Non-Player Races

- Vampires of the Material Plane
- Dragons
- Harpies
- Lesser Giants

Vampires of the Material Plane

> "The fair girl went on her knees and bent over me, fairly gloating. There was a deliberate voluptuousness which was both thrilling and repulsive, and as she arched her neck she actually licked her lips like an animal... I could feel the soft, shivering touch of the lips on the super-sensitive skin of my throat, and the hard dents of two sharp teeth, just touching and pausing there."

Purpose

Vampires of the Material Plane was written as the first in depth study into vampires. It collects the smaller works of many writers together and elaborates on them with first hand accounts that prove and disprove multiple theories and "facts" put forward in the other writings.

Background

Dominica Willow's work is widely understood to be the most detailed of any accounts of monstrous encounters. Following her recent disappearance all original copies have been collected by the

Redfeathers

for copying and safekeeping.

> Vampires have long considered themselves the master predator, and it is with relative disdain that I am bound to agree with them. Inhuman strength, sight, and other senses, coupled with natural magic makes for a formidable opponent.
> No vampire considers themselves a savage and though it took considerable effort to discover one which would speak to me long enough to divulge any information about itself or the culture of its species. Vampirism it seems does not a noble make. Even so, I did manage to speak with one creature who's name and location will not be written within the pages of this book. The gentleman, when I sat down to dinner with him, was nothing but polite. He took no food, though he served me a meal so lavish I was worried that I was going to be dessert. Instead we had a marvelous conversation well into the early hours of the morning. Vampires worship The Betrayer . All intelligent undead creatures believe him to be the first undead being ever. From him came, and still come, all undead creatures. Vampires were the first of his creations, his own children, though none of the originals exist. Because of him there are always vampires on the Material Plane, but no new originals (also called Prime Blooded) have been created since the first ones. Prime Blooded were incredibly powerful and, if the

gentleman I spoke to is to be believed, a devastating force. If one were to be created today, it is likely to wipe out half the continent before it is destroyed. As many know, there are three subspecies of vampire. While they all are classified as vampire, they are all different and most often despise others of a different subspecies.

The first is the most common form of vampire, called Purple by their more intelligent brethren, The Ferine. These beast are quadrupedal and although they lack eyes, they have incredible hearing. Ferine can often be found in packs, roving about more rural areas, or even underground. While they are intelligent, their bestial nature causes them to be looked down on by the other vampires.

The second is the less common but more casually remembered Sovereign. Human in looks, save for pale skin and sharp fangs. Many of them, so I was told by one of them, are quite sophisticated and merely feed on blood when required to, otherwise choosing to blend in with human society.

The third, and most rare, subspecies of vampire are referred to as The Exalted. Believed by Sovereign and Ferine alike to be the perfect form of vampire. These creatures are hyper intelligent and because of this are often solitary. They require no blood, are undamaged in sunlight, and suffer no pain in the presence of silver. Their terrible forms are something out of a nightmare. Even while my host spoke of them the room seemed to grow darker and colder. It is believed that Exalted are only one or two "generations" away from a Prime Blooded though my host seemed adamant that a Sovereign could, under the right circumstances, become an Exalted.

From what I could find, most of the rumors about vampires brought back by adventurers tend to be true. And it is because of these rumors that I believe vampires to be disappearing at such an alarming rate. Stay with me, I know they're monsters, but the gentleman I spoke to was very convincing his his convictions. I'm not saying I believe every word out of his mouth, but I've had enough interactions with divine beings to understand that if there was a vampire, created by a god, set loose on the Material Plane, there would be very little to be done to stop it. In most cases that I've found, vampires tend to have two forms. One is humanoid, and nearly indistinguishable from whatever race it used to be. While difficult to discover a vampire in this form, those with keen vision may be able to pick out the reddish tint to the iris, or the elongated canine teeth. (Though it should be mentioned that some carriers of Inferna Sanguinem bear these same traits and as such not every person with red eyes and sharp teeth should be considered a vampire.) A vampire's second form is monstrous and displays the creatures true nature. Though most forms are unique, they all share similar traits. Pale, even rotting, skin, long fangs that extend out of the mouth, claws, large eyes, and long bat-like wings. Most vampires, so I've found, rarely use this form as it makes for a very satisfying target for adventurers.

Dragons

> **Body Tint, Colouring and Marking**
> Stories tell that before the gods war, dragons exhibited a multitude of colours. Nowadays dragon colours seem to be restricted to shades of grey, black, and white, often a mix of the three. It is believed that this shift to more muted, natural colours is another side effect of the world shattering; though some minds believe that they are in fact an entirely new species.
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> The only remnant of the old dragons left can be found in the Dragonborn who's scale colour dictates things like resistance to elements as well as their elemental breath.

Anatomy

Dragons possess a tail and six limbs: two arms, two legs, and two wings. Dragons are not to be confused with other Draconic species such as Wyverns (who possess only two wings and two legs), and Drakes (who possess four legs and no wings).

Biological Traits

As far as anyone has discovered, Dragons are virtually immortal. Though they can starve, get injured, or be killed, a Dragon who remains well fed and healthy can live as long as they desire. In turn, though their growth slows significantly once they reach adulthood, a Dragon never fully stops growing. They can reach immense sizes given enough time to do so.

Genetics and Reproduction

After a pair of Dragons mate the mother usually carries one to four eggs for anywhere from one to five years until she finds somewhere she feels comfortable making a nest. Once the egg is laid it usually does not take longer than 2 years to hatch.

Growth Rate & Stages

A freshly hatched Dragon Wyrmling is capable of taking care of itself, more or less. It can speak (usually being taught languages by its mother and/or father during its gestation as an egg), hunt

for bugs and small animals, and even begin using its elemental breath. At this stage they are about the size of an average adult human and their scales are dully coloured.

It takes about ten years for a Wyrmling to grow into a Juvenile. A Juvenile Dragon usually has left the protection of its parent and has begun to make its own way in the world. About the size of a large horse, Juvenile Dragons are capable of hunting down creatures far bigger than they are. Their scales have started to gain a bit of brightness but otherwise maintain that dull Wyrmling shade.

When a dragon reaches forty years of age it is considered an Adult. Adult Dragons can be about the size of a single room house. Their growth rate slows but a Dragon never actually stops growing.

Dragons who live past their second century are generally considered in the beginning stages of becoming an Ancient Dragon. Most Dragons that reach this stage are incredibly powerful, able to destroy entire armies and cities with their elemental breath.

Perception and Sensory Capabilities

Many dragons possess the ability to see without their eyes, however the ability comes in many different forms. Some can sense vibrations in the earth, some have a highly acute sense of smell, and some can even use magic to sense to world around them.

History

As far as anyone knows, Dragons have existed on the Material Plane long before most other sentient species. In Ovenica especially, the Ancient Dwarves have texts of battles with dragons from a time long before the gods war. However, since the gods war, Dragons have become less and less prevalent. Today they are virtually extinct, at least as far as people remember them. In truth Dragons live on in three ways:

In rare cases there are Dragons that have chosen to live among humanoid society, shedding their true forms in favour of safety. Additionally, while not true dragons, those with Draco Puer carry on the heritage of their ancestors in their blood and appearance. Finally there are the dragons who live to the north, in Giant Country. These beasts are true monsters, so the stories say. Some of them as large as a mountain, fighting each other for domination of the landscape

Dragon Eggs walk the line between bird and reptile eggs, with a twist of magic. Visibly they appear to be an oddly shaped sphere, silver in colour and ranging in various sizes depending on the age of the dragon within. The outer layer of the egg, while strong, is very flexible and allows the dragon inside to stretch and shift to any position it wishes. As the dragon grows the shell grows with it, generally reaching the size of a small cart before the dragon is ready to hatch. Dragon Eggs can be highly sought after. Their outer shell is toxic to virtually any living thing it comes in contact with, other than the dragon's mother, and can be used in multiple poisons. With the proper tools and know-how the shell can even be integrated into weapons and armor, though there are few capable of such work.

Harpies

Anatomy

While standing upright and having a humanoid appearance Harpies have a digitigrade leg structure, much like many walking birds, and have wings instead of arms.

Genetics and Reproduction

Harpies are magical beings. When a clamor of harpies intends to make more they gather together on high mountain peaks and sing to one another. The music, already intertwined with space, matter, and time through magic, begins the process of gestation within the harpies present. After a period of 4 - 6 months a baby harpy is born.

Growth Rate & Stages

Young harpies grow quickly. Though they are usually capable of hunting and caring for themselves after a year, they do not reach adult size until around 5 - 8 years.

Dietary Needs and Habits

Harpies are obligate carnivores and cannot survive without a steady diet of meat. They often prefer the meat of sentient creatures, but no scientific proof exists to say they require more than animal flesh.

Additional Information

Social Structure

Harpies form small groups called clamors. These are usually made up of family members, very rarely containing members outside of their "blood" relatives due to their aggressive nature. Harpies do not follow any sort of pecking order, and are not usually considered to be matriarchal. Instead, clamors of harpies work together to hunt, sharing food and labour equally.

Facial characteristics

Harpies possess the features of a humanoid woman, though when observed at a close range the angles and bone structure seems far too sharp. Additionally, large eyes and feathers growing alongside hair give a very obvious avian appearance to them.

Average Intelligence

Though both sentient and intelligent, harpies can be fiercely territorial and aggressive. It is rare to find a clamor of harpies containing more than 10 individuals.

History

So the story goes: When the world was young, an elf witch named Sylna got it in her head to trap one of the now dead elven gods. She sent him offerings, and letters inviting him to join her for a meal. He was amused and went to her home in the forest. Together they dined and afterward she led him to a large chair in front of the fireplace. Once he was seated she began to sing. Now Sylna was a powerful witch, and as she sang she wove magic into her music. The song put the god into a deep slumber, from which it is said he never woke. With the god asleep in her home Sylna opened his chest and took his heart. Even in those days, when gods could walk the planes in their true form, removing the heart of a god was not enough to kill it, and even asleep as he was, the god was not truly robbed of his power.

So as Sylna stood in front of her fireplace and began to eat the still beating heart of the god, she was cursed. She choked on the meat and her form was twisted. In the end she flew away on her new cursed wings and went into hiding in the mountains. Now her progeny still lure creatures to their deaths with haunting songs, steeped in the magic of Sylna.

Lesser Giants

Anatomy

Though having a regular humanoid shape, Giant bones are incredibly dense and durable in order to support the massive weight of the body. Giants are quite stocky in appearance and have feet that are less like a humans (long and thin) and more like an elephant's (short and round.) Giants are Faculative Bipeds and have the ability to walk around on two legs but most often prefer moving on all fours.

Giants have little to no sexual dimorphism between male and female.

Growth Rate & Stages

Lesser Giants are born fully formed, about the size of a full grown man. They go through an incredibly rapid growing stage and become full grown adults within about a year.

Ecology and Habitats

Giants typically live on mountains, large plains, or thick forests where large prey is plentiful.

Dietary Needs and Habits

Giants are omnivorous but prefer to eat meat. Each giant has a different preference, but most prefer to hunt their prey and eat it bloody and warm. That being said, Giants are not idiots and will often prep for winter by stockpiling food in a cave or hole. Giants need a lot of food to sustain their bulk and therefore spend most of their time hunting.

Social Structure

Giants are solitary creatures. They leave their mother shortly after birth and find an unclaimed chunk of land to live on. Very rarely Giants will gather to discuss a grave threat, such as a Dragon who has claimed a territory spanning multiple Giants claimed territories, or on even rarer occasions a Giant moot where Giants will travel from all over to gather and discuss what is happening where they are, participate in physical 'games' and generally try to prove that they are the strongest. Other than these rare events, Giants almost only ever come together to mate or fight.

All Giants follow the motto of Bigger is Better. Though two Giants that meet may fight to try and prove which one is dominant, when it comes down to it a smaller giant will always give way to a bigger Giant.

Uses, Products & Exploitation

Giant bones are incredibly dense and strong. A craftsman with the proper skills can create weapons, armor, even building fortifications out of Giant bone. Because of this, Giants are sometimes hunted down by skilled warriors, and the discovery of a Giant's skeleton can mean prosperity for a small village. Aside from the uses of a Giant post mortem, a living Giant will sometimes provide protection to a village or bolster the ranks of an army in exchange for food.

Facial characteristics

Giants usually have square faces with exaggerated 'tusks' and large noses.

Geographic Origin and Distribution

Giants can be found nearly everywhere. Though each Giant had a wide territory, these territories overlap and change all the time as Giants die, fight, or relocate.

Average Intelligence

Most Giants are just as smart as any human.

Perception and Sensory Capabilities

Lesser Giants can see in the dark (as many races can), have a heightened sense of smell that allows them to track prey, and also have the ability to detect nearby magical auras.

Naming Traditions

Giant names are not like other cultures and the names are usually descriptors like "Lives in a hollow tree" or "Threw a boulder over a lake."

Beauty Ideals

Since there is very little sexual dimorphism between male and female, Giants decorate themselves with trophies of their greatest kills, jewelry made from any material imaginable, and tattoos.

Courtship Ideals

A Giant who wishes to mate with another Giant will leave gifts of food in the territory of its perspective mate. After some time passes and the gifts are well received, the gift giver will leave a final gift but wait next to it for the recipient to arrive. They then participate in a mock battle which, from the perspective of other creatures, is just as violent as a real fight. In the end one Giant will show their dominance over the other and the two will then mate. It is not required of either sex to make the first move.

History

The oral traditions of Lesser Giants claim that they are descendants of True Giants, which are now considered to be extinct, and were the first sentient creatures to exist on the material plane. The lived in solitary harmony across the world until the Dragons came. Giants were hunted by Dragons and systematically wiped out over time. Since then, Giants and Dragons have remained bitter enemies. With the arrival of Dragons came an understanding of magic no other creature on the material plane had yet grasped. Because of its connection to the Dragons, Giants hate magic almost as much as they hate Dragons.

Lesser Giants are of the belief that one day True Giants will return, and when that day comes they will stand up against the Dragons and all other races of the world, proving once and for all that Giants are the greatest of all creatures.

Interspecies Relations and Assumptions

Giants consider most humanoid species beneath them, due to their size, and because of this make very little distinction between them and animals as prey. However some Giants who are having a hard time feeding themselves (or simply do not want to hunt on their own) will join forces with an army or take up the role of guarding a small village in exchange for food.