

COLLEGE OF SILENCE

A (NOT SO) MUSICAL SUBCLASS FOR BARDS



BY KAI LINDER



BARD COLLEGE: COLLEGE OF SILENCE

INTRODUCTION

Where other bards sing and cavort, bards from the the College of Silence focus on the power of quiet, both physical and personal. They know that silence is a greater tool than many know or appreciate, a thing people struggle to avoid for fear it might lay bare truth or hide lies. Silence is the great equalizer, they say, simply ask the awkward lovers fumbling to speak, or the king finishing a decree to his silent subjects. Silence can also be a powerful weapon few are ready for, bringing discomfort, disorientation, and even dissociation.

Silence bards play various roles, from silent observer to stealthy assassin to contemplative counselor. Many speak little, which can cause discomfort and sometimes leads them to be mistaken to the maligned bards of the College of Whispers. Whatever their role, the silence bard carries a quiet confidence with them.

"Head up, we got another hour still." The other mercenary shook her head and stood up. "If they were gonna show they woulda done it by now," she said. "What?" They exchanged confused looks, their voices seeming to come from underwater. "Can you hear ME?" "What was that?" A flash of light made them turn. Half the camp was on fire. A bolt of thunderless lightning struck the command tent. The two glanced at each other, then turned and walked away from the camp.

QUIET COMMUNICATOR

Starting at 3rd level, your quiet mind is able to reach out to others. You can telepathically speak to any creatures you can see within 10 feet of you. You don't need to share a language with a creature for it to understand your telepathic utterances, but the creature must be able to understand at least one language.

Additionally, you can understand what a creature is saying as long as you can see them speak, and understand the language being spoken.

HUSH

Also at 3rd level, you are able to remove sound from magic. When you or a creature that you can see within 60 feet of you casts a spell, you can use your reaction and expend one of your uses of Bardic Inspiration to silence that spell. The spell's verbal component can be ignored and the spell itself makes no noise.

SUPPRESSION AURA

At 6th level, you can suppress sound in the area around you. As an action, you create a 30-foot aura of muffled sound for the next 10 minutes, centered on yourself, which moves with you. Creatures in the aura have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks based on hearing, and resistance to thunder damage.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

TRUE SILENCE

At 14th level, you have learned to tear sound from a creature on a dimensional level, plunging them into a disorienting true silence that infringes on the mind and senses. As an action, a creature you can hear within 30 feet must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or take 4d6 psychic damage and be enveloped in True Silence for the next minute, becoming deafened and unable to make any noise. On a successful save they take half damage and are not enveloped in True Silence.

While enveloped in True Silence, at the end of each of the target's turns it takes 4d6 psychic damage and must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the target succeeds on three of these saves (they do not need to be consecutive), it escapes the True Silence and all effects end. The first time the target fails one of these saves, it becomes disoriented and its speed is reduced by 10 feet. The second time it fails the save, its thoughts become muddled and it must subtract a d6 and from all of its attack rolls and ability checks. The third time it fails, the creature is paralyzed. Each of these effects are cumulative and last until the True Silence ends.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.



Vo, THE VOICE SNATCHER

Vo the Voice Snatcher is a twisted being that gains strength by stealing voices, in the hope of leaving its larval stage. It has a placid human face on an elongated worm neck, and a lizard-like body with eleven skittering legs. Vo considers itself a connoisseur and collector, loving to bargain almost as much as it abhors lies. It cajoles people into lying so it can snatch their voice, then flees or uses the voice as a bargaining tool.

Vo, THE VOICE SNATCHER

Large aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (liar's hide)

Hit Points 176 (12d10 + 110)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws CHA +9

Skills Insight +11, Perception +7, Stealth +5

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

Damage Vulnerabilities damage dealt while Vo is in the area of a zone of truth spell

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses Blindsight 30 feet

Languages understands and speaks all languages

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

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

Life from Sound. Vo regains 5 (1d10) hit points whenever it hears a creature within 30 feet use their voice.

Spider Climb. Vo can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Vo makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d10 - 1) piercing damage.

Snatch Voice (Recharge 5-6). A creature within 30 feet that Vo has heard speak must make a DC 17 Charisma saving throw. They have disadvantage if Vo noticed them tell an untruth in the last minute. On a failed save, the creature takes 33 (6d10) psychic damage and Vo gains 10 current and maximum hit points as it steals the creature's voice. The creature loses the ability to use their voice in any way, and Vo can speak in their voice at will. A creature regains its voice when Vo dies or willingly returns it as an action. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Vo 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. Vo regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bite Attack. Vo makes one bite attack.

Skitter. Vo moves up to its move speed.

Shriek (Costs 2 actions). Vo emits a disorienting shriek in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take 22 (4d10) thunder damage and be paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

Vo's LAIR

Vo moves often, preferring to lair underground or in large buildings near populated or well-traveled areas.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

A region containing Vo's lair becomes warped by its unnatural presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Voices echo with unnatural volume and clarity.
- Vo's voice can magically originate from any point in its lair. Speaking doesn't affect its Stealth.
- Creatures within 100 feet of Vo's lair experience a sensation of hearing voices that seem familiar but they can't seem to recall.

FEAT: COMMUNICATION ADEPT

You're skilled at multiple methods of communication. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You can understand what a creature is saying as long as you can see them speak, and understand the language being spoken.
- You can communicate in languages you are proficient in by using a detailed gesture and signing language, and can understand this from others. A creature can be trained in a sign language in the same way any other language is trained. If a creature is proficient in a sign language's base language, it takes half the amount of time to learn it. For example, teaching Elvish sign language to a creature not proficient in Elvish would take 10 weeks, while teaching it to a creature proficient in Elvish would take 5 weeks.

MAGIC ITEM: HEAR RING

Ring, common

While wearing this ring, you are immune to the deafened condition. You can use an action to switch the item into enhanced mode until you switch it off as an action. While in enhanced mode, you have vulnerability to thunder damage and advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing.

SOUNDS OF SILENCE

Complete silence can have profound effects, which most will never experience. So what could I possibly put here?

Item 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoAbXwr3qkg&t=62s>

Item 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAEppFUWLfc>

Item 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXVGlb3bzHI>

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