

GEMHIDE, THE WHITE BULETTE

Bulettes have been regular targets for monster hunts and local bounties. Their appearance always means trouble for the locals, as they terrorize and devastate vast stretches of land which they claim as their new territory. However, this bulette in question is one of a kind and one of the most fiercely pursued monsters in the land.

Gemhide is a unique albino bulette, named after the precious gems lodged into her hide, by the first hunters who laid eyes on her. Ever since this first encounter, she has been migrating from land to land in search for a territory of her own. But wherever she went, hunters keen for her priced gems followed, never allowing her to settle. Thus she has been continuously migrating from land to land for years in pursuit. Gemhide though, is an extraordinary specimen; She possesses an extensive bulk and great cunning, surpassing the common bulette in every way. Exceptional traits which were only further honed during the endless hunts for her head. Despite the great efforts to slay this sought after beast, Gemhide has always been able to elude her hunters, which caused her legend only to grow.

Many foolhardy hunters have tried to take her down and many aspiring hunters found their end in the pursuit of this legend.

Deep Delver. Aside from Gemhide's paleness, she was born with a pair of adamant claws. These allow her to dig through solid rock. With these claws, she is able to burrow deep underground, far enough to expand her hunting grounds to the Underdark. Her ability to flexibly move between the depths and the surface makes tracking Gemhide with conventional hunting methods almost impossible.

Gemcrusted. What elevated Gemhide from a peculiar albino specimen to the now legendary prey are the gems lodged into her underbelly. Wild tales are told in hunting lodges about how this beast came to be this way. Speculations range wildly from fantastic tales to rather straight-forward and dull explanations. For instance some believe her to be blessed by the gods to be the ultimate test of hunting. Others think her gem-covered state is the result of Gemhide's many deep delves which simply caused an occasional gem to get stuck in her softest parts over time. Whatever the reason is, these gems are very real and so is their value. This means a hunter who were to take down Gemhide would not only be able to harvest the bulette's great fortune, but he would also receive the fame for slaying the beast.

Coveted Target. Unsurprisingly, competition to be the one hunter to slay the legendary white bulette is high. Even despite the fact that all efforts to take her

Tuz's Fearsome Foes: Gemhide, the White Bulette down have failed so far, people are not deterred. Locales in which reports of this legendary beast spread are soon to attract vast amounts of monster hunters. Anyone who will plan to hunt this beast themselves will have to recon with fierce competition. In particular one will have to beware of a certain man who has been ruthlessly hunting this creature for years.

INFORMATION GATHERING

Players not in the know about Gemhide might be surprised about the high number of monster hunters in a certain locale, or they already have set their eyes on Gemhide and want to learn more about her. You can let your players roll Intelligence (History), Intelligence (Investigation), Charisma (Persuasion), or other skills that you deem appropriate to learn more about Gemhide.

Easy: DC 10 – Gemhide is a rare albino bulette that has valuable gems lodged in her skin. She is a legendary beast that is a top target for numerous hunters.

Intermediate: DC 13 – Despite the efforts of so many hunters, no one has been able to hunt down Gemhide successfully. She is a fierce monster that has claimed the lives of many hunters who came after her.

Hard: DC 15 – Gemhide has been successfully evading hunters for years. It is impossible to corner or trap the beast, because of Gemhide's adamant claws which allow her to tear through any traps she might find herself in. Even trying to corner her on solid rock, a hunting tactic commonly used against bulettes, does not work on her, as her claws allow her to dig through bedrock itself.

Hard: DC 15 (Nature) – Perhaps the gems the bulette carries are not the only treasures that can be obtained from her. If the rumors about her claws are true, perhaps powerful weapons might be fashioned from them. [Players learn of the option to repurpose Gemhide's claws.]

Hard: DC 15 (Persuasion) – The players are warned by a friendly hunter to be extremely careful when hunting Gemhide; Gemhide herself is dangerous enough as is, but several competitive hunters are not above sabotaging another's efforts. In particular he warns them of an old hunter with a pegleg, who has sworn to be the one to kill Gemhide.

Impossible: DC 20 (History or Persuasion) – The players meet a veteran hunter who tells them the tale of Ismal Baan (Persuasion) or one of the players has heard of the tale of Ismal Baan themselves (History). Ismal was a masterful hunter in his time and had an impeccable track record. By the time Ismal heard of Gemhide, he amassed such riches that he could live comfortably for the rest of his days. This fateful hunt for Gemhide was meant to be his last hurrah before retiring. But the hunt failed catastrophically, leaving Ismal's hunting team dead and Ismal himself crippled. It was on this day that Ismal Baan's obsession for the white bulette was born. The hunter has been pursuing Gemhide ever since, willing to go over dead bodies to achieve this goal.

AFFILIATED CREATURES

Gemhide is a solitary creature. But that does not mean players should not have to worry about other antagonistic forces during their hunt for Gemhide.

Aside from Gemhide herself, other creatures driven out of their habitat by Gemhide might be encountered. More likely than that, though, the players are to encounter other hunters who also have set their eyes on the coveted bulette. These hunters can be represented by Bandits, Thugs, Scouts, Veterans, or Archers found in the Monster Manual, either being foolhardy beginner hunter's looking for a quick path to riches and fame (represented by bandits) or legitimate accomplished veteran hunters who want to test their skill against the legend herself (represented by Archers and Veterans). The fierce competition for Gemhide is well known and many hunters encountered along the hunt will be likely to start out on unfriendly terms with the players. Among the hunters though, there is one individual that is bound to get into the player's way of their pursuit of Gemhide: the notorious Ismal Baan.



Artwork by DM Tuz

Tuz's Fearsome Foes: Gemhide, the White Bulette

GEMHIDE, THE WHITE BULETTE

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 116 (11d10 + 55)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (0)	21 (+5)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +3

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +8

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Drill Claws. Gemhide's claws are hard as diamonds, allowing her to burrow through solid rock and attacks made with her claws deal double damage to objects and structures.

Legendary Resistance (2/Day). If Gemhide fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Standing Leap. Gemhide's long jump is up to 30 ft. and her high jump is up to 15 ft., with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 31 (4d12 + 5) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Deadly Leap. If Gemhide jumps at least 15 ft. as part of her movement, it can then use this action to land on its feet in a space that contains one or more other creatures. Each of those creatures must succeed on a DC 17 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or be knocked prone and take 15 (3d6 + 5) bludgeoning damage plus 15 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage. On a successful save, the creature takes only half the damage, isn't knocked prone, and is pushed 5 ft. out of Gemhide's space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature instead falls prone in Gemhide's space.

Trampling Charge (Recharge 5-6). Gemhide moves up to her speed in a straight line. Each creature size medium or smaller in her path must make a DC 17 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice). On a failed save a creature takes 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. On a successful save takes no damage and isn't knocked prone. A creature that succeeds a Strength saving throw by 5 or more stops Gemhide in her path. A creature that succeeds a Dexterity saving throw by 5 or more can jump on top of Gemhide and ride on her back.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Move. Gemhide moves up to half her movement speed.

Swipe (2 Actions). Gemhide attacks with her claws.

Burrow (2 Actions). Gemhide begins digging furiously, kicking up a cloud of dust in a 10 ft. radius centered on her. She then burrows up to half of her burrowing speed. The cloud heavily obscures the area and remains until the end of her next turn.

Trampling Charge (3 Actions). Gemhide uses her trampling charge if available.

GEMHIDE TACTICS

Gemhide for all her reknown, is still a bulette after all and shares their typical behaviors. Initially Gemhide will not back down from a fight. During combat, Gemhide will make use of terrifying hit and run tactics by diving in and out of the ground. She will focus on isolated targets first. As soon as creatures group up for safety, she will attack the group using her deadly leap to scatter her attackers.

Gemhide will not fight to the death unless she is unable to escape. Should Gemhide's hit points be reduced to below half of her maximum hit points, she will flee. She will burrow to escape or make use of her trampling charge to break through any line of creatures that keep her trapped.

When escaping, she will try to throw off pursuers. She is aware that the tunnels left behind by her burrowing can be easily followed, so she will occasionally either resurface and continue to burrow somewhere else, or move through nearby cave systems. Gemhide will hide and rest in a location where she can make use of her tremorsense to detect any threats.

When Gemhide is cornered in her retreat before finishing her rest, she will be too tired to continue fleeing and muster her last remaining strength to fight to the end.

BULETTE RODEO

While the Dungeon Master's Guide lines out a way for players to ride the back of large monsters, here is an interesting alternative to how to handle a character on Gemhides back:

A creature that manages to land on Gemhides back is in for a wild ride. For all intents and purposes, a creature on Gemhide's back is treated as if riding it (see *Mounted Combat* rules) except the creature mounting Gemhide cannot control her and must make a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (creature's choice) at the beginning of its turn. On a failed save a creature is flung off of Gemhide's back and lands prone in an empty space within 5 ft. of Gemhide.

Being on the back of a wild, rampaging bulette does not allow for steady aim, but grants a clear shot at it's exposed parts. A creature on Gemhide's back has disadvantage on all attacks against creatures other than Gemhide, but has advantage on all attack rolls against Gemhide herself.

Up to 2 medium size or smaller creatures can ride on Gemhide's back at one time.

A creature can use its action on its turn to try to wrangle Gemhide towards a specific path. The creature must make a DC 15 Strength check. On a success the creature can choose a direction in which Gemhide will move up to her speed on her next turn. If this causes Gemhide to move into a wall or similar obstacle, it will cause Gemhide to be knocked prone along with all creatures on her back, who fall prone in unoccupied spaces within 5 feet of her.

THE TALE OF ISMAL BAAN

Ismal Baan was an accomplished hunter in his youth. Leading a cadre of loyal hunters, he and his company successfully tracked and killed even the fiercest of prey. His success rate was legendary, and people and communities paid good money for his services.

As time progressed, Ismal built himself a fortune and while he thoroughly enjoyed hunting, he was painfully aware of the toll that it took on his aging body. But just retiring like that was not Ismal Baan's way, no, he wanted a final grandiose hunt to mark the end of his hunting days. As fate would have it, the rumors of Gemhide had spread within his area. A white bulette, an elusive and ferocious monster, covered in gems, a monster truly worthy of Ismal's final hunt. While Ismal himself was not in need of the riches the monster held, he did want to present them as a farewell gift to his loyal hunters without whom he could not have forged his fame. He wanted to make sure they were set once he retired.

Gemhide was unlike any beast he ever faced. The hunt ended in a massacre. One by one Gemhide picked off Ismal's loyal hunters, men and women who served him for years. Amidst the slaughter, Ismal Baan became injured and his leg trapped underneath debris.

By the time Ismal Baan had freed himself, he was the only one left. The rest had fallen to the beast. Gripped by an inhuman rage, Ismal could not let the beast escape. Balancing on one remaining leg, his spear tightly in his hands, he gained the monster's attention and lunged himself at Gemhide, mustering any ounce of strength he had left. He lodged his spear deep into the bullet's shoulder with all of his wrath, dealing it a grievous wound. This was enough to drive Gemhide back, leaving Ismal Baan alone among the bodies of his fallen comrades.

Maybe it was the trauma of seeing and hearing his loyal hunters die one by one. Or perhaps it was the absolute humiliation of being routed by such a simple beast. But something broke in Ismal Baan that day. He vowed to not rest before he had killed that white bulette. It became his all consuming obsession.

The following years he would relentlessly pursue Gemhide. Thanks to his own magic, he was able to track the beast, since a part of his spear's tip was still lodged into the creature's body from when he had attacked it many years ago. It is this tip that he can track through his divination magic and that will ensure that Gemhide will not be able to avert him for long.

On his pursuit, Ismal burned through vast amounts of his former fortune on mercenaries and equipment, notable among them being a magical amulet that ensures that his aged body can keep up with his hunt for Gemhide. Nothing will come in his way of killing that white bulette. He will not accept anyone else delivering the killing blow on that beast, except for himself.

But the question is, what will this broken man do once Gemhide lies dead?

ISMAL BAAN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 77 (9d8 + 36), 41 (9d8) without Amulet of Health

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	19 (+4)	11 (0)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)

Proficiency +3

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +7

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +6, Stealth +7, Survival +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elven, Undercommon

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Items. Ismal Baan wears an *Amulet of Health* and wields a +1 harpoon (spear).

Pegleg Blade. Ismal Baan's prosthetic leg contains a hidden, retractable blade that is coated in wyvern poison. After he hits a creature with a pegleg blade attack, the poison is consumed and the pegleg blade will not deal additional poison damage until new poison is applied.

Slayer. When Ismal Baan hits a target that he hit with a weapon attack since the beginning of his last turn, he deals an extra 9 (2d8) damage.

Spellcasting. Ismal Baan is a 9th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit). Ismal Baan can cast the following ranger spells:

1st Level (4/day): *Alarm, Ensnaring Strike, Hunter's Mark, Longstrider*

2nd Level (3/day): *Darkvision, Locate Object, Pass Without Trace*

3rd Level (2/day): *Daylight, Meld into Stone*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ismal Baan makes two weapon attacks that are made with weapons other than his pegleg blade.

Harpoon +1 (Spear, One-Handed). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Harpoon +1 (Spear, Two-Handed). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Harpoon +1 (Spear, Thrown). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Range Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Pegleg Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save and half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Hidden Leg Blade. When a creature within 5 ft. of Ismal Baan attacks him when he is prone, Ismal makes an attack using the retractable blade hidden in his pegleg against the attacking creature. Attacking while prone imposes no disadvantage on this attack. To use this reaction, Ismal must be able to see the attacking creature and wear his pegleg.

Tuz's Fearsome Foes: Gemhide, the White Bulette PLOT HOOKS

ISMAL BAAN TACTICS

Ismal Baan is a cunning hunter, but is well aware of his physical shortcomings. If Ismal Baan learns of the players stalking Gemhide he will set up an ambush to hinder their progress, using spells such as *Pass Without Trace* or *Meld Into Stone*. He will not fight alone, making use of the remainder of his fortune to pay for hired muscle and bribable hunters. He will most likely stay in the back rows, using his crossbow to attack and using *Ensnaring Strike* to debilitate characters. If confronted in melee combat he will use his harpoon to fend off attackers. His pegleg blade is his ace in the hole and he will only use it if he is cornered, or knocked to the ground. If the players capture him he will make use of the pegleg blade for a surprise attack to escape his captors.

Ismal Baan will mainly fight to incapacitate. Should players get too dangerously close to hunting down Gemhide before Ismal can, he will not hesitate to use lethal force.

When fighting Gemhide, Ismaal Baan will always use his *Hunter's Mark* exclusively on her and will avoid using other spells that require concentration.

Ismal Baan will always cast *Darkvision* on himself before a hunt and will keep one 2nd level spell slot available if possible to cast *Locate Object* on his old broken harpoon tip stuck in bulette's body in case he loses track of Gemhide.

TREASURE

The collective gems on Gemhide's body range from a worth of 15 gp to 75 gp a piece. Depending on how much treasure you want to reward your players with for slaying this legendary monster, adjust the worth and the amount of gems gathered from the white bulette as you see fit.

Typically for 5th to 6th level characters, 4d6 x 10 gemstones worth 40 gp each (averaging at 5600 gp worth of gemstones) for slaying Gemhide would be appropriate.

Characters that successfully learned about the unique properties of Gemhide with a successful nature check are rewarded with the additional choice of harvesting Gemhide's adamant nails. A weapon created from these nails becomes an *adamantine weapon* (XGTE Pg. 78).

Leather created from Gemhide's pale skin, while not having any innate qualities, will fetch a high price for the right collectors, especially if the characters can verify that the leather is from Gemhide, the legendary White Bulette. Two entire armor sets of leather armor (padded, normal, or studded) can be created from Gemhide, which sell for 10 times their original price.

Additionally Ismal Baan holds valuable magic items that your characters can obtain, depending on how many magic items you want to hand out to your players. Ismal Baan carries a *+1 Harpoon*, which is functionally the same as a spear, an *Amulet of Health*, one vial of wyvern poison, a heavy crossbow, 40 bolts, and one set of studded leather armor.

In case you find yourself struggling with featuring Gemhide, the White Bulette in your game, here are some plot hooks for how you can implement Gemhide in your game:

- The players are hired by Ismal Baan to join his hunting party after he hears of their latest exploit. At this point the players are not aware how deranged Ismal Baan is, but are bound to find out.
- Gemhide made her way to the player's "base" or other "hub" town, which is soon to be flooded by monster hunters. This is a unique opportunity for the players to participate in the hunt for the legendary Gemhide.
- Gemhide is the ultimate hunter's trophy! In case any of the players are members of a tribalistic society. Gemhide might be the perfect target for a "coming-of-age" ritual, or a similar occasion.
- Very straight-forward: If your players are in need of funding (for either something story related, or a private goal), have them learn about Gemhide's arrival in a nearby location. Successfully hunting down Gemhide will assure them the money they need!



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