

CATASTROPHIC DRACONIANS

While they have their origins in profane magic rituals, many Draconians have struggled to become a part of the natural world, forming communities and even whole cities, and managing to build a future for their kind, in the manner of the other races of the world. But not everyone, welcomes this natural development. There are some, both amongst the Draconians themselves, and those versed in the dark rituals used in their creation, who seek to return the race to it's original purpose- a source of formidable soldiers, to swell the ranks of the armies of darkness.

Worse, some seek to enhance the Draconians- turning them into an even more formidable force with which they hope to create a new order. Some of these dark augmentations occur during the creation of new clutches of Draconians, using a modified version of the ritual that creates them from the egg of a metallic dragon. Others are carried out on fully grown Draconians- even some who seek to augment themselves. This dire process infuses the draconian with an overwhelming eruption of elemental energy, with the intent of creating a creature who is in all ways superior to the original breeds.

The result is indeed, a formidable creature- a draconian far more dangerous and resilient than the 'lesser' versions of it's kind, and often manifests powers of an elemental nature. But just as the strengths of the Draconians are enhanced by the process, so are their weaknesses, in particular, the elemental instability which causes their spectacular death-throes. In death, a normal draconian erupts with elemental power, transmuting into solid stone, pools or acid, or other effects. But for a draconian enhanced by this process, the death-throes begin far sooner, and take on new and bizarre forms.

So it is that despite the great power of these creatures, the specter of their death is always nearby – like candles burning bright, they burn out far sooner than their 'weaker' peers. The obsession with their deaths leads to a creature that can easily become unhinged, turning on their allies, or engaging in desperate and malevolent schemes to prolong their life. Worse, for the more powerful of these tragic creatures, the power that infuses their deaths takes on a transformative quality, adding an strange additional stage to the cycle of life and death.

These so-called Catastrophic Draconians are few in number, but becoming more common as the lure of power calls to the Draconians, and others who would make use of their might.

Baaz Stoneguard	Level 8 Soldier
Medium Natural Humanoid (draconian)	XP 350
Initiative: +7	Senses: Perception +5
HP 89; Bloodied 44	
AC 24; Fortitude 21; Reflex 19; Will 19	
Speed 5, Fly 5 (clumsy)	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
⬇ Hookblade Strike ✦ At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Melee Basic 1 (one creature) +13 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 3d6+6 damage, and the target is marked until they hit the Stoneguard with a melee attack, or are no longer adjacent to them. The Stoneguard can mark no more than two targets at once.	
Triggered Actions	
⬇ Hookblade Haul ✦ At-Will	
<i>Trigger:</i> A creature marked by the Stoneguard tries to move away from them. <i>Attack(Immediate Interrupt):</i> +13 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 3d6+6 damage, and the creature stops moving. <i>Miss:</i> The Stoneguard can move with the marked target, shifting up to 5 squares in pursuit.	
Stoneguard's Doom ✦ Encounter	
<i>Trigger:</i> The Stoneguard becomes bloodied. <i>Effect:</i> Until the end of the encounter, whenever the stoneguard has a target marked, they and the target become restrained (save ends). If the target saves against being immobilized, they are also no longer marked.	
Skills Athletics +11, Endurance +12, Intimidate +11	
Str 15(+6);	Dex 13(+5); Wis 13(+5)
Con 17(+7);	Int 11(+4); Cha 14(+6)
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Equipment: Nerakan Hookblades	

Baaz Stoneguards are by far the most stable of the Catastrophic Draconians, infused with the power of the earth. When their elemental power emerges, it bonds them and those close to them to the ground, holding them in place as an immovable bulwark.

Stoneguards are bodyguards and leaders of squads of normal Baaz, who treat them with a reverent awe. They fight with Nerakan Hookblades- short, sickle-like swords that allow them to latch onto their foes, and keep in contact.

Unique amongst the Catastrophic draconians, Baaz Stoneguards are not doomed by their elemental power- although each time it emerges, it takes years from their lifespan.

Kapak Corruptor **Level 10 Controller**Medium Natural Humanoid (draconian) **XP 500**

Initiative: +9 **Senses:** Perception +5
HP 103; **Bloodied** 51
AC 23; **Fortitude** 21; **Reflex** 23; **Will** 22
Speed 6, fly 6 (clumsy) Darkvision

Standard Actions⬇ **Seething Scourge** ✦ **At-Will**

Attack: Melee Basic 1 (one target) +13 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d6+9 acid damage

↩ **Poison Spit** ✦ **Recharge** [☹]

Attack: Close Blast 4 (each creature in blast) +13 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 4d6+6 poison damage

Triggered Actions**Corrupted Toxin** ✦ **Recharge** [☹]

Trigger: A foe within 5 takes poison or acid damage
Effect: The triggering creature suffers ongoing 5 poison damage, and whenever they suffer poison or acid damage, the Kapak Corruptor can slide them 1 as a free action (save ends both).

Corruptor's Wake ✦ **Encounter**

Trigger: The Corruptor becomes bloodied.
Effect: Until killed, whenever the corruptor leaves a square of terrain, the square becomes corrupted. A corrupted square is difficult, lightly obscured terrain, which inflicts 10 acid damage to any creature which ends their turn within it. In addition, the recharge rolls on Corrupted Toxin and Poison Spit become 3+

Skills Acrobatics +14, Stealth +14, Intimidate +13

Str 15(+7); **Dex** 18(+9); **Wis** 11(+5)

Con 15(+7); **Int** 15(+7); **Cha** 16(+8)

Alignment Chaotic Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic
Equipment: Seething Scourge

The Kapak Corruptor is the most commonly known form of Catastrophic Draconian. While the Baaz Stoneguards are more common, many don't even recognize them for what they are- but there is no mistaking a Corruptor for a 'lesser' Kapak, and no missing the fact that something is terribly wrong with it.

Even through it's scales, the Kapak Corruptor's veins pulse with a seething radiance, as the fundamentum within it's chest pumps corrosive elemental energy through it's body. The Corruptor's eyes glow a sickly green, and it's breath is a constant hiss of toxic fumes.

The Corruptor can spit this poison in wide, splattering goutts, and the vapour of their breath leaves the ever-corroding scourges they favour with a thick coating of acid. But far worse than that, they seem to have a sort of kinship with the power- through little more than an act of will, they can inflict a potent poison on those exposed to such substances, wracking them with pain and planting agonizing spasms in their muscles.

When a Corruptor suffers too much damage, the poison within their veins spills out of their wounds, and begins to seep from their skin, dripping in particular from their wings. It forms a hissing, spitting wake behind them, biting into the ground as they stagger through the last moments of their life.

While they are highly resistant to the toxins within, they still take a toll, and will inevitably dissolve the wretched creature in the last moments of their lives. While, for mundane Kapaks, this process is rapid, the Corruptor Suffers through an extended torment, which in many ways begins the moment they are given their power. The Kapak Corruptors are always tormented by the deaths, since they can feel it pulsing through their veins.

Bozak Erruptor	Level 16 Artillery
Medium Natural Humanoid (draconian)	XP 1,400
Initiative: +15	Senses: Perception +10
HP 120; Bloodied 60	
AC 29; Fortitude 27; Reflex 28; Will 29	
Speed 6, fly 6 (clumsy)	Darkvision
Standard Actions	
⬇ Thunderclaw ✦ At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> +Melee Basic 1 (one creature): +19 vs. Fortitude <i>Hit:</i> 4d8+6 Thunder damage, the target is pushed 1.	
⚡ Thunderbolt ✦ At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Range 10 (one Creature): +20 vs. Reflex <i>Hit:</i> 3d10+10 thunder damage, the target is knocked prone, and each creature adjacent to the target is pushed 1. <i>Miss:</i> The target can shift 2 as a free action.	
⬇ Thunderclaw Fly-By ✦ At-Will	
<i>Requirement:</i> Only when bloodied. <i>Effect:</i> The Bozak Erruptor makes a Thunderbolt attack, and then flies 6, making a single Thunderclaw attack at any point in the movement.	
Triggered Actions	
Erruptor's Flight ✦ Encounter	
<i>Trigger:</i> The Erruptor becomes bloodied. <i>Effect:</i> The Erruptor's flight becomes Fly 6 (hover), they lose all conditions upon them, and they fly shift up to 6 above the battlefield as a free action. The square they leave then explodes, for the following attack: ✦ <i>Attack:</i> Close Burst 2, (All creatures in burst): +20 vs. Reflex <i>Hit:</i> 3d10+10 Thunder damage, and the target is pushed 2 and knocked prone.	
Skills Arcana 18, History +18, Intimidate +19	
Str 18(+12); Dex 18(+12); Wis 15(+10)	
Con 18(+12); Int 20(+13); Cha 22(+14)	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic

A Bozak Erruptor thrums with the power of the storm, the lighting of their lesser kin absent, as the elemental power is channeled inwards, focused into blasts of thundering concussive force. They unleash this power from their talons, striking at those nearby, or hurling it short distances. Skilled in the arcane arts, they are often ritualists of prodigious talent and ambition.

An Erruptor is perhaps the most tormented of the Catastrophic Draconians. While all of these formidable creatures struggle with the self-destructive nature of their power, the Bozaks have both the intellect, and the knowledge of arcane and elemental forces to truly understand the depth of their predicament. And yet, while the more powerful forms of Catastrophic Draconians meet an almost transcendent end, the Bozak Erruptor is as doomed as any normal Draconians once caught in their, admittedly spectacular death throes.

When a Catastrophic Bozak dies, they do indeed, erupt- their bones explode from their flesh, their spirit fused to their skeleton by the power of the elements, a quasi-life which inevitably ends in final death. The skeletal draconian soars over the battlefield, robbed of all it's hopes and ambitions for the future, driven now only to revenge itself utterly on the creatures who have brought it to it's final fate.

Sivak Devourer **Level 18 Lurker**Large Natural Humanoid (draconian) **XP 2,000****Initiative:** +21 **Senses:** Perception +15**HP** 132; **Bloodied** 66**AC** 32; **Fortitude** 29; **Reflex** 30; **Will** 31**Speed** 7, Fly 7, Climb 6 **Darkvision****Traits****Flexible Form**

The Sivak Devourer can hide in partial concealment, and does not grant CA while squeezing.

Chamelionic Glide

While Flying, the Sivak Devourer can remain hidden once it leaves concealment.

Instinctual Absorbtion

The Sivak Devourer can use their Absorb Essence attack even while Stunned, and never takes a penalty to it's attack roll.

Standard Actions**⬇ Enveloping Wings** **◆ At-Will**

Attack: Melee 1 (one target): +21 vs Reflex

Hit: 4d8+8 damage, and the target is Enveloped by the Sivak Devourer (save ends). An enveloped target is immobilized, and there is no LOS and LOE between the target and any creature apart from the devourer. The Devourer can only have one target enveloped at a time, and while they do, they lose their fly speed, and any damage they take is shared equally with the target. While enveloping a target, the Devourer carries the target with them, and the two cannot be seperated by forced movement..

⬇ Absorb Essence **◆ EAAt-WillIncounter**

Attack: Melee 1 (One target, must be enveloped):

+20 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8+16 damage. The target is Dazed and takes ongoing 15 acid damage until they are no longer enveloped.

Miss: Target makes a save against the enveloping as a free action.

Triggered Actions**Crysalis**

Trigger: The target the Sivak has Enveloped is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer.

Effect: Both the Sivak and their Target becomes petrified. The target can be extracted from this process by a Remove Affliction ritual or similar magic. If they are not within a week, then they and the Sivak Devourer merge and form a new creature, which emerges from the Crysalis.

Skills Bluff +20, Insight +20, Stealth +19

Str 18(+13); **Dex** 20(+14); **Wis** 22(+15)

Con 18(+13); **Int** 19(+13); **Cha** 22(+15)

Alignment Evil

Languages Common, Draconic-

While most Catastrophic Draconians retain some similarities to their basic type, the Sivak Devourer represents a dramatic and disturbing departure from this norm. Whether created from a silver dragon egg, or the product of an enhancement of a normal Sivak Draconian, the Sivak Devourer is a creature quite unlike other Sivaks- although it shares common traits with them, they take on a strange and alien quality in this genuinely new organism.

Indeed, the so-called 'death throes' of a Sivak Devourer are more accurately described as another stage in a truly strange life cycle. It is not clear why the Devourers act in this fashion, although it does seem to be derived from the ability of the base creature to impersonate those that they kill. While a normal Sivak can impersonate other humanoids, a Sivak Devourer is a chameleon-like creature that can alter it's color, texture, and even shape to match it's terrain- although it's skin always retains a slight, tell-tale silvery sheen. But this is only the beginning of this odd mutant's nature.

For while a normal Sivak impersonates a creature after killing it, a Sivak Devourer seeks to Merge with it's victims- enveloping them in it's wings, melding and re-shaping around them as it scuttles away from danger, and eventually taking on a chrysalis-like form, as it absorbs their essence. Sometimes, what emerges from this chrysalis is a seemingly perfect copy of the creature- which is only revealed to be something very different when a new 'cycle' of the Sivak Devourer emerges from within the creature at a later time.

However, rumors has it that the process can take on a different result, when a Sivak Devourer envelops a creature of more formidable power and strength of will- creatures the Devourers seem drawn to in their hunts. If such a creature was to be merged with inside the chrysalis, the hybrid that results could be very different indeed, and in a strong willed creature, could retain much of the memories and personality of the victim.

Aurak Ascendant **Level 22 Brute**
 Medium Natural Humanoid (draconian) **XP 4,150**

Initiative: +19 **Senses:** Perception +23
HP 251; **Bloodied** 125
AC 34; **Fortitude** 33; **Reflex** 33; **Will** 35
Speed 6, Teleport 1

Traits
Instinctual Teleportation

The Aurak Ascendant can teleport even when normally prevented from doing so, such as by a condition of zone.

✦ Aura of Disruption

Requirement: Only when Bloodied.
 Effect: (Aura 1) Creatures ending their turn on the aura take 15 damage.

Standard Actions
↔ Psionic Shockwave ✦ At-Will

Attack: Close Blast 2 (all creatures in blast)
 +25 vs Fortitude and Will defence.
Hit Will: 4d6+5 Psychic damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage (save ends).
Hit Fort: 4d6+5 Force damage, and the target is pushed and slowed (save ends).

Triggered Actions
Unbound ✦ Encounter

Trigger: The Aurak Ascendant becomes bloodied.
Effect: Teleport speed increases to 3, and the Aura of Disruption activates.

Glimpse of Eternity ✦ Special

Trigger: While the Aurak Ascendant is bloodied, a creature hits them with a vs Will attack
Effect: The creature gains a cumulative +2 bonus to all Wisdom and Intelligence based skills until the next time they take an extended rest.

Skills Diplomacy +21, Insight +23
Str 21(+16); **Dex** 21(+16); **Wis** 24(+18)
Con 21(+16); **Int** 24(+18); **Cha** 21(+16)

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Draconic-

The Aurak Ascendant is both the most dangerous, and seemingly least hostile of the Catastrophic Draconians, for while they are capable of immense power, they are also completely consumed by the end of their corporeal existence- an end they believe will lead to a new beginning, as an ascended being on some higher (or lower) plane of reality.

This is no mere delusion- when subjected to the enhancement process, the Aurak Ascendant finds their psionic abilities supercharged, to the point where they can barely focus on the mundane world any further- and the world carried few threats for them. Paradoxically, despite or perhaps because of their great power, they seek out enemies and challenges capable of destroying them- as a Catastrophic Draconian, their nature is defined by their death, and it is only by finding death can they hope to find what lies beyond it.

So it is that while the Catastrophic Aurak finds themselves utterly disinterested in the petty conflicts of the world, they seek them out all the same- allying with tyrants, opposing heroes, or doing whatever else is likely to lead to conflict with powerful foes. They cannot simply allow themselves to be slain- only a genuine and hard fought conflict can supply them the energy, both magical and psychic, that they need to catapult themselves into what lies beyond. Often, their foes prove too weak, or weak willed, to spur the cycle of the Aurak Ascendant to the next step.

When their time is close, they begin to shed their physical form- scales and skins fall away in a most reptilian manner, revealing a gleaming, barely humanoid figure beneath. It is not exactly clear where these creatures go when they ascent, but those who touch their mind in the final moments of their life can gain startling insights into the nature of the cosmos- if only for a short while.

For use with the 4th Edition



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
 ROLEPLAYING GAME

Requires the use of the D&D Player's Handbook,[®] Monster Manual,[®] and Dungeon Master's Guide[®] Player's Handbook[®] 2, Monster Manual[®] 2, Adventurer's Vault[™] core rulebooks, available from Wizards of the Coast, LLC

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THANKS FOR READING!

STORY HOOKS

Catastrophic Draconians are strange variations on the normal Draconians, which might battle against the heroes in the earlier part of their career. An old draconian nemesis might return as a supercharged Casatrophic, or a villain of another kind might unleash these 'new improved' creatures on the heroes as they grow in power.

Whatever the events that bring the heroes into conflict with the Catastrophics, their twisted and unstable nature will dominate these confrontations- with few exceptions, the allies of a Catastrophic Draconian will not find them a pleasant comrade. Below are a few hooks for using these creatures in a campaign:

- *A small group of Stoneguard Baaz have lived peacefully in a free Draconian nation for some time. However, rumors has it that they have been joined by another, more powerful Catastrophic, and the group is urging the leaders of the free draconian nation to allow the enhancement of Baaz and other draconians. The heroes are sent to investigate- some of their allies press them to eliminate the thread the Catastrophics represent, while others believe that peace with the free draconian nation must be the priority.
- *A human wizard has captured a clutch of copper dragon eggs, and has been experimenting with the creation of Kapak Corruptors. These wretched but powerful creatures make for excellent shock troops, and their terrifying nature has cowed local goblin tribes into following the wizard's orders. To make matters worse, the Corrupted Kapaks are starting to realize what kind of creature is supposed to emerge from the copper eggs (many of which have yet to be corrupted), but it is not clear whether this revelation would spur them to rebel, or simply collapse into madness and despair.
- *A pair of Bozaks who sought to enhance their power has subjected themselves to the enhancement process- only to discover it's side-effects when one of them was seriously injured in an accident. The survivor mourns their mate, but more than anything is desperate to stabilize the process, going to extreme lengths to gather the power and Lore it requires to prolong it's life. In a moment of inspiration, they realize that their best bet may be to absorb the life force of a Dragon- although they shall need some suitably capable pawns to lay such a creature low....
- *One of the Heroes finds themselves approached by a mysterious but intriguing person, who claims to know them, and seeks to aid them in their adventures. Only later is it revealed that the creature is a Sivak Devourer who has taken a more pleasing form, with the intention of melding with the Hero- a desire that most would recoil from- but some might find intriguing indeed- or a desperate solution to other problems that weight upon them heavily (such as a curse, an incurable disease, or a desire to keep up with their increasingly powerful allies),
- *An Aurak who has long been a major foe of the heroes faces them in what is to be their final battle. Something goes terribly wrong- and neither side wins a clear victory, with the forces unleashed in the battle badly injuring the Aurak. As the heroes regroup, they hear rumors of their enemy's forces in disarray, as if their schemes and agendas were unraveling. When they finally track the villain down, they find a very different creature- forced towards Ascendance by their penultimate clash, their old nemesis seeks one more battle, for very different reasons- assuming the creature can be defeated, they may even aid the heroes with vital information about other quests, before they leave this world.ain.

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