out of the horizon itself. Clouds of mist or vapor drift through all types of terrain on this layer obscuring the sanguine-tinged, slate gray sky most of the time. Additionally, no stars or luminaries have been ever noted in the sky.

Thusly, light, be it open flame or magic light, is diminished in this layer. All light sources function at half normal radius.

The second factor is that no matter the direction traveled one will eventually end up in the same place: the craggy, forlorn hills where Aseninoth dwells. Travelers that do not have a specific location in mind always end up in these hills after 1-12 days no matter which direction they originally set out. Every 1-3 days traveled the terrain of the layer will randomly give way to another. Roll on the table below to determine which terrain type a traveler moves in to.

d10 Terrain Type

- | | |
|-----|----------------|
| 1-4 | Dense Forest |
| 5-6 | Marsh |
| 7-8 | Moor |
| 9 | Forested Hills |
| 10 | Rocky Barrens |

The continually shifting terrain makes it nearly impossible for travelers to navigate this plane by traditional means. Landmarks seen previously disappear and shift, so that a traveler could move a few miles and then double back only to find he is completely lost. Previously seen landmarks, such as a unique rock formation seen in a wooded area, might be seen later while traversing a moor.

Native creatures of this plane can easily locate any feature or location by traveling 1-6 days. Clever or exceptionally powerful travelers would be wise to enlist one of the more intelligent native creatures as a guide. A demand of payment, be it treasure, magic, food, or even slaves, will be required. Of course, there is no guarantee that the guide will lead the traveler to the right location; it might even lead them into an ambush with a powerful monster or a group of its comrades who have been lying in wait.

Flora & Sustenance

The trees and vegetation of the layer are similar to those found in temperate climes on many Prime Mate-

rial Planes. Trees and plants will often seem familiar to a traveler, but always appear slightly different from the ones they know.

Furthermore, the vegetation of the layer is typically unfit for consumption. The vegetation, even if it looks quite edible, tastes rancid and bitter. It proves so foul tasting that a character must pass a successful Constitution check to even get it down. Those that actually swallow any will be wracked by nausea and vomiting for the next 1-6 hours (no save allowed). During this time all rolls are made with a -2 penalty on the die and their Strength and Constitution scores are each reduced by 4 points each.

The flesh of the animals that inhabit this layer is not poisonous, but tastes just as horrible as the vegetation. Anyone attempting to consume an animal's flesh must successfully pass a Constitution check or immediately vomit it up.

Likewise, the water found on this layer induces terrifying hallucinations to anyone that drinks 3 ounces or more at a time (no save allowed). Those affected act as if they have **hallucinatory insanity** (as per pg. 84, 1st edition *Dungeon Masters Guide*) for 1-4 hours.

A *neutralize poison* or *cure disease* spell will dispel the effects of the food and water.

One boon exists for the hapless traveler on this layer: small, teardrop-shaped crystals. Roughly almond shaped, these crystals are about the size of a thumb and have a soapy texture. If swallowed whole the crystals protect the individual from the effects of the food and water for a whole day (24 hours). These crystals seem to grow from the ground itself. Travelers have a 5% chance per day of randomly stumbling across 1-4 "tears." A few sages claim that these crystals are the tears of despair shed by an exceptionally pure elfin maiden who became trapped on Aseninoth's plane and perished. Her goodness created the only things on the layer that does not succumb to the corrupting evil influence of the Abyss.

Inhabitants & Encounters

This plane is quite dangerous to the unprepared or hapless traveler, be they mortal or demon. Lurking in the shadows are multitudes of predatory beasts ready to pounce upon anyone (or anything) unfortunate enough to cross their path. Wandering encounters should be checked 6 times per day with an encounter indicated by a roll of 1 on a d6. Should the traveler stop for more than 3 turns chances increase to 1-2 on a d6. If the die indicates an encounter, roll on the following table.

WANDERING ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR THE FORLORN REALM

<u>d100</u>	<u>Encounter Type</u>	<u>Number Appearing</u>
01-05	Aseninoth	—
06-10	Bat, normal (50%), giant (50%)	100-1000/1-6
11-13	Carrion crawler	1-10
14-16	Cat (leopard, lion, or panther)	1-4
17-21	Centipede, huge (50%), giant (50%)	4-16/2-7
23-25	Demon, chasme	2-5
26-28	Demon, colchiln*	2-7
29-34	Demon, manes	3-12
35	Demon, nabassu	1
36-37	Demon, Type II (Hezrou)	1-2
38-41	Fly, giant (bluebottle or horsefly)	1-10
42-45	Frog, giant (50%), killer (50%)	2-12
46-48	Jackal	3-30
49-50	Mastiff, shadow	2-12
51-53	Pedipalp, huge (50%), giant (50%)	2-12/1-8
54-58	Rat, normal (50%), giant (50%)	50-500/6-60
59-63	Raven, huge (50%), giant (50%)	4-24/2-16
64-66	Snake, giant, poisonous	1-3
67-69	Snake, poisonous	4-24
70-74	Spider, large (40%), huge (40%), or giant (20%)	3-18/2-12/1-10
76-78	Squirrel, normal (50%), giant black (50%)	6-36/4-16
79-82	Stirge	3-30
83-86	Toad, giant	3-12
87-88	Treant	1-6
89-93	Vulture, normal	4-24
94-97	Wolf	3-30
98-00	Wolf, dire	2-16

* See module *WG 5 Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure* for a description of this demon. Re-roll if you do not have access to this product.

The DM is free to add to this list of monsters keeping in mind the nature Aseninoth's dominion. All normal type animals and creatures are *chaotic evil* in alignment and view anyone or anything that it crosses paths with as a potential victim or food. One out of twenty encounters with "animal" type creatures (*i.e.* all but the demons, shadow mastiffs, and treants) possess an Intelligence score of 5-10 and can speak the Common tongue.

Thirty-three percent of the time (1-2 on a d6) encounters with Aseninoth himself result in the demon prince ignoring any travelers and continuing on his way. This is, of course, unless they attack him first (foolish!) or he is encountered in his great cavern (see below). Additionally, there is a 1 in 6 chance each melee round of combat that the demon prince simply breaks off combat and promptly leaves the area. Of course, this will happen only when he is away from his lair.

The Lair of the Prince of Shadows

Aseninoth dwells in a labyrinthine cave system that riddles the earth below his layer. The entrance to his lair is marked by a large cave mouth found deep with the forlorn, craggy hills. The few brave (or unwise) mortals who have actually entered the caves and lived to tell about it report that it consists of a winding maze of tunnels and caverns. If one enters the caves, exits back to the surface, then returns again, they will find the passages connecting to these caves will have shifted positions. This makes the caves a bewildering labyrinth, undoubtedly ensuring that those who do not know the true route will become hopelessly lost. (And no mortal knows the route.)

Somewhere deep in the heart of the cave system Aseninoth inhabits a massive cavern, nearly ¼ mile in length (1200'), held up by a multitude of pillars in the very heart of the cave system. This cavern has a great number of rock overhangs and shelves that serve as points of concealment for Aseninoth or his minions. Spread across the floor of this cave is the treasure accumulated from eons of unfortunate lost travelers.

This consists of treasure types A (x2), G, H, S (x3), T (x2), and V (x2).

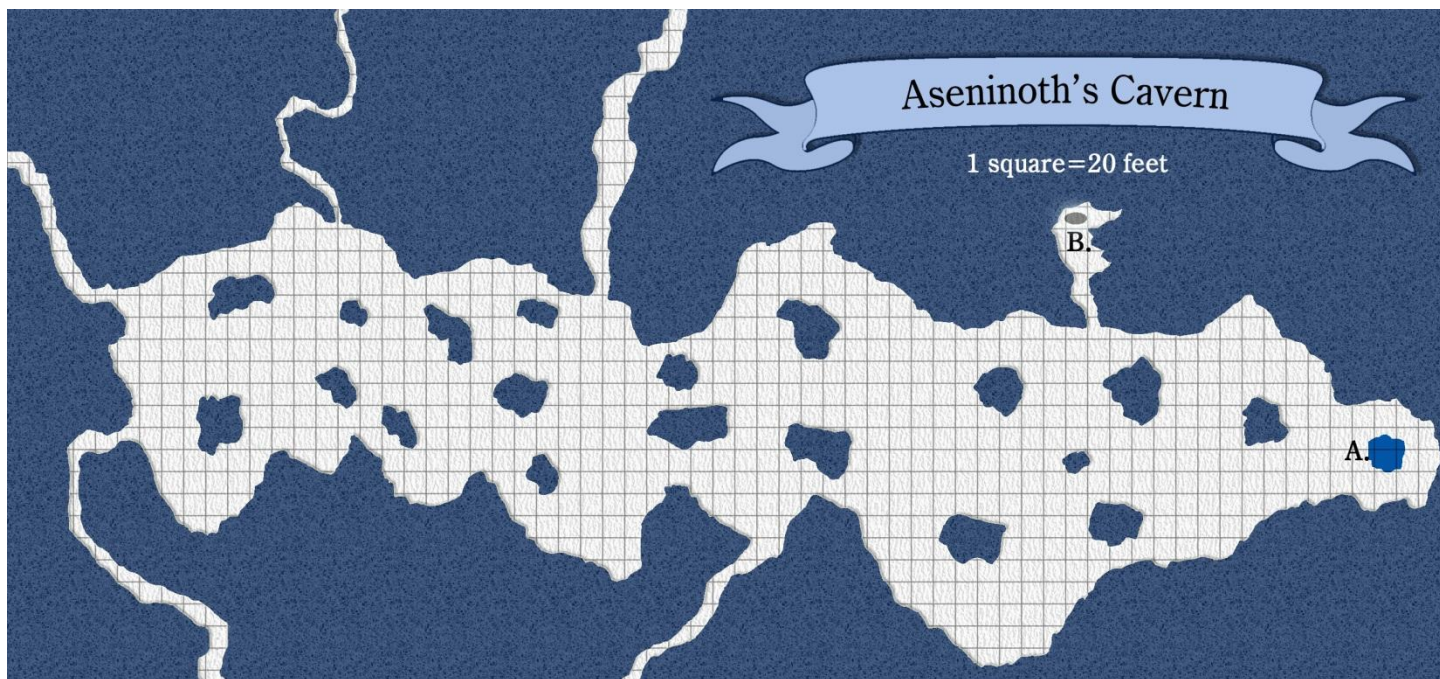
Within Aseninoth's cavern lies the Pool of Hechez-zinar. Mortals that drink from this pool will gain the psionic ability *precognition* permanently. However, they first have to vanquish the demon prince. And this is easier said than done.

Finally, Aseninoth's liar hides a conduit to the first layer of Pandemonium, Pandesmos. The conduit appears as an oval-shaped gate constructed of skulls. The gate lies in a side cave located in Aseninoth's main lair. Permanent illusions mask the entrance to this cave to make it appear as a shallow, cob-web-filled

alcove. See *Manual of the Planes*, pg. 74, for details on conduits.

All the creatures listed in the encounter table, with the exception of treants, inhabit these caverns. Encounters should be checked once every 3 turns occurring on a 1 on a d6.

Dungeon Master Note: By using the **Random Dungeon Generator** in Appendix I of the 1st edition *Dungeon Masters Guide* (pgs. 169-172), one can randomly construct Aseninoth's maze as a party moves through its ever-shifting corridors. Use tables III and IV to determine passages and table V (and sub-tables) to construct the rooms.



Key to Aseninoth's Cavern

- A.Pool of Hechez-zinar
- B.Conduit to Pandesmos

Aseninoth's Rule on His Layer

Being a demon prince, Aseninoth is considered a lesser power while in his layer (see *Manual of the Planes*, Appendix IV, pgs. 124-126, for details). The demon prince is quite solitary, engaging in little or no contact with other demon lords or princes. Likewise, he has no enemies amongst his peers, but will ruthlessly attack any that dare step foot (or hoof, or claw) on his layer.

Few humans worship Aseninoth. Those that do are the most craven, uncivilized types teetering on the edge of sanity. Only an exceptionally powerful mortal wizard would ever attempt to summon Aseninoth to

the Prime Material Plane. The few foolish enough to try have never lived to tell anyone.

On rare occasions in the wild, forsaken regions of the Prime Material Plane, and only in twilight hours, a temporary *gate* to Aseninoth's layer will open. A 1% chance every year for a region is suggested. These gates are nearly invisible — often all that is often noted is a slight shimmering of the air — and last only 1-4 hours before they close. It is during these times that Aseninoth will travel to the Prime Material Plane to hunt those unfortunate mortals that he encounters near the gate. When the gate closes he is forced back to the Abyss. Sometimes mortals traveling through

these areas inadvertently pass through the gate ending up in the Abyss. The few souls blessed enough to find their way out of Aseninoth's layer are usually permanently traumatized from the experience, often aging 10 or 20 years in those few hours.

Spell Functions on Aseninoth's Layer

Consult the *Manual of the Planes*, pgs. 78-72, for guidelines on spells and magic items that will not operate or are altered while in the Abyss. However, the following spells (or similar spell-like effects) never function in Aseninoth's layer:

All light-based spells function at half effect.

Animate Rock
Cloak of Bravery
Control Weather
Find the Path
Misdirection
Nondetection
Pass Without Trace
Plant Growth
Purify Food & Drink

Aseninoth (Prince of Shadows)

FREQUENCY: Unique (very rare)
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: -8
MOVEMENT: 15"
HIT DICE: 24 (167 hp)
% IN LAIR: 35%
TREASURE TYPE: A (x2), G, H, S (x3), T (x2), V (x2)
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2
DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 2-20 bite + poison, 2-12 tail
SPECIAL ATTACKS: See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +2 or better weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 85%
INTELLIGENCE: Supra-genius
SIZE: L (10' high, 32' long w/tail)
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
PSIONIC ABILITY: 260
Attack/Defense Modes:
All/all
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: X/60,000 (for material form)

The demon prince known as Aseninoth (Aw-sě-nen-ôth) has dominion over terrors that dwell concealed in darkness. He is also known as the "Carrion Prince" or the "Crawler in the Shadows" and is often accompanied by creeping and furtive beasts of all sorts. He rules the 178th plane of the Abyss, a land of dark shadows steeped in perpetual twilight and draped with

Remove Fear
Weather Summoning

The following spells will not function on creatures native to the Abyss on this layer:

Animal Growth
Antipathy-Sympathy
Avoidance
Chaos
Cloak of Fear
Confusion
Emotion
Fear
Giant Insect
Invisibility to Animals
Pass Plant
Scare
Snake Charm
Speak With Plants
Spook
Symbol (discord, fear, hopelessness, insanity)

gloomy forests. Aseninoth lives in a great cave in the center of the plane's desolate, lonely hills. 60% of the time when encountered up to 100 HD of normal and giant-sized (and sometimes intelligent) versions of rats, bats, spiders, snakes, centipedes, carrion crawlers, jackals, wolves, stirges, and night-dwelling great cats will accompany him on his plane. Randomly determined which specific types of creatures accompany him, as needed.

Aseninoth's primary method of attack is a bite that delivers 2-20 damage and a tail lash for 2-12 damage. His spittle is poisonous and those bitten must save vs. poison at -4 or die. The tail is quite flexible reaching up to 20' in any direction, even in front of the demon. Those hit must save vs. paralysis or be stunned for 2-5 rounds.

The mere sight of Aseninoth causes all creatures under 5 HD/level to flee in terror (no save) for 1-4 turns. Those of higher level must make a save vs. spell at -2 or flee likewise. This terror is so powerful even creatures normally immune to fear are effected as long as their Intelligence is animal (1) or higher. Even worse, the demon can, at will, create an insane cacophony of screams, moans, howls, growls, whines, whimpers, and similar babblings. This ability is equal to a *chaos* spell (*q.v.* 5th level illusionist spell) except that range is a 6" radius and duration for as long as the babbling continues. Furthermore, creatures less than 4 HD/level immediately die of fright unless they save

vs. spell; those less than 8 HD/level must save vs. spell at -4 or stand paralyzed with fear for as long as remain within the cacophony.

In addition to the powers typical of all demons, Aseninoth has the following spell-like abilities which he is able to employ at will, 1 at a time, 1 per round as a 24th-level caster: *advanced illusion*, *detect good* (always active), *dispel good*, *death fog* (1/day), *dispel magic*, *feeblemind* (1/day), *hypnotic pattern*, *insect plague*, *obscurement*, *symbol* (1 each/day of *discord*, *hopelessness*, and *insanity*), *telekinesis*, *true seeing*, and *web* (double area of effect). He can *gate* in 2-5 chasme demons (40%), 2-7 colchiln demons (40%), or

1-3 Type II demons (20%) with a 70% chance of success.

Appearance: Aseninoth always appears as a cruel wolf with amber eyes atop a massive snake-like body. Hairy spider legs sprout from the snake body just below its head. The demon moves by a combination of snake and spider locomotion. The wolf head continuously snarls and drools, growling frequently. Dual human-like faces protrude from its body just under the wolf head. Each visage faces away from the other, locked in a semi-frozen gaze. Aseninoth speaks with one, the other, or both faces simultaneously, alternating between the two seamlessly as his whim sees fit.



THREE NEW DENIZENS OF THE ABYSS...

Gulrahz (Major Demon)

FREQUENCY: Uncommon

NO. APPEARING: 1-2 or 2-12 in The Abyss

ARMOR CLASS: -3

MOVEMENT: 18"

HIT DICE: 9 + 16

% IN LAIR: 20%

TREASURE: Nil

NO. OF ATTACKS: 5

DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 1-10/1-10/1-10/1-10 claws, 2-12 bite

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Destroy armor, rend

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to mind-affecting spells & psionic attacks, +1 or better weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 50%

INTELLIGENCE: Low to average

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil

SIZE: L (9-10' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes:

Nil/nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: VIII/4,500 +14/hp

Gulrahz are a race of exceptionally violent and warlike demons. They vary in color and appearance, but all are large bipedal humanoids with four arms that end in vicious claws. Head is always bestial in appearance with tusks and fangs. Horns of various sizes are not uncommon. Gulrahz never retreat from combat and never surrender. They are immune to all types of mind-affecting spells, psionics, and similar abilities, including illusions.

In melee, gulrahz attack with four claws inflicting 1-10 damage each and a bite for 2-12 damage. Attacks can be divided amongst up to four different targets. Gulrahz never employ weapons or shields. On a successful hit with a *natural* 20 their iron-hard claws will destroy an opponent's armor unless it saves vs. crushing blow. If a shield is employed it is destroyed first. Destroyed armor provides no protection to its wearer.

Additionally, opponents hit with at least two claw attacks are held tight with a grappling Strength of 19. Each round thereafter they automatically suffer 2-20 points of rending damage and can be bitten with +4 'to hit.' Opponents held lose any Dexterity and shield bonuses. The hold can only be broken by a *bend bars* roll or the death of the demon.

In addition to those available to all demons, gulrahz can, at will, use the following spell-like powers, once per round, as a 9th level spellcaster: *confusion* (1/day), *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *fear*, *fly*, and *taunt*. Once per day they can attempt to *gate* in 2-12 rutterkin or 1-3 gulrahz with a 40% chance of success.

Demon lords and princes employ gulrahz as front-line shock troops. They gladly work for anyone willing to pay for their services, typically slaves or food. However, employment often proves short-lived, as these demons tend to be impulsive and destructive. Gulrahz are mostly useless in other duties, as they tend to disregard all authority, doing what they wish as whim dictates.

Ronwe (Minor Demon)

FREQUENCY: Uncommon
NO. APPEARING: 1-3 or 2-9 in The Abyss
ARMOR CLASS: 2
MOVEMENT: 12"
HIT DICE: 4 + 1
% IN LAIR: 60%
TREASURE: Q, S, X
NO. OF ATTACKS: 2 or 1 (with weapon)
DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 2-5/2-5 fists
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Flame gaze
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to fire
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 60%
INTELLIGENCE: High
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
SIZE: M (4' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY: 96
Attack/Defense Modes:
B, C/G
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: III/305 + 5/hp

The race of minor demons called ronwe appear as short, human-like creatures with large heads, big noses, big ears, small horns, and a short, ass-like tail. Their body is hairless with long, gangly arms and legs. These demons are vindictive, arrogant, and impetuous. They use their greater intellect to play less intelligent demons off one another to achieve their own ends and delighting in the chaos that ensues.

Weak in melee, ronwe generally avoid combat unless absolutely necessary. They attack with two fists inflicting 2-5 points of damage each. On rare occasions (15%), they will be armed with a short, 5' trident. Normal weapons will hit them.

These creatures are absolutely immune to all sorts of fire, magical or otherwise. They often will dwell within areas of flame or intense heat, such as lava pools. Thrice per day they can use their *flame gaze* power on a victim. This power works like the psionic devotion *molecular agitation* (q.v.) at 10th level of mastery for up to six rounds each usage. Note that the fire resulting from this power is considered magical in nature. This power is typically reserved for mortals, as most demons have partial immunity to magical fire.

In addition to those available to all demons, ronwe can, at will, use the following spell-like powers, once per round, as a 7th level spellcaster: *ESP*, *know alignment*, *Melf's acid arrow* (3/day), *obscurement*, *pyrotechnics*, *sanctuary*, *shocking grasp*, *spectral force* (3/day), *telekinesis*, and *tongues*. Once per day they can attempt to *gate* in 1-8 dretches, 1-2 bar-lgura, or a single chasme with a 55% chance of success.

Ronwe make alliances quickly with other types of demons and break them just as fast. They usually consider themselves in charge no matter whom they ally with. Babau demons utterly hate ronwe, attacking them on sight.

Skulhd (Minor Demon)

FREQUENCY: Uncommon
NO. APPEARING: 1-4 or 4-16 in The Abyss
ARMOR CLASS: -2
MOVEMENT: 6, Fl 20 (B)
HIT DICE: 6
% IN LAIR: 5%
TREASURE: Nil
NO. OF ATTACKS: 3 or 2
DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 2-7/2-7 talons, 1-4 bite
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Disease, weakness, dive
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 40%
INTELLIGENCE: Very
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
SIZE: M (4½' high, 20' wingspan)
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:
Nil/nil
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: V/650 + 6/hp

Also called "plague birds," skulhd demons roam the aerial spaces of the Abyss in ravenous flocks. They appear as large birds with a horrid, human-like heads and their pale, grayish skin is covered in scabs and boils. They have black fangs and short, backward-curving goat horns sprouting from their heads. Feathers are a mottled black, gray, brown, and tan. The smell of rotting flesh always precedes this demon.

A cloud of sickness surrounds the skulhd. This infects anyone with a 2" radius of as per the *cause disease* spell (save vs. poison to avoid). However, once all strength has drained from the victim this disease is fatal 2-12 hours if they fail Constitution check. Victims need only make one save per encounter or exposure for each individual demon.

The physical attack of the skulhd is with two talons (2-7 damage each) and a bite (1-4 damage). Given at least 5" the demon can dive, raking with its talons with +2 'to hit' and inflicting double damage with each successful hit. Those hit with its bite attack must save vs. paralyzation or be afflicted with *weakness*, resulting in the loss of one point of Strength and Constitution each. Additional bite attacks result in cumulative effects. Lost ability points return at a rate one per hour. Normal weapons can strike these demons.

In addition to those available to all demons, skulhd can, at will, use the following spell-like powers, once per round, as a 6th level spellcaster: *charm person* (by touch), *detect good* (always active), *enlarge* (or *reduce*)(self only), *invisibility*, and *protection from normal missiles* (1/day). Once per day they can attempt to

gate in 1-6 skulhd or 1-2 vrock with a 60% chance of success.

Skulhd hate most other demons and, given the chance, will attack any they encounter so long as they have superior numbers. Their only ally is the vrock whom they tend to manipulate with their superior intelligence.

...AND ONE FROM THE GLOOMS OF HADES.

Corodaemon (Lesser Daemon)

FREQUENCY: Common

NO. APPEARING: 4-16

ARMOR CLASS: 2

MOVEMENT: 9"

HIT DICE: 5 + 10

% IN LAIR: 40%

TREASURE: C

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3 or 1

DAMAGE/ATTACKS: 2-7+2/2-7+2 claws, 1-6 bite or by weapon type +2

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Quills

SPECIAL DEFENSES: +1 or better weapon to hit

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 50% to 1st level spells

INTELLIGENCE: Average

ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil

SIZE: M (4'-5' tall)

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

Attack/Defense Modes:

Nil/nil

LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: IV/450 + 6/hp

By far the weakest and most numerous of daemon-kind, corodaemons appear as bird-headed humanoids, most often a crow or rook. Their torsos are barrel-chested and stout, with a mass of porcupine-like quills sprouting from their backs. Their sturdy arms and legs are hairless (and featherless), with hands ending in thick, four-fingered claws.

Cruel and domineering to those weaker than themselves, corodaemons serve more powerful demons with unquestioning efficiency. The daemoniac workforce of the Glooms of Hades, these creatures perform all sorts of menial tasks, acting as guards, soldiers, laborers, servants, and hordling herders. Given the opportunity corodaemons will mercilessly attack anyone or anything they consider beneath their station.

Corodaemons typically fight with two claw attacks that inflict 2-7 points of damage each and a beak attack for 1-6. Infrequently (40%) they will fight with battle axes, military forks, footman's picks, scourges, or barbed spears (treat as harpoons, but not thrown).

Additionally, once every melee round, they can shoot 1-3 quills (up to 12 per day) from their back, hitting targets up to 5" distant. Each 2-3' long quill causes 1-6 damage (striking as a javelin). Multiple targets within 120° arc behind them can be fired upon. Additionally, anyone hit with a quill must save vs. spell or be affected as if hit with the 2nd level magic-user spell *irritation* (itching version, save at -3).

In addition to those available to all demons, corodaemons have the following spells usable one per round, as a 6th level spellcaster: *bind*, *blight* (reverse of *bless*), *detect evil/good*, and *spook*. Once per day they can *haste* themselves. They can also *gate* in 2-8 corodaemons or 1-2 piscodaemons once per day with a 30% chance of success.

END.