



Denizens of Filth

Monstrous Pages for Shadow of the Demon Lord

The cities and towns of Rûl are islands of civilization that provide a refuge from the horrors in the uninhabited parts of the land. Behind their walls and barred gates, citizens feel safe from what lurks outside. Content in their homes, few of them realize that the tunnels and sewers under their feet teem with sinister creatures and foul abominations that wallow in the filth, looking for the right moment to snatch a fresh meal.

One such terror is the creature that most people call the filth goblin. This offshoot of the goblin race thrives and multiplies in the fetid sewers, privies, and waterways that flow beneath the largest towns and cities. Their primary form of sustenance is humanoid waste—the warmer and fresher the better. Few citizens sitting down to do their bodily business realize that something sinister might lurk mere feet or inches away.

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FOULEST OF FAERIES

Though the fact is almost impossible to comprehend, the lowly goblins were once immortal creatures of the faerie realm, where all is bright and beautiful. But, for reasons lost to time, they left their former home to take up existence in the mortal world. (Bits of folklore in some places tell of how the goblins were exiled after the Goblin King stole a kiss from the Faerie Queen.)

Over the millennia that followed, these faeries became stunted, ugly, and spiteful, until they evolved into the goblins known throughout the world of today. The goblins spread far and wide across Rûl, some living in the wilderness while others were drawn to the lights and smells of other creatures' civilizations. Regardless of where they chose to call home, goblins sat at the bottom rung of the social ladder, surviving through theft and opportunism. Many found refuge in the sewers, basements, and tunnels beneath cities and towns.

An offshoot of the goblin race was so attracted to the subterranean darkness that they vowed never again to gaze upon the sun. They evolved into a distinct subspecies called filth goblins, so named because of the sewers they make their homes. They live apart from "normal" goblin clans that occupy underground warrens. Indeed, most other goblins are distrustful and fearful of their albino-like cousins, so the two groups maintain clear boundaries between their territories.

Some magicians and priests who study the faeries and their subspecies conjecture that goblins (and especially filth goblins) are spiritual manifestations of the faeries' self-loathing and/or disgust for the material world. In other words, the goblins' exile into this world is seen as a punishment, and the squalid places they inhabit and the manner in which they live support that contention. Goblins refute this, of course, by accepting their lot in life with an ironic, fatalistic cheer. Filth goblins in particular consider themselves lucky compared to their kin, since the sewers they live in both keep them sheltered from the sun and provide them an endless supply of food.

FEASTING ON FECES

Filth goblins' main source of food is fecal matter. They prowl the sewers, aqueducts, privies, and latrines in cities and towns, sucking up any waste they can find. For a filth goblin, a stream of sewage is akin to fine wine, and a floating turd might be a savory midday snack. Anyone who happens upon a band of filth goblins squatting at the edge of a river of sewage, noisily slurping away, might never get the memory of that sight out of their head.

Filth goblins can be found in every community in Rûl that has some sort of underground sewer or aqueduct system. Ironically, the wealthiest areas of a city, which typically boast the most extensive sewers, host the largest concentrations of these creatures. Filth goblins fight fierce internal battles for control of this territory, since the waste produced in those neighborhoods is the byproduct of exotic foods, powerful drink, and sometimes bizarre drugs and chemicals. As the goblins say, "Rich man's shit be more precious than they gold."

Typically, the poorest neighborhoods have no sanitation system or other way to process waste, but the goblins make their way to these places as well, emerging from the sewers at night to sneak inside houses to sup on brimming piss pots or harvest the night soil dumped on the streets.

Although fecal matter makes up the bulk of their diet, filth goblins do need the occasional bit of fresh meat and blood, which they get primarily by ambushing victims from below as they sit on the privy.

HORRENDOUS TO BEHOLD

Someone who lays eyes on a filth goblin will be reviled by the sight. Its skin is a near-translucent white, with blue and purple veins pulsing beneath the surface. A filth goblin is typically a few inches shorter than an ordinary goblin. Its frame is thin and emaciated, with arms that extend nearly to its kneecaps and ending in tough, blunt digits that can tear through dirt and even masonry, given time. These extremities also make them excellent climbers—filth goblins are equally at home crawling along the tops of tunnels as they are treading on the ground.

A filth goblin's head holds two enormous black eyes often set far apart or slightly askew. The eyes are protected by a vertical nictitating membrane that blinks slowly with a muffled wet sound. Although a filth goblin has an enormous nose, it can pinch its nostrils shut through muscle action when swimming.

A filth goblin's mouth takes one of a variety of shapes. Round, lamprey-like maws lined with dozens of sharp teeth are common, as are probing "tubes" akin to the mouth parts of some creatures found in the sea. Some filth goblins have multiple tongues. Regardless of the shape, the purpose of these mouths is the same—snatching, slurping, and devouring as much offal and feces as possible.

Not surprisingly, the mouth of a filth goblin is filled with disease-causing bacteria even when it's not eating. A single bite is enough to infect a victim with a wasting disease that causes high fever, vomiting, and diarrhea.

When they venture up to the surface, many filth goblins arm themselves with crude spears, which they smear in waste and their own spittle to make them more dangerous.

After untold years of being acclimated to darkness, they find exposure to natural sunlight extremely uncomfortable and shriek in pain if caught in a ray of bright sunlight for more than a few seconds. The light from a typical small fire, such as that of a torch or lantern, is annoying to their eyes, but impairs them only if they stare at it for too long. The torches carried by sewer workers or rat catchers are bright enough to hold off the most cowardly filth goblins, but most are cunning enough to lurk just outside its range.

Filth goblins do not typically wear clothing beyond a simple loincloth or bandolier that might include a way to carry trinkets. Some more flamboyant individuals might dress in cast-off remnants of clothing, their original color barely visible through a coating of fetid brown refuse.

When killed, a filth goblin's body decomposes into a puddle of goo in a matter of minutes—or instantly if exposed to sunlight. This means that the remains of filth goblins often go unnoticed by surface dwellers, helping to perpetuate the idea that they are merely myths or stories to frighten children.

CONGESTION IN THE SEWERS

Filth goblins are not particularly aggressive or dangerous, but are definitely opportunistic and insidious. A single filth goblin isn't much of a threat; an individual often runs and hides when facing danger. Much like a rat, however, a filth goblin fights with amazing ferocity when cornered.

Unfortunately for citizens aboveground, filth goblins are highly social, if internally competitive, creatures. Each one is a member of a clan that has dozens or hundreds of members. Each clan is ruled by a single matriarch, known as a mother of filth. Although ordinary filth goblins can and do mate to produce young, a mother of filth is the largest contributor to the clan, birthing a huge litter of new goblins every six months. Despite the goblins' high birth rate, their overall numbers remain limited, mainly because of internal squabbling, border skirmishes with other clans, other dangers lurking in the darkness, and desperate surface dwellers that send out heavily armed groups to root out any nests they can find.

Filth goblins operate underground in familial packs of between four to six individuals. When they discover a particularly savory patch of refuse, they instinctively fall into a pecking order, with the largest and toughest

filth goblin getting first crack at the tastiest morsels while the rest wait their turn.

Every civilization with a sewer system considers filth goblins a public menace for several reasons. First, as mentioned before, filth goblins still need fresh meat, so they occasionally attack or kidnap victims by coming at them from inside latrines or garderobes. Braver bands of filth goblins take to the streets on moonless nights to capture lone stragglers (drunkards and lost children make particularly easy prey) and drag them back to the clanhold in the bowels of the sewer. Wary citizens typically use a torch or a candle to illuminate the privy hole, on the lookout for eyes peering back at them from below.

The nests of filth goblins cause a secondary problem in towns and cities. As a nest grows in size, the clan collects garbage and detritus to build more housing, often at the juncture of two or more sewer tunnels. Over time, this causes sewage to back up and flood into the streets above. Workers might then be tasked to go below and take out both the blockage and the creatures that caused it.

SPIES AND SCAVENGERS

Belying their crude nature, filth goblins are surprisingly intelligent and crafty. As they lurk beneath sewer grates or inside privy holes, they hear all sorts of conversation meant to take place only behind closed doors. Upon hearing a juicy piece of information, a filth goblin will scurry back to its clan's mother of filth to relay the knowledge. This espionage can provide the goblins with warning when an attack by the surface dwellers is imminent, giving the clan time to pick up and move or to prepare an ambush.

Because sewers are littered with all manner of small items that fall through sewer grates or into latrines, filth goblins are likely to have some valuables in their possession. They collect anything of interest, including coins, trinkets, jewelry, and hastily discarded murder weapons. In some places where the sewer tunnels are exceedingly deep, stranger objects from earlier times might turn up, including powerful magic items and cursed idols.

Their familiarity with the sewers, warrens, and tunnels (natural or otherwise) also means that filth goblins often know the locations of secret passageways, some of which date back to the era of the Men of Gog or earlier.

For any of these reasons, brave surface dwellers might descend into the depths to make deals with filth goblins, prepared to exchange anything from fresh bodies to gossip or even fine foods in return for incriminating evidence against a rival, a lost keepsake, or details about secret passageways into an enemy's home. Perhaps surprisingly, filth goblins honor the deals they make most of the time, viewing

such engagements as entertaining for themselves and humiliating to the surface dwellers. If the other party reneges on a deal, however, the goblins begin a campaign of revenge that in extreme cases can last for generations.

All filth goblins, including those described below, speak the Common Tongue and their own dialect of Elvish.

FILTH GOBLIN

DIFFICULTY 1

Size 1/2 frightening faerie

Perception 12 (+2); **shadowsight**
Defense 14; **Health** 7; **Insanity** 4; **Corruption** 2
Strength 7 (-3), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 9 (-1)
Speed 10; climber, swimmer
Immune damage from disease; charmed, diseased
Sneaky A filth goblin attempting to hide or move silently makes the Agility challenge roll with 1 boon.
Iron Vulnerability A filth goblin is impaired while it is in contact with iron.
Sunlight Weakness A filth goblin is impaired while it is in an area lit by sunlight.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Filth-Covered Spear (melee or short range) +4 (1d6 plus Wasting Disease)
Diseased Bite (melee) +4 (1d6 plus Wasting Disease and then Bite Down)
Wasting Disease If the target is a creature, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become diseased. While it is diseased in this way, whenever the target becomes injured or takes damage while injured, it becomes dazed for 1 round. Each time a diseased target completes a rest, it can make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the target removes the diseased affliction from itself. On a failure, the target takes a permanent 1d6 penalty to its Health score.
Bite Down If the target is a creature, the goblin latches onto the creature with its filthy maw. While it is attached to the creature, the goblin grants 3 boons on rolls to attack it, and it moves with the target to which it is attached. An attached goblin can use an action to deal 1d6 + 1 damage to the creature to which it is attached. The goblin can end this effect at any time without using an action to do so. The target creature can use an action to make a Strength attack roll against the goblin's Strength and ends the effect on a success.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Spring Away When a creature the filth goblin can see gets a failure on an attack roll against the filth goblin's Defense or Agility, the filth goblin can use its triggered action to retreat.

FESTERING MAW

Filth goblins live in cramped, squalid conditions and frequently are pressed cheek to jowl when supping on the sewage they crave. Under some bizarre circumstances during this activity, three or four filth goblin young might begin to bond—literally—at their heads, merging into a single larger creature with its multiple bodies joined into one, multi-eyed filth goblin. The mouths also merge and mutate, turning into an enormous toothed maw from which all the bodies get sustenance.

A festering maw is an especially ravenous eater because its body is nearly four times the size of an ordinary filth goblin. This added mass makes it a brutal opponent but also comes at a cost, as festering maws are distinctly dumber and more animalistic than their smaller kin. A festering maw will eat anything it can get into its mouth, including fellow filth goblins, who often keep them in pens for use as shock troops and defenders if the nest is attacked by surface dwellers.

Festering maws are formidable in battle, using their multiple legs to scurry from place to place while their arms grasp the air around them. Anyone unlucky enough to be overtaken by a festering maw is in danger of being trampled to death by its powerful legs.

FESTERING MAW

DIFFICULTY 50

Size 2 horrifying faerie

Perception 9 (-1); **shadowsight**
Defense 9; **Health** 48; **Insanity** 6; **Corruption** 4
Strength 16 (+6), **Agility** 9 (-1), **Intellect** 8 (-2), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 12; climber, swimmer
Immune damage from disease; charmed, diseased
Iron Vulnerability A festering maw is impaired while it is in contact with iron.
Sunlight Weakness A festering maw is impaired while it is in an area lit by sunlight.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Diseased Bite (melee) +6 with 2 boons (3d6 plus Wasting Disease)
Wasting Disease If the target is a creature, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become diseased. While it is diseased in this way, whenever the target becomes injured or takes damage while injured, it becomes dazed for 1 round. Each time a diseased target completes a rest, it can make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the target removes the diseased affliction from itself. On a failure, the target takes a permanent 1d6 penalty to its Health score.
Trample (melee) +6 with 2 boons (3d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Double Attack The festering maw attacks twice with its trample attack.

MOTHER OF FILTH

At the center of every filth goblin clan sits the mother of filth. She serves as the progenitor for most of the clan's young, the group's decision maker, and its spiritual touchstone. A mother is an enormous, corpulent, bloated version of a normal filth goblin with numerous flabby, engorged teats. Its limbs are atrophied and weak, meaning it must rely on its brood to perform most tasks.

Mothers of filth rarely leave their "throne rooms"—containment pools that are collection points for raw sewage. The mother spends all of her time floating and lounging in the muck, emerging only to mate with her many consorts. If she ever has to leave, primarily due to an imminent attack, her minions

haul her through the dank tunnels on a sturdy palanquin made from discarded wood and metal. If she is attacked, the rest of the clan goes into a berserk fury, defending her with their lives.

Despite their appearance, mothers of filth are extremely bright, cunning, and, armed with the knowledge brought to them from spies, well versed in the goings-on of the surface world.

MOTHER OF FILTH

DIFFICULTY 250

Size 2 horrifying faerie

Perception 18 (+8); shadowsight

Defense 6; **Health** 90; **Insanity** 8; **Corruption** 7

Strength 18 (+8), **Agility** 6 (-6), **Intellect** 17 (+7), **Will** 17 (+7)

Speed 4; swimmer

Immune damage from disease; charmed, diseased

Provoke Frenzy When the mother of filth takes damage, each filth goblin within medium range that can see her becomes subject to frenzy for 1 round. While it is subject to frenzy, a filth goblin makes attack rolls with 1 boon and its attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.

Surprising Speed A mother of filth can use two actions on each of her turns.

Iron Vulnerability A mother of filth is impaired while she is in contact with iron.

Sunlight Weakness A mother of filth is impaired while she is in an area lit by sunlight.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Diseased Bite (melee) +8 with 3 boons (6d6 plus Wasting Disease)

Wasting Disease If the target is a creature, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become diseased. While it is diseased in this way, whenever the target becomes injured or takes damage while injured, it becomes dazed for 1 round. Each time a diseased target completes a rest, it can make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the target removes the diseased affliction from itself. On a failure, the target takes a permanent 1d6 penalty to its Health score.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Drown in Shit The mother of filth makes a Strength attack roll against the Agility of one creature she can reach. On a success, the target takes 3d6 damage and becomes grabbed. If the target is already grabbed, the mother of filth pushes the target under the filthy waters in which she floats. The target must succeed on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or inhale some of the filth, taking 1d6 damage and becoming impaired for 1 round.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Vomit Filth The mother of filth spews feces and offal up from her stomach and out her mouth into a 6-yard cone. The noisome mess deals 8d6 damage to each creature in the area and forces each creature to make a Will challenge roll and gain 1d3 Insanity on a failure. A creature can make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane, taking half the damage on a success. Once the mother of filth uses Vomit Filth, she must use an action to gorge herself on sewage before she can use it again.