

PUPPETEER PARASITE

Now, the real problem with the squammy floppers known as "puppeteer parasites" is that Wildspace is just swimming with dirtkickers too green to check their boots and too goggle-eyed for anyone to tell when they've been nipped. Easy enough to strip your helmsman down and sun him for wigglers when he starts holding his fork backwards, but too many crews been hived up 'cause they couldn't stomach that odd.

PUPPETEER PARASITE LORE

History DC 10: Puppeteer parasites are one of the more benign forms of mind-controlling slug found in the vast reaches of Wildspace, usually content to joyride hijacked drunks through wildspace for a tenday or three, leaving them drained and confused, rather than devouring their brains or turning them inside out.

Though their alien minds and remedial psionic abilities make them not-terribly-adept at passing unnoticed, they are often ignored so long as they don't lurch anyone too well-liked, as accusing someone of being infected is considered dreadfully rude.

History DC 15: Those piloted by puppeteer parasites can often be identified by their incredibly slow reaction times, often continuing to follow their parasite's last command long after it stops making sense. There's little point in pointing this out to them, however, as the puppets rarely can remember or see their rubbery masters, even when directly pointed out to them.

Nature DC 15: Anyone with a proper brain-and-a-half should be able to conk a parasite on mind alone, but for those of more modest cognition an intense sunning will do the trick.

Nature DC 20: Puppeteer parasite infestations are usually rooted out before they cause too much harm, but in particularly unobservant or apathetic populations can completely overtake a society, turning those outposts into hives that serve as both traps for luring in travelers and hubs from which they can spread.

PUPPETEER PARASITE TACTICS

Puppeteer parasites use humanoid hosts to gain access to restricted areas, advanced technology, and spelljamming transportation, spreading themselves to new lands. In combat, puppeteer parasites try to attach themselves to the strongest and least Intelligent enemy they can sense and direct it against its allies with their Assume Control.

If already controlling a creature and trying to hide their nature or if they attach themselves to a spellcaster, they instead use their Drain Mind and Insidious Suggestion. If their thrall is already following a command, they prefer to take the Dodge action, issuing a new command only when necessary due to the risk of Psionic Backlash.



PUPPETEER PARASITE

Tiny aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 71 (11d4 + 44)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

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

Saving Throws DEX +4, CON +6, WIS +2

Skills Deception -2, Stealth +4

Damage Vulnerabilities Radiant

Damage Resistances Fire, Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius),
Passive Perception 10

Languages The languages of any creature it is attached to. Telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Custom Mimicry. The puppeteer can add its Intelligence modifier to Charisma checks made to mimic behavior it has observed in the last 24 hours.

Psionic Backlash. If a creature the parasite is Attached to succeeds on a saving throw against one of the parasite's abilities by 5 or more, the Parasite falls prone and is Stunned until the end of its next turn.

Actions

Clinging Flop. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 bludgeoning damage and the parasite becomes [Attached](#) to the target (remove DC 12).

Drain Mind. The parasite digs its ventral teeth into a humanoid creature it is attached to, connecting directly to the creature's nervous system. The creature takes 7 (2d6) piercing plus 11 (2d10) psychic damage, then must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw.

On a failure, the creature loses all memory of the parasite and the parasite becomes undetectable to the creature until the parasite is removed or deals any damage to the creature.

Insidious Suggestion (Recharge 5-6). The parasite telepathically whispers a command to a creature it is attached to. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or follow that command for the next hour, or until the parasite uses this ability again.

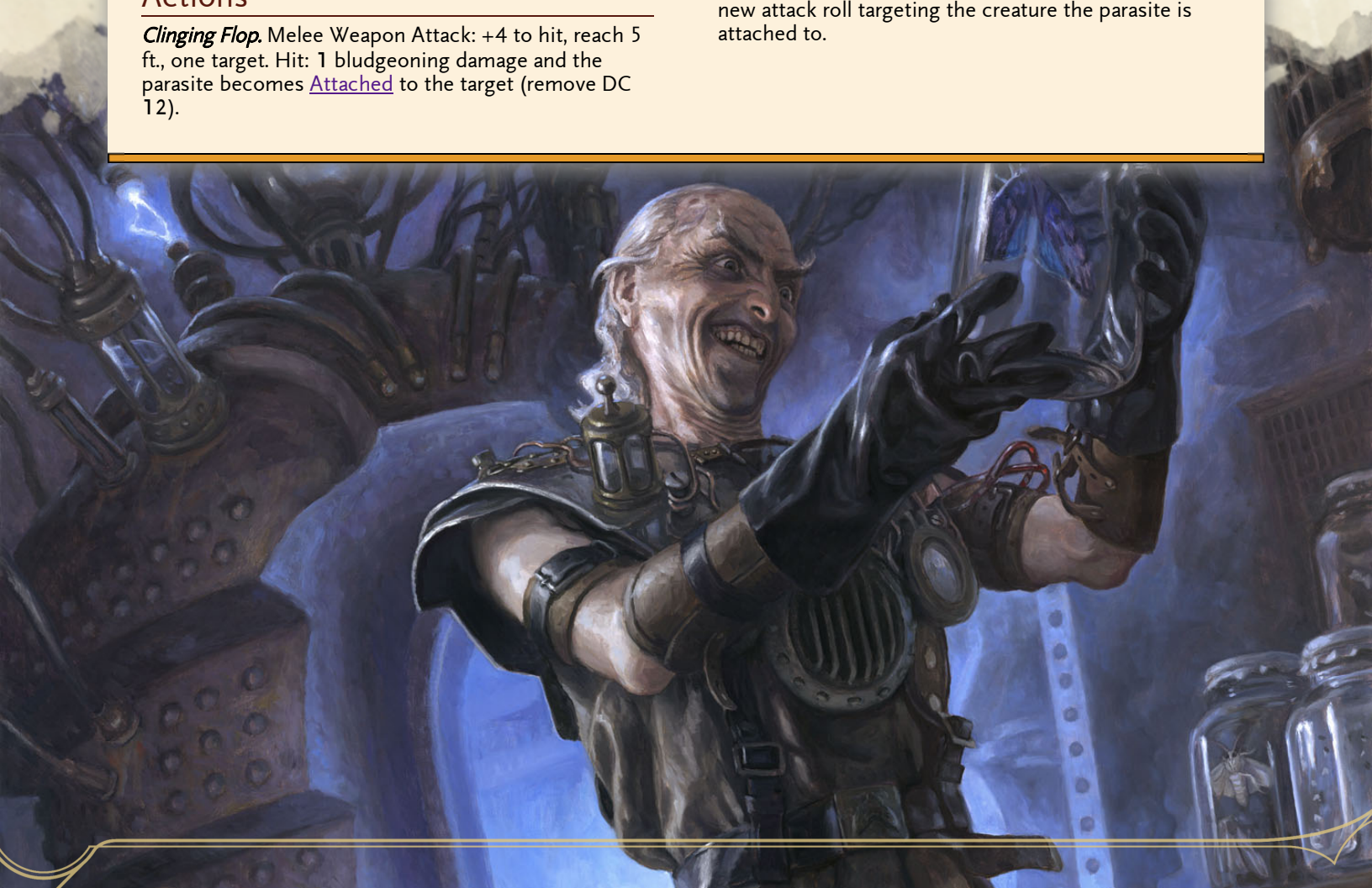
Assume Control (1/Day, Concentration). The parasite attempts to directly take control of the body of a humanoid creature it is attached to, forcing it to succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be [Dominated](#) by the parasite for the next 24 hours.

While Dominated in this way, a creature can't cast spells and uses the parasite's knowledge, mental statistics and proficiencies in place of its own.

Reactions

Slither. When a creature the parasite can see targets it with an attack while it is attached to a creature, it crawls deeper into the creature's clothing or armor, gaining half cover against the attack.

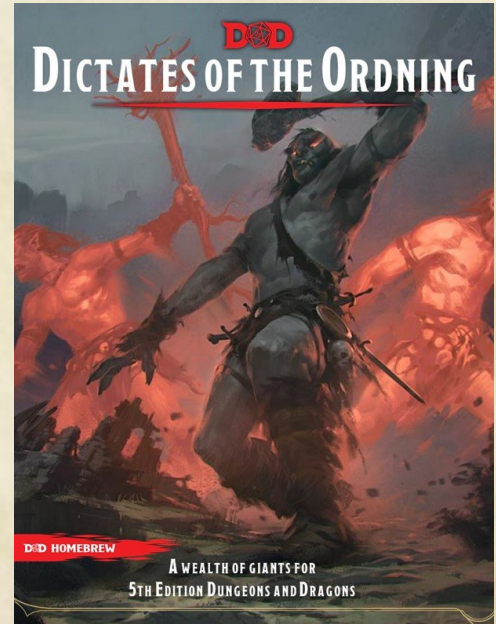
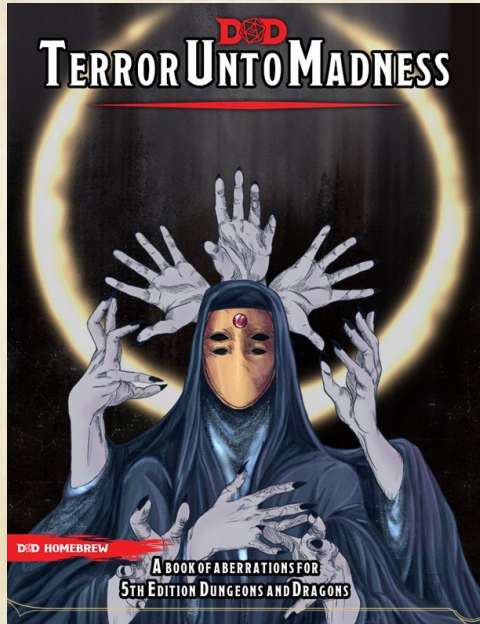
If the attack misses the parasite, the attacker makes a new attack roll targeting the creature the parasite is attached to.



ART CREDITS

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