# **PARTI** MASS COMBAT

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# MASS COMBAT BASICS REDUX NEW RULES FOR FIFTH EDITION

**BY DAVID HAMRICK** 

# New Mass Combat Rules

The Battle of Dragard Mine introduces new rules for mass combat in Fifth Edition. These rules can be added into your game with very little modification on your part.

This system doesn't change how combat works with the exception of adding two new actions, **Command** and **Rally**. The Command action allows **Leaders** (described below) to use their action to direct units in combat and the Rally action allows a leader to stop broken units from fleeing.

**Morale**, an optional rule in Fifth Edition, is also implemented in this system to add a necessary dynamic to large scale battles.

In addition to commands and morale, the system introduces **units**, which act similar to the same way that swarms do with a few additional mechanics. Units make it easier for the GM to manage multiple enemies and NPCs at once.

#### Leaders

A leader is any non-unit creature that can command a unit. Typically, leaders are the players' characters plus any important NPCs that the GM has deemed worthy of leading. A leader can join a unit by moving into the same space as the unit. Once the leader joins a unit, it cannot move or take actions of its own unless it chooses to remove itself from the unit by moving out of the unit's space. However, it can move the unit and have the unit take actions on the leader's initiative count without the unit counting towards the total number of units that it can command. The unit uses the leader's Wisdom saving throw for morale checks in place of its own. A leader that is part of a unit cannot be directly targeted by attacks, spells, or other effects that target one target or one creature.

#### Units

A unit is a single, cohesive group of soldiers or monsters comprised of 5-10 creatures of Large size or smaller. Units function similarly to swarms in that they move and attack as one, and are immune to conditions that would otherwise affect an individual creature. If a unit is hit by an area of effect spell or effect that completely envelops the unit, such as a fireball spell or a white dragon's ice breath, the unit takes double the normal damage if it has more than

half its hit points remaining. In addition, a unit that has more than half of its hit points that misses a creature with a melee attack still deals half damage against the target.

A unit obeys the commands of a leader as best as it can. It takes its turn on its leader's initiative, though it does not move or take an action unless commanded to (see Commands below). On its turn, a leader can verbally command the unit where to move (no action required by the leader). A leader can use its action to command it to take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help action. Once a unit follows the commands of one leader it cannot be commanded again until the next round begins.

In the absence of commands, the unit acts on its own, focusing on protecting itself. The unit never requires a leader's command to use its reaction, such as when making an opportunity attack.

**Optional Rule.** If you are using flanking rules in your game, you may give a unit advantage on melee attacks that it makes against creatures in the same space as the unit.

#### New Actions

The two actions described below are available to leaders to use during combat in addition to those normally offered.

**Command Action.** In combat, a character or leader NPC can use its action to command a number of units equal to its proficiency bonus within 30 feet of it. With this action, the leader commands the unit to take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help action.

**Rally Action.** When a unit flees due to a failed morale check (see Morale below), a leader can use its action to Rally the unit. The unit makes another

# MASS COMBAT BASICS REDUX

### **Mass Combat Feats**

If your campaign focuses heavily only on battles and wars, you may wish to include new options for characters.

These feat options are available to characters if you are using the optional feat rules.

#### **Charge Leader**

When a unit that you are a part of uses its action to Dash, the unit can use its bonus action to make one melee weapon attack. If the unit moves at least 10 feet in a straight line immediately before taking this bonus action and the attack hits, the unit scores a critical hit against the target.

#### **Mounted Leader**

Prerequisite: Mounted Combatant feat.

When you are mounted and part of a mounted unit, you and the unit gain the following advantages:

• You and the unit's speed increases by 10 feet.

- You and your unit has advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature or unit that is smaller than the unit.
- When the unit makes a melee attack against a creature or unit, it doesn't provoke opportunity attacks from that creature for the rest of the turn, whether the unit hit or not.

#### Commander

Prerequisite: Charisma 13 or higher. You have the ability to inspire and lead great throngs of soldiers into combat. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Charisma score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Units within 30 feet of you automatically pass Wisdom saving throws to check for morale when surprised.
- Units within 30 feet of you gain a bonus to their Wisdom saving throws equal to your Charisma modifier.

DC 10 Wisdom saving throw but adds the leader's Charisma modifier to the saving throw.

#### Morale

Units might run away when a fight turns against them. The following circumstances trigger a morale check:

- The unit is surprised.
- The unit is reduced to half its hit points or fewer for the first time in the battle.
- The unit has no way to harm the opposing side on its turn.
- A leader within 30 feet of the unit is reduced to 0 hit points, incapacitated, taken prisoner, or removed from battle and there are no other leaders within 30 feet.

To determine whether the unit flees, make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw for the unit or the unit's leader. On a failed save, the unit flees by the most expeditious route, using the Dash action if possible, at the end of each round of combat. If escape is impossible, the unit surrenders. If a unit that surrenders is attacked by its conquerors, the battle might resume, and it's unlikely that further attempts to flee or surrender will be made.

If a leader is part of a unit that is fleeing, the leader can decide to stay with the unit and flee with them or leave the unit. Otherwise, a leader cannot join a unit that is fleeing.

A leader can use the Rally action to force a unit to make another DC 10 Wisdom saving throw.

Optional Rule. If a unit flees from the edge of the map or battlefield, the unit is considered "destroyed" and cannot be rallied.  $\Omega$ 

# Sample Unit

ZOMBIE UNIT Huge unit of 10 Medium undead (human), neutral evil Armor Class 8 Hit Points 220 Speed 30 ft. STR 21 (+5) INT 3 (-4) DEX 6 (-2) WIS 6 (-2) CON 16 (+3) CHA 5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +1 Skills Perception +4 Damage Immunities poison Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14 Languages understands the languages it

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Unit. The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium zombie. If the unit is targeted by an area of effect spell or effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Undead Fortitude.** Whenever the zombie unit takes damage, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the unit does not take damage.

#### ACTIONS

**Slams.** Melee Weapon Attacks: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. Hit: 40 (10d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 22 (5d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

#### REACTIONS

**Rend.** If a Medium or smaller creature ends its turn in the same space as the zombie unit, the zombie unit can use its reaction to make a slams attack against the creature.



BY DAVID HAMRICK AND JD RUSSEL

# A Mass Combat Adventure for Fifth Edition

Cartography and primary art by Justin David Russel

The Battle of Dragard Mine is intended for a party of 4-6 11th-level characters. It uses the mass combat rules detailed earlier in this issue of **BroadSword** Magazine. You will need to learn the rules before running this campaign in order to teach it to your players and run the adventure as it is intended.

The dwarves digging in Dragard were quite surprised to discover an ancient temple within the gold-bearing mines. However, their lust for wealth urged them forward, and instead of retreating as they should have, they placed themselves in even greater danger. The body of a long-dead demi-goddess rests in the ancient prison, and there are many who hope to bring her back to the world. Such an event could cast darkness over the entire land.

# Adventure Background

Before Dragard was a gold mining operation for one of the Southern Kingdoms, it was a lucrative resource for an ancient people that occupied the land long ago. They worshipped a creature with devastating power; the Medusa Queen. For many years, the chieftains of the ancient people sacrificed their own to the Medusa Queen and made her beautiful treasures from the nearby mine. Eventually, the people became tired of the monster's demands, tired of living in fear and pain.

They rebelled against her, sealed her behind the halls she forced them to build. They did not kill her, for they still held a place of reverence for their former queen. When they were done, the chieftain ordered a long, pillared, decorative hall made so they could remember their history and their mistake. When that chieftain died, his body was interred in a chamber hidden behind a statue of the Queen in the hall. His tomb was then sealed. The people collapsed the mine and abandoned it, leaving only carvings to warn off visitors. Eventually, the monster queen was forgotten. A new mine was opened after the old tunnels were rediscovered. However, continued mining revealed the sealed tomb and prison of the monster queen. Once rumors got out that the ancient temple was discovered, all manner of dark forces turned their attention to the small mining town. In fact, the horrid beastmen of the north have sent a sizeable army south to forcibly take the mine.

# **Events Summary**

The dwarves and the troops defending the mine estimate that the beastman force will arrive at the mine within the next 48 hours. And since they are beastmen, they suspect that the force will attack at night. Thanks to dwarven ingenuity (and paranoia) Dragard Mine is fairly well-defended. And it quickly becomes obvious that standing ground at the Mine is a better bet than meeting them in the forests.

While the militia prepares for the coming battle, the characters are free to assist or explore the surrounding area. They may even attempt to enter the temple and discover the Medusa Queen's petrified remains.

On the second day, the beastmen attack. Joined by only five units of trained soldiers and six units of dwarven miners armed with pickaxes, the characters must fend off the beastmen. If they succeed, the beastmen retreat to the hills. But should they fail, the resurrected demi-goddess could spell doom for all of mankind.

# Adventure Hooks

Once word that the beastmen were marching on Dragard Mine, the dwarves sent out their fastest runners to secure help. This adventure assumes that the characters are in a large town or small city roughly 25 miles from Dragard Mine when the runners arrive. A call to arms mobilizes roughly 40 troops, enough to help defend the mine until additional reinforcements can arrive.

#### The Fight Against Evil

The leader of the mobilized militia, Omar Goldwind (LN male human **veteran**), approaches the characters and asks them for assistance. He tries to appeal to their better natures. Should that fail, he offers an official favor to the characters within what's possible, perhaps information on a future quest, the rites to land near the city, or some other manageable request.

#### Thar's Gold In Them Hills

In addition, the dwarven runners are offering every person that can help 500 gp worth of nuggets taken directly from the lode. If the characters present themselves as particularly useful, the dwarves may offer even more gold for them to fill their bags with.

# **The Dragard Mine**

Dragard Mine is a well-fortified mining town. Its defenses were further improved by the dwarves once they took possession of it. They rebuilt its towers and walls and established new buildings necessary for the operation.

#### Traveling to the Mine

The mine is just a day's ride from where the characters were approached. The terrain surrounding the mine is quiet, lacking settlements and farmsteads. While traveling, the characters might engage Omar and his troops in conversation to learn a little more about them.

Eventually, felled trees and wagon tracks offer the first clues to the mine's presence in the hills. Soon, the tall walls and babbling moat surrounding most of the mine come into view.

#### Mine Exterior

Normally, the mine would be alive with the sounds of the dwarven workers toiling inside. However, the coming beastmen forces have cast an aura of gloom over the town. Now, the dwarves wait for outside assistance, hoping they can hold onto their tenuous stake in the gold mine.

The dwarves did an exceptional job returning the old mining site to its former glory. The 60-foot stone walls are fully repaired. At the eastern edge of the mining town, a watermill churns the water pouring from the falls down the face of the mountain, powering the grain mill. From there, the river splits away into a wide creek heading east, then around the front of the mine acting as a moat.

#### The Moat

A 50-foot wide moat surrounds the entirety of the mine save for the cliff face at the northern end. The moat is 20-feet deep at its lowest point. Two drawbridges offer the only way over the moat, one at the western edge of Dragard and another at the south. Any dangerous creatures that once swam in its waters are long gone.

When the characters arrive, the drawbridges descend to allow them and the troops access, then quickly rise once they're through.

#### The Walls

The massive stone walls surrounding half the operation are close to 60-feet high all the way around, providing ample views of the valley before the mine. Each tower has enough room to support a full unit of archers or manned ballistas.

# The Pond

The most vulnerable side of the mine is the eastern approach near Dragard Pond. Although the moat provides plenty of coverage, a determined assault would undoubtedly approach from that angle. On arrival, Goldwind instructs the troops to assist the dwarves in planting sharpened wooden spikes in the water and on the moats banks.

#### The Town

Like the walls, the town itself is in exceptional condition. Most of the brick buildings were in ruins when the dwarves reclaimed Dragard Mine. Then, they quickly rebuilt the town, using stone pulled from the mine itself. There is barely any hint at the mine's age save for a few foundation stones and ancient markings on the cliff face.

#### Garrison

The town's garrison houses 10 guards lead by Tanner Faze (NE male human veteran). Faze took the job as the town's garrison captain in hopes of eventually overpowering the dwarves once the lode was clear. Then the dwarves discovered the Medusa Queen. Faze now waits for the beastmen to arrive in Dragard so he can turn the tables on the dwarves and their allies in exchange for ownership of the mine and its gold.

#### Golden Flask Inn

The Golden Flask's owners-a pair of halfling brothers named Nobin and Hoevar (both N **commoners**)-are in a bit of a bad spot with their fellow townsmen and women. To drum up business, the brothers got the word out about the gold discovered in the mine. Naturally, a rush followed. Annoyed, Rogar brushed off the majority of the opportunists looking for jobs in the tunnels, although a few were given employment. Of course, that wasn't the issue. The real issue stemmed from the pair bragging about the "ancient snake

#### The Tunnels

Before the battle, the entrance to the mine is guarded by 5 of the garrison's guards. They are all loyal to Faze, but otherwise, remain impartial. They are under instructions not to let anyone into the tunnels. However, the characters should have no trouble convincing the guards that they should be allowed entry into the mine. Most are seasoned warriors who know trouble when they statue" the dwarves found in the sealed prison. Now, everyone in Dragard blames them for attracting the beastmen forces. Glad to see business come through, the brothers will jump at the opportunity to cater to Omar, the troops, and the characters.

#### Headman

The headman's office acts both as a home to the headman, Rogar Knockskull (LG male dwarf **noble**), and the administrative offices for the mine. Rogar is an amiable enough fellow, despite being somewhat short-tempered and grouchy, and is known for always chewing on tobacco leaves. He eagerly assists Omar and the characters. While the mine is important to him, he's more concerned about the livelihoods of his fellow miners. Before the mine, many of the dwarves were unemployed. Dragard gave them purpose.

After the dwarves cleared the mine, they stored their findings in the headman's office. 320 pounds (16,000 gp) of gold nuggets are stored there for safe keeping in the headman's vault. The vault itself is made of solid steel with an AC of 19 and 200 hp. A character can pick the lock with a successful DC 23 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

#### Miners Barracks

All 65 miners who work the mine live in the barracks at the mouth of the tunnels. While mostly clean, the unmistakable smell of ale, body odor, and dust from the tunnels cling to the bunks like shadows. The quarters' majordomo Hollee (NG female dwarf **veteran**) ensures that the miners have

see it.

The dwarves did an exceptional job reestablishing the old tunnels. Once they learned of the approaching beastmen forces, the miners stopped production immediately. They removed the gold they had retrieved from the mountain, but a few bits and pieces still remain, locking it in Rogar's office. Regardless, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of everything they need. Hollee is friendly but sensible—if she believes the characters have no real business at the barracks, she'll shoo them off.

#### Temple

Sister Grindstone (LG female dwarf **priestess**) manages a non-denominational temple in town. Many of the miners come from different backgrounds, therefore, it only made sense to keep things loose. She assists with the anxiety, stress, and other issues brought on from the toil. Grindstone is eager to help with healing and care when its needed.

#### Trader

An elven merchant named Danick (N male elf **noble**) runs the trade shop. His business opens its doors two days out of the week, offering the dwarves essentials imported from the south. Just his luck that he arrived in Dragard right as the beastmen forces were approaching. Now he's trapped there like everyone else.

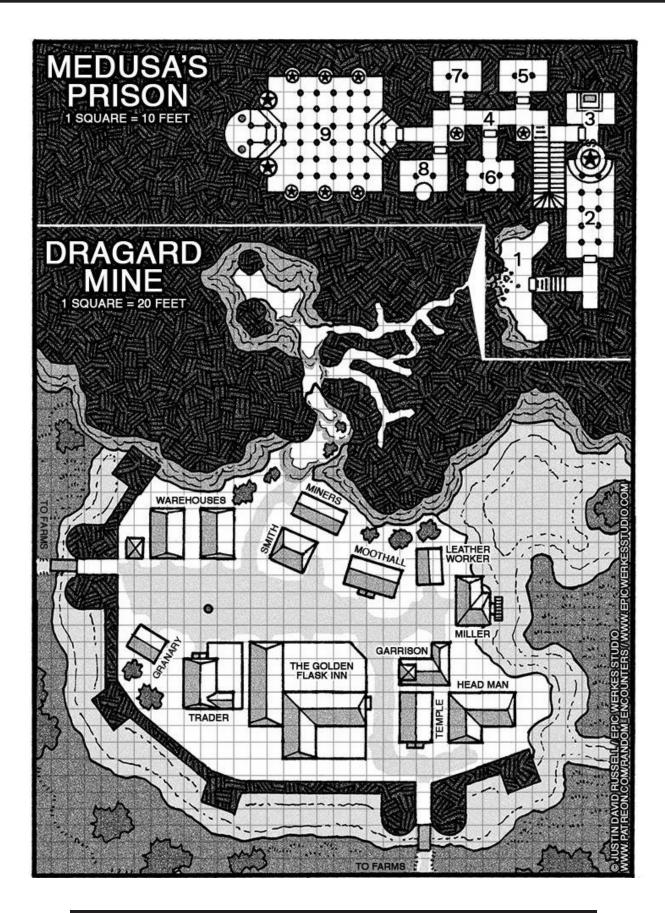
Danick is nervous and talkative, but not a complete coward. He is assisted by a half-hobgoblin bodyguard named Brock (CN male **hobgoblin**) who normally protects Danick on his supply runs. The bodyguard's thoughts are always with his family who lives to the east. Despite his considerable pay, Brock has no issue ditching Danick if the going gets tough.

Danick's trading post has most of the items detailed in the PHB (25 gp or less) available for purchase but does not trade in arms or armor.

roughly 1,000 gp worth of gold nuggets littering the main lode at the northwestern corner of the mine.

#### The Narrow Passage

The entrance to the Medusa's Prison is a short, narrow tunnel pushing into the eastern rock. The tunnel is low. Any character that is Medium or larger and not a dwarf will have to crawl on his or her hands and knees.



# The Medusa's Prison

The long-dormant Medusa Queen rests in the hidden prison at Dragard. In addition to the hidden entrance, the creators of the prison placed dangerous traps and immortal sentries to prevent anyone from ever finding her.

#### **General Features**

The Prison is grand in its design, demonstrating the respect its creators had for the Medusa Queen. Stonework decorated with inlaid mother of pearl, gold, and silver depicts the history of the people who came before the dwarves. Frescoes dominate the floors and ceilings, and all of the columns are carved in the form of great heroes of a long-forgotten age.

Ceilings in the halls and chambers are 20 feet high. All of the doors are made of heavy stone balanced on thick stone hinges. Most are barred from the side that the characters will approach. It should be clear by this design that there are things within that were not meant to be let out.

Below is a summary of the locations keyed to the Medusa's Prison map. The prison has no light sources, so it is assumed the characters have darkvision or another means of seeing in the dark.

#### 1 – Landing

Finally, after crawling for a hundred feet or so, the tunnel opens into a large cavern. Here is where the dwarves discovered the old temple. The temple's facade juts from the stone wall; its antique architecture betrays its age. A massive stone door, likely opened by the dwarves, reveals stone stairs descending into darkness.

Written above the door are glyphs in an unrecognizable language.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check reveals the language to be Old Common. If the characters have

a way of deciphering the glyphs, they read: "Turn Away Now and Let The Queen Sleep."

#### 2 – Main Temple

Over a dozen columns carved to look like great warriors, mages, and priests lift the detailed frescoed ceilings 20-feet above you. Inlaid mother-of-pearl, gold, and silver streak the walls. At the northern end, atop a stone dais, stands a huge, marble statue of a woman with snakes for hair offering a sword with both hands.

Her eyes appear to be made of green gems.

The statue is of the Medusa Queen. Behind the statue is a secret door leading further into the Prison. Beyond the main entrance, there are no other obvious exits.

A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of the secret door. Then, a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) shows how exactly to access the door. The sword the medusa holds works as a counterweight. Should it be removed, nothing happens. However, if the gems in the Medusa Queen's eyes are placed in her hands, it opens the secret door. If a character makes an Intelligence (Investigation) check and rolls a 15-19, they can tell that the puzzle has something to do with the sword and her arms, but not the gems.

**Trap.** If the gems are removed from the statue's eyes but not placed into her hands, all of the doors into and out of the chamber seal shut (DC 25 Strength check to break open) and a petrifying gas pours from the empty eye sockets. Have the characters roll initiative. On initiative count 20, each character in the temple must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the character begins to turn to stone and is restrained. On the next initiative count 20, the restrained character must repeat the saving throw, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the character is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Replacing the emeralds or stuffing the sockets with fabric, rocks, or something else will stop the gas from pouring out. Alternatively, the characters can remove the sword from her hands and place the gems in her hands. Doing this stops the trap and causes the statue and dais to rotate 90 degrees counterclockwise, revealing the entry to Area **#2**. The sealed doors also open.

The characters can attempt to open the secret door without using the statue. Doing so requires a successful DC 25 Strength check to rotate it.

**Treasure**. The emeralds are worth 1,000 gp each.

#### 3 – Guardian's Tomb

Once the characters enter the guardian's tomb from the secret entrance in the temple, read the following.

A sarcophagus rests atop a simple, stone dais. To your right is a door barred from this side. Judging by the musty smell of the air and undisturbed, dust, no creature has set foot in this tomb for a very long time.

The second line of defense in the Medusa's Prison rests here in the guardian's tomb. It is the restless spirit of the chieftain.

**Creature**. The guardian is a **greater specter** (see its stats in the Appendix) and rises from its tomb the moment the characters enter. It first attempts to frighten the characters off, but then attacks should they try to remove the bar to the door leading deeper into the prison. Once activated, it fights until destroyed.

**Treasure**. Removing the lid to the sarcophagus requires a DC 16 Strength check. Within, lies the bones of the guardian and in its skeletal clutches is an ancient sword of sharpness.

#### 4 - Prison

At the base of the stairs is the old prison. Here, the medusa's minions were stored and locked away (in areas 5, 6, 7, and 8). Two **stone golems** carved to resemble the Medusa Queen stand guard in the two alcoves in the southern wall. Entering the Prison Hallway without speaking the Old Common phrase "regina velim visos" engages the golems and seals all exits into and out of the hall.

**Creatures & Trap.** The stone golems are programmed for one thing: destroy all who enter. Unfortunately, they aren't the only danger in the hallway. Once the doors are sealed, vents in the floors and ceilings begin to suck the breathable air out of the hallway. A successful DC 16 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disables the trap. Until disabled, however, the character must hold their breath or begin to suffocate.

Even if the golems are destroyed, the hall remains sealed. The doors are difficult to open, requiring a DC 25 Strength check to break the deadbolts holding them in place. A character can make a successful DC 21 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to unlock the doors as well. Once the door leading back to Area 3 is reopened, the room once again fills with breathable air.

#### 5 – Gorgon's Cell

This large room lacks the decorations present in the other parts of this underground temple. In fact, it almost looks like a prison cell. At the center of the room, lying motionless, is what appears to be a bull made of armored plates.

Once the Medusa Queen's beloved pet, the gorgon in this chamber is long dead. However, its exoskeleton gives it a false semblance of life. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals that it is dead.

#### 6 – Anzerak's Cell

As you open the door to this room, a whimpering, growling voice calls out in the darkness in a language you don't understand. Suddenly, something leaps out at you!

Anzerak was the Medusa Queen's greatest general. An immortal **vampire**, Anzerak stayed cruelly locked away in this cell for over a thousand years as the creators of the prison made it impossible for him to escape using his mist form. Eventually, the internment drove Anzerak insane. Lacking a proper meal for all that time, Anzerak wastes no time attacking. He appears emaciated and ghoulish due to his long imprisonment. In fact, it may not be immediately obvious that he is a vampire.

**Creature**. Anzerak wants to draw blood as quickly as possible. Once he feeds, he attempts to revert to his mist form and escape. Should Anzerak find himself cornered, he will try to make a deal with the characters, promising them anything they want. He explains all he knows about the prison, its creators, and the Medusa Queen. He is desperate to leave and will fight to the death if threatened with reinternment.

#### 7 – Nola's Cell

A humanoid skeleton with the head of a wolf rests against the far wall. It looks like it may have been a prison cell at some point.

The Medusa Queen's werewolf handmaiden, Nola died shortly after her imprisonment.



#### 8-Skeleton Room

Hundreds of bones litter the floor. Judging by their size and shape, these were the remains of humanoids.

The remaining humanoids working for the Medusa Queen were imprisoned in this room. Most died at the hands of the others, slain, cannibalized, and discarded.





#### 9-Her Final Resting Place

The door leading into this area from Area #4 isn't just locked, it's been completely sealed. Only by completely destroying it can the characters enter. The vault door has an AC of 17 with 100 hp and a damage threshold of 5; it is immune to psychic and poison damage. In addition, the entire area and sealed door have a magic ward placed upon it. Divination spells do not work in the room, nor do spells or powers that allow characters to teleport or gate into or out of the chamber. In addition, the walls, door, columns, and other features have resistance to damage from spells and other magical effects.

Once they enter, read the following:

This massive chamber is quite the sight to behold. Much like the first temple at the head of this underground fortress, frescoes, reliefs, and carved statues decorate the entirety of the room. At the far side of the chamber atop a stone dais sits a stone figure. It looks similar to the first statue of the snake-haired woman in the temple but humanoid-sized... almost as if it had once been a real woman that was turned to stone. She holds a golden harp in her hands. Knowing she had no way to escape, the Queen went into a dormant state, voluntarily turning herself to stone. Should a greater restoration spell or similar magic be cast upon her, the Medusa Queen immediately returns to life.

The Medusa Queen is an incredibly powerful creature. Hopefully, the warnings all throughout the temple dissuade the characters from reviving her. However, if they do revive her, she first tries to convince the characters to worship her as the goddess she considers herself. Failing that, she attacks and escape. See the Appendix for her statistics.

**Treasure**. The only possession the Medusa Queen had to keep her mind occupied was a small magic harp called the *Medusa's Melody*. Her stone form still clutches the harp. See the "Medusa's Melody" sidebar for details.

#### The Battle of Dragard Mine

The beastman forces attacks the second night that the characters are there. Scouts detect the presence of the beastmen an hour before they arrive. This will give the characters and Omar plenty of time to get the troops into position.

#### The Allies

Many of the NPCs mentioned in this adventure assist with the PCs including Omar, Tanner Fade, Sister Grindstone, Rogar, Danick, Hollee, and Brock. The Golden Flask Inn's brothers stay out of the combat.

The characters have the following troops at their disposal (see the Mass Combat Rules section for statistics):

- 3 guard units
- 2 archers units
- 6 miners units

Unless a confrontation occurs between Omar and the characters beforehand, Omar trusts the characters with the battlefield strategies and tactics. The character may place Omar's units anywhere they like.

#### The Enemies

Once the characters and the troops are in position, the beastmen forces arrive.

War horns disrupt the night sky. Hoots, howls, and growls pour from the woods to the south. With what little light is available to you, you see the beastmen emerge from the trees. They each stand 6-7 feet tall, and have the heads of goats, bulls, antelope, and other horned creatures. And there appears to be nearly two hundred of them of them, all armed and slavering.

The beastmen forces consists of:

- 15 beastmen hordes
- 4 ogre units
- 2 hill giants
- 4 minotaurs

The beastmen forces are 200 feet away from the south moat when they appear, taking only a single round to test the mettle of the dwarves and soldiers within the mine. Then, they charge, moving at their full speed and taking the Dash action until they reach the water.

**Tactics**. The beastman forces lacs any form of strategy or tactics, nor do they use any ranged weapons. Only the hill giants have their rocks. However, the force does have superior numbers which they hope to whelm the mine's inhabitants with. One-quarter of the force attacks the western drawbridge, another quarter attacks the southern draw bridge and the remaining units attempt to cross the water to the east.

Once a beastman horde is within 40 feet of a raised drawbridge, they use their action to toss grappling hooks at it. On their next turn, they attempt to pull the drawbridge down. Doing so requires two successful DC 21 Strength checks. If a beastman horde rolls a 20 on the check, they get two successes. Forcing the drawbridge down breaks its gears, making it impossible to retract. While the beastmen attack the drawbridges, hill giants provide cover by tossing rocks at archers, spellcasters, and any others who could stop their progress.

With the drawbridges down, the beastmen and their companions are free to enter the mine and kill anything they come across.

Swimming across the moat is a dangerous affair for the remaining beastmen force. Each round a unit or creature is in the water, it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (3d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one. If a unit has half its hit points or more, it makes this saving throw with disadvantage.

**Morale Checks.** The beastmen are terrified of their superiors (the minotaurs) and automatically pass morale checks as long as at least one minotaur is within 30 feet of them.

#### **Special Events**

During the battle, special events can occur to spice things up a little. At the start of each round, you can choose one of the events on the table to the right, or roll 1d10 to see what happens.



# **Concluding the Adventure**

If the characters successfully defeat the beastman forces, the next day, the miners celebrate and hold a feast in their honor at the town's moot hall. There and then, the characters are given the awards they were promised by the dwarves and/or Omar and his troops.

If Fade and his men turned on the miners, they are arrested by Omar and locked in the garrison until reinforcements arrive. Omar may seek the counsel of the characters what to do with the traitors.

#### d10 Battle Special Event

- 1-4 Nothing Happens
- 5 Brock retreats from combat, leaving Danick to fend for himself.
- 6 In the excitement, a fire breaks out in one of the buildings. At the start of each round of combat, it spreads, catching additional buildings on fire. A creature can use its action to put out a 5 x 5 square of fire, or a unit can use its action to put out a 15 x 15 area of fire.
- 7 A previously unseen **minotaur** sneaks into the mine and heads for the lode. One of the miners notices it and alerts the others.
- 8 Tanner Fade and a unit of guards turn on the inhabitants of the mine. They head for the headman's offices, hoping to steal the gold stored there.
- 9 2 **beastmen** hordes emerge from the forest to join the beastman forces.
- 10 1 **frost giant** emerges from the forest to join the beastmen.

#### **Further Developments**

In the off chance that the characters revived the Medusa Queen or the beastmen secured the mine, the Medusa Queen returns to wreak havoc on the world. She may even become a recurring villain for the characters, recruiting dark creatures—such as the beastmen—to do her bidding.

Even if the Medusa Queen didn't return from her slumber, the character may consider holing up in Dragard Mine until the place can be properly secured.

After all, the beastmen were just the beginning...  $\boldsymbol{\Omega}$ 

# DRAGARD MINE APPENDIX T NEW MONSTERS AND MAGIC ITEMS

**BY DAVID HAMRICK** 

# **New Magic Item**

#### Medusa's Melody

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)

This harp is simple in its design, with no decorations to speak of. However, its strings have a curious silver sheen to them. A creature that attempts to play the instrument without being attuned to it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 2d4 psychic damage.

You can use an action to play the instrument. While playing the instrument, all creatures within 30 feet of you that can hear the instrument must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed saving throw, the creature has disadvantage on its saving throws and attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

On subsequent turns, you can use your action to maintain this effect, extending its duration until the end of your next turn. However, the effect ends if you move more than 60 feet away from a creature, if the creature can't hear you, or if the creature takes damage.

On its turn, an affected creature can use its action to make another Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on itself with a success.

Once the effect ends for it, or if the creature succeeds on its initial saving throw against this effect, the creature is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

# **New Monsters**

#### The Medusa Queen

Once worshipped by the ancient people who lived and toiled in Dragard Mine, the Medusa Queen was a dangerous foe and curse on the land. Fortunately, the ancient people were able to lock her away in the temple they'd built for her. Since then, she has laid dormant for hundreds of years. Should she rise again, undoubtedly an unshakeable shadow would fall across the land.

#### The Medusa Queen's Lair

The Medusa Queen's lair is the prison that now holds her. Despite being trapped there and lying dormant within for hundreds of years, she still holds power over the location.

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Medusa Queen takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; she can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The medusa casts the confusion spell on every creature of her choice within 60 feet of her. She must be able to see the creatures. Casting the spell using this ability does not cost her a spell slot, nor does it require components.
- The medusa animates a stone statue that she can see within 120 feet of her. As a bonus action on each of her turns, she can mentally command the animated statue she made with this lair action if the statue is within 500 feet of her. If she controls multiple statues, she can command any or all of them at the same time, issuing the same command to each one. She decides what action the statue will take and where it will move during its next turn, or she can issue a general command, such as to guard a particular chamber or corridor.

If she issues no commands, the statue only defends itself against hostile creatures. Once given an order, the stone statue continues to follow it until its task is complete. The statue has the same statistics as animated armor. The medusa can have up to three statues created by this ability at a time.

• The medusa targets one creature she can see within 60 feet of her. Until the start of that creature's next turn, it has disadvantage on Constitution saving throws.

**Regional Effects.** The region containing the Medusa Queen's lair is warped by her magic, creating one or more of the following effects:

- If a humanoid spends at least 1 hour within 1 mile of the lair, that creature must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or go mad. It gains a character flaw which lasts until cured: "I will do anything I can to get my hands on more wealth and power."
- Stone statues, reliefs, and other works of art with 1 mile of the lair bleed from their eyes during the light of a full moon.
- Snakes within 6 miles of the lair become unusually savage, killing far more than what they need for food, traveling in huge swarms.

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Medusa Queen Medium monstrosity, lawful evil								
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA			
			22 (+6)					

Skills Arcana +10, Deception +10, Insight +9, Perception +9, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Infernal

**Challenge** 3 (25000 XP)

Special Equipment. Medusa's Melody (see description on facing page)

Petrifying Gaze. When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw, if the medusa isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a creature that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic. Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its

If the medusa sees itself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of it and in an area of bright light, the medusa is, due to its curse, affected by its own gaze.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). When the medusa fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The medusa has advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects.

Spellcasting. The medusa is an 11th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). The medusa has the following bard spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, vicious mockery
- 1st level (4 slots): charm person, disguise self, Tasha's hideous laughter
- 2nd level (3 slots): detect thoughts, enthrall, invisibility, shatter
- 3rd level (3 slots): bestow curse, dispel magic, nondetection
- 4th level (3 slots): compulsion, confusion
- 5th level (2 slots): dominate person, hold monster
- 6th level (1 slot): mass suggestion

#### ACTIONS

*Multiattack.* The medusa uses her Frightful Presence. She then makes either three melee attacks-one with her snake hair and two with her shortsword-or two ranged attacks with her longbow.

Snake Hair. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage plus 21 (6d6) poison damage.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

*Frightful Presence.* Each creature of the medusa's choice that is within 90 feet of her and aware of her must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the medusa's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

#### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The medusa can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The medusa regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Attack. The medusa makes an attack with her shortsword or her longbow.

Teleport. The medusa magically teleports, along with any equipment she is wearing or carrying, up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space she can see.

Focused Gaze (Costs 2 Actions). The medusa targets one creature she can see within 30 feet of her with her petrifying gaze. The creature must make a DC 20 Constitution saving. If it fails its saving throw, it is instantly petrified. If it succeeds on its saving throw, it begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic. A creature can use its reaction to avert its eyes and avoid the saving throw. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the medusa in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.



#### **Greater Specter**

A specter is the angry, unfettered spirit of a humanoid that has been prevented from passing to the afterlife. Specters no longer possess connections to who or what they were, yet are condemned to walk the world forever.

Greater specters are older specters who maintain a piece of their undying quest. Although more rational than their lesser kin, they are also far more dangerous.

**Undead Nature.** The greater specter does not require air, food, or sleep.

#### A Greater Specter's Lair

Greater specters influence the locations they haunt, exerting their will over their surroundings. Often, the specter's lair is a tomb where its original body rests. Some long-forgotten mission binds it to that location. The intense psychic energy the specter emits distorts and changes the place. Thick, musty mist clings to the floors. It's always cold, even in the midst of summer. And dark, pervasive thoughts echo through the thoughts of trespassers.

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the specter takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the specter can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

• **Dread Moan.** The specter targets one creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened. While frightened, the target's speed is

GREATER SPECTER Medium undead, chaotic evil								
Armor Class 14 Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54) Speed 0 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)								
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА			
1 (-5)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)			

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +6, Cha +10

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11 Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

*Incorporeal Movement.* The specter can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 4 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the specter fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The specter has advantage on saving throws against spells and magical effects.

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

#### ACTIONS

Multiattack. The creature makes two life drain attacks.

*Greatsword.* Melee Spell Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 28 (8d6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0, and returns as a wraith in 1 minute.

#### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The specter can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The specter regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Forceful Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (3d6) force damage.

 ${\it Invisibility.}$  The specter magically turns invisible until it attacks or casts a spell. Any equipment the specter wears or carries is invisible with it.

Life Drain (Costs 2 Actions). The specter uses its life drain attack.

halved and it can't use reactions.

- Snap Freeze. Each creature within 30 feet of the specter must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, a creature gains one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to necrotic damage automatically pass the saving throw.
- **Telekinetic Thrust.** The specter targets a creature or unattended object within 30 feet of it. A creature must be a Medium or smaller to be affected by this magic, and an object can weigh up to 200 pounds.

The target must succeed on a DC 17 Strength check or the specter hurls the target up to 30 feet in any direction, including upward. If the target then comes into contact with a hard surface or heavy object, the target takes 1d6 damage per 10 feet moved. If the target is an object that isn't being worn or carried, the specter hurls it up to 30 feet in any direction. The specter can use the object as a ranged weapon, attacking one creature along the object's path (+9 to hit) and dealing 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage on a hit.

# New Mass Combat Units

The following units are used with the new mass combat rules, participating in the *Battle of Dragard Mine*.  $\Omega$ 

#### MINERS UNIT Huge unit of 10 Medium humanoids

(dwarf), lawful neutral Armor Class 11 (armor scraps) Hit Points 50

 Speed 25 ft.

 STR 20 (+5)
 INT 10 (+0)

 DEX 10 (+0)
 WIS 10 (+0)

 CON 20 (+5)
 CHA 10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Resistances poison Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14 Languages Common, Dwarven Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Unit. The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium dwarf. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

**Dwarven Resilience.** The unit has advantage on saving throws against poison.

# ACTIONS

**Pick Axes.** Melee Weapon Attacks: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. Hit: 40 (10d6 + 5) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 22 (5d6 + 5) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

#### GUARD UNIT Huge unit of 10 Medium humanoids (human), lawful neutral Armor Class 16 (chains shirts, shields) Hit Points 110 Speed 30 ft. STR 21 (+5) INT 10 (+0) DEX 12 (+1) WIS 11 (+0) CON 12 (+1) CHA 10 (+0) Skills Perception +6 Condition Immunities charmed,

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned Senses passive Perception 16 Languages Common Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

**Unit.** The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium human. If the unit is targeted by an area of effect spell or effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

# ACTIONS

**Spears.** Melee Weapon Attacks: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. Hit: 40 (10d6 + 5) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 22 (5d6 + 5) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

*Volley of Spears.* The unit hurls its spears at a point that it can see within 60 feet of it. Each creature in a 15-foot cube centered on that point must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the unit has half its hit points or fewer, the target instead takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage on a successful one.

# THE BATTLE OF DRAGARD MINE

#### ARCHERS UNIT Huge unit of 10 Medium humanoids (human), lawful neutral Armor Class 13 (leather armor) Hit Points 110 Speed 30 ft. STR 19 (+4) INT 10 (+0) DEX 14 (+2) WIS 11 (+0) CON 12 (+1) CHA 10 (+0) Skills Perception +6 Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned Senses passive Percention 16

prone, restrained, stunned Senses passive Perception 16 Languages Common Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) Unit. The unit can occupy a Medium or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can more through any open-

smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium human. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

# ACTIONS

Short Swords. Melee Weapon Attacks: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or one target in the same space as the unit. Hit: 39 (10d6 + 4) piercing damage, or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 21 (5d6 + 4) piercing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

*Volley of Arrows.* The unit fires its longbows at a point that it can see within 600 feet of it. Each creature in a 15-foot cube centered on that point must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 27 (6d8) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the unit has half its hit points or fewer, the target instead takes 13 (3d8) piercing damage on a failed saving throw, and no damage on a successful one. A target has advantage on this saving throw if it is 150 or further from the unit.



**OGRE HORDE** Gargantuan unit of 10 Large giants, chaotic evil Armor Class 11 (hide armor) Hit Points 590 (33d20 + 231) Speed 40 ft. STR 27 (+8) INT 5 (-3) DEX 8 (-1) WIS 7 (-2) CON 24 (+7) CHA 7 (-2) Skills Perception +10 Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned Senses passive Perception 11 Languages Common, Giant Challenge 18 (20,000 XP) Unit. The unit can occupy a Large or smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Large ogre. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points. Siege Monster. The unit deals double damage to objects and structures. ACTIONS Greatclubs. Melee Weapon Attacks: +14 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or sharing the same space as the unit. Hit: 98 (20d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 53 (10d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

BEASTMAN HORDE Huge unit of 10 Medium monstrosities, chaotic evil Armor Class 16 (breastplates) Hit Points 200 Speed 40 ft. STR 23 (+6) INT 7 (-2) **DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 9 (-1) CON 22 (+6) CHA 6 (-2) Skills Perception +7 Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17 Languages Abyssal Challenge 11 (7,200 XP) Unit. The unit can occupy a Medium or

smaller creature's space and vice versa, and the unit can move through any opening large enough for a Medium beastman. If the unit is targeted by an area effect that completely encloses the unit and the unit has more than half its hit points remaining, the unit takes double damage from the effect. The unit can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

*Charge.* If the unit moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a ram attack on teh same turn, the target takes an extra 35 (10d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

# ACTIONS

**Greataxes.** Melee Weapon Attacks: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or sharing the same space as the unit. Hit: 71 (10d12 + 6) slashing damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 38 (5d12 + 6) slashing damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.

**Horns.** Melee Weapon Attacks: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target within reach or sharing the same space as the unit. Hit: 41 (10d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage or half as much damage on a miss. Or, the unit deals 23 (5d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage on a hit and no damage on a miss if the unit has half its hit points or fewer.