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READING THE SIGNS

Each monster in this book has one or more icons following its game statistics. These icons are designed to help you get the gist of each monster at a glance. The best way to use these icons is to page through the book with a particular encounter in mind, be it a combat encounter, a social encounter, or something else. Look for the icons that correlate to your encounter's needs, audition the monsters that catch your eye, then cast your favorite in the encounter.

Remember that a monster's abilities aren't defined or constrained by the icons. The icons reflect the sort of encounter a monster's abilities are plainly good for, but not necessarily an individual monster's motives or style. Don't let the icons substitute for your own creativity. Create a combat encounter around the dark advocate or a role playing encounter featuring terra-cotta warriors, if you'd like. These are referential tools for you as a reader, not game mechanics for you as a game-player.



THE WOLF

Hunters and general combatants fall under this sign, whether the monster works alone or in a group. These monsters are well-suited to combat encounters.



THE CAT

An agent of stealth or misdirection, this monster uses subtle tricks like poisons and disguises to overcome its foes. Use these monsters for mysterious or suspenseful encounters.



THE HAND

This is the sigil of monsters defined by magical or supernatural power, whether arcane or divine. These monsters add a magical challenge to any encounter.



THE MASK

Creatures whose wiles lay in their looks or personalities get this mark. These monsters are good for encounters focused on role-playing or drama.



THE ECLIPSE

These beings are more than monsters. Challenging them is the same as dying. Such creatures are powerful enough to serve as the defining force of an entire campaign.

FOREWORD

The *Penumbra Fantasy Bestiary* draws from the imagination and vision of more than thirty authors and more than a dozen illustrators. Besides their creativity, this book called for patience and dedication from our freelancers, through tight deadlines and sometimes difficult revisions. In looking through the list of writers and artists who contributed to the completion of this hefty book, some of those names identify first-time contributors, whose work we happily welcome into this book. Other names have appeared in many Atlas titles, and we're very grateful to have such skilled colleagues working with us again.

Still more people had to come through to make this book possible, though. Our friendly playtesters graciously spent their time losing their favorite characters to the monsters in this book for the sake of game balance, and we thank them. The skilled and helpful folks at Bang Printing turned our files into an actual book, and it's our pleasure to do business with them. You, the reader, took it upon yourself to hoist this humungous book off the shelf. Thank you all.

Now go play before you sprain something.

EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Producing the *Penumbra Fantasy Bestiary* has been an adventure in itself. We estimate the *Bestiary* to be about 223,622 words long, not including the aforementioned credits or this message. Scott Reeves, our Art Director, reports that more than 200 illustrations decorate these pages. By our conservative estimates, that's more than 3,150 square inches (22 square feet) of art. All that creative energy came together just to make your game and your adventures more thrilling. Now that I've come to the conclusion of my encounter with these monsters, I thought I'd take the chance to review the experience I've gained:

ENCOUNTER	EL	XP	NOTES
Dire Rabbit	2	500*	Cutting my own work when told by my loving husband that dire rabbits just aren't ferocious. Protestations that "you should see its teeth!" are to no avail. (Everyone would have loved the Thump extraordinary ability, though. Imagine a 500-pound rabbit causing the equivalent of an <i>earthquake</i> spell!)
Nemesis	Indeterminate	6,000+	A creature pushing 1000 hit points, who can consume entire planes of reality — the "Indeterminate" CR comes into being.
Fuzzwippit	1/2	500*	Editing my own work objectively, and trying to hide the fact that fuzzwippits are really rabbits with attitude ... hah!
Saboath	19	4,000	Biting the bullet and deciding to do an entry on angels. After all, if demons and devils are standard fantasy fare, who could protest giving the forces of good equal time?
Naryanese Snapdragon	1/2	500*	Editing my husband's work objectively, though relying heavily on the fact that he turned this piece in over a year ago to fade his memory of the original.
Zhu Ru	1	500*	A creature that would tip over in a strong wind, but who can cast <i>wish</i> at will. I decide that some creatures just aren't going to appear on the <i>summon monster</i> tables, no matter how much the players beg.
Bonethief	2	500*	Running my first online contest, then realizing at the last minute that the creature size of the winning stats was nowhere near that of the mini provided by Lance & Laser Models, on which they were based. The bonethief gets a quick dose of fantasy steroids.
The Killer Appendices	20	6,000	Three days of grueling labor that only a GM could appreciate. Light-headed from the exertion, I concluded that I deserve "story award" experience for including lists of familiars and mounts, creatures that advance by class, and monsters by terrain.

So, going on the premise that I'm a 20th-level expert (editor), I've earned at least 18,500 XP. Not quite enough to advance to epic level, but according to Table 7–2: Treasure Values per Encounter I should also get 221,900 gp. I think I deserve a raise.

Michelle Nephew
Penumbra Line Editor

* Table 7–1: Experience Point Awards doesn't support XP for monsters that are eight CRs lower than the party level. However, the minimum award given a 20th-level group is 500 XP.

The bizarre a'peril brings new meaning to the term "fashion victim." These creatures appear to be related to mimics; it is unclear whether they are the product of natural evolution or are the creation of some deranged wizard. Where a mimic tends to assume the form of heavy, solid objects — chests or furniture — an a'peril specializes in disguising itself as articles of clothing. The unfortunate person who makes the mistake of putting on that beautiful gown or elven cloak will find that it adheres to her skin and whispers into her mind — if she disobeys its commands, it will begin to crush the life from her with a savage strength.

An unworn a'peril is not a particularly dangerous opponent. It can crawl about slowly and flail at enemies with extruded pseudopods, but these attacks are quite pathetic. When it is being worn it does not attack external foes; it simply forces its wearer to either do battle or face the lethal crushing damage it can inflict. The challenge for attackers is many times finding a way to deal with an a'peril without killing its wearer.

A'peril are quite intelligent and can speak the common tongue. When an a'peril is worn, it forms a telepathic bond with its wearer that allows both communication and the sharing of thoughts and sensations. This sharing of perceptions is something that the a'peril enjoys, as the humanoid nervous system is capable of many interesting and pleasurable sensations. It can temporarily sever this telepathic link in order to avoid sensations of pain.

Solitary a'peril are generally driven by a desire for sensation; they wish to take advantage of the more developed senses of taste and pleasure possessed by most humanoids. Multiple



A'PERIL

	Small Aberration
Hit Dice:	3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	10 ft.
AC:	14* (+1 Dex, +1 size, +2 natural)
Attacks:	Slap +6 melee
Damage:	Slap 1d3+4 subdual
Face/Reach:	5 ft. x 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Adhesive, Crush Wearer
Special Qualities:	Darkvision 60 ft., Detect Thoughts, Immunities, Mimic Clothing, Transmit Damage
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16
Skills:	Diplomacy +5, Disguise +11, Hide +11, Intimidate +4, Innuendo +1 (+3 to intercept a message), Listen +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +7
Feats:	Skill Focus (Disguise)
Climate/Terrain:	Any urban land
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or gang (3–6)
Challenge Rating:	4
Treasure:	None (based on wearer)
Alignment:	Usually neutral evil
Advancement:	1–2 HD (Tiny), 4–5 HD (Small), 7–10 HD (Medium-size)



Aberration: Aberrations have Darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

Adhesive (Ex): Like a mimic, an a'peril can exude a slimy adhesive from its skin. This is typically used to prevent a victim from removing the sinister clothing — once worn, the only way an a'peril can be removed is by dissolving the adhesive or killing the beast. The adhesive can also be used to trap weapons; any weapon that strikes an a'peril is held fast unless the wielder succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 16). A successful Strength check (DC 14) is needed to remove a trapped weapon. The adhesive can be dissolved using strong alcohol — a pint of wine will serve. An a'peril can dissolve its adhesive at will, and the substance breaks down after five rounds if the creature dies.

Crush Wearer (Ex): On the ground an a'peril is not an especially dangerous opponent. But if anyone makes the mistake of wearing the creature, it becomes a deadly foe. As a standard action, a Small a'peril can constrict and crush its wearer, inflicting 1d6+3 points of bludgeoning damage per round. It does not need to make any sort of attack roll to inflict this damage. A Medium-

sized a'peril can crush a victim for 1d8+5 points of damage, while a Tiny a'peril inflicts only 1d4+1 points of damage.

An a'peril can also choose to restrain its victim, either instead of or in addition to inflicting damage. This is resolved using a grapple check; the a'peril receives a total bonus of +4 to its roll, and its victim cannot use Escape Artist to wriggle free (it's hard to escape from something that's glued to your skin). If the a'peril is successful, the victim cannot use any limbs that are contained within the creature — a pair of a'peril pants can prevent a victim from moving, but not from attacking, a shirt can pin the arms but not the legs, and a robe can render its victim completely immobile.

Detect Thoughts (Sp): The a'peril forms a mental bond with its victim. As a result, it can continuously detect the thoughts of its victim, as the *detect thoughts* spell cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (Will save DC 15). It can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. The a'peril can also mentally communicate with its wearer through this link.

