

QL's Chromatic Dragons v 1.0

This document updates the MM1 chromatic dragons (and the dracolich) with the new solo guidelines laid out in DMG2, the monster design philosophy and format of MM3, along with some new powers I've made up to make these dragons more interesting tougher opponents, and to highlight their "core concept" and role. I've given the chromatic dragons a more predatory and fierce feel to differentiate them from their metallic kin. Chromatic dragons are vain, greedy, and predatory creatures; canny adventurers can exploit these traits to gain the upper hand against these dragons.

Here are the "core concepts" of each chromatic dragon:

- **Black:** Lurking horrors attacking from shadows and dragging prey away.
- **Blue:** Masters of the sky nearly undefeatable while airborne.
- **Green:** Cunning deceivers who never fight fair and set up pitched battles.
- **Red:** Malign wyrms of vast power that bask in the adulation of mortals.
- **White:** Blood-thirsty beasts with a single-minded focus on their next meal.
- **Dracolich:** Utterly terrifying monstrosities which sap the life from their foes.

Here's a summary of the changes I made:

- **Adjusted Hit Points:** Quadruple (x4) not quintuple (x5) for monsters 11th level or higher.
- **Damage:** Double static damage (e.g. 1d8+5 becomes 1d8+10).
- **Lowered Defenses:** Reduce AC and two lower defenses by 2 each.
- **Avoid "Stun Lock":** Each chromatic has a different way it can shake off conditions.
- **Better When Bloodied:** In addition to the bloodied breath of all dragons, each chromatic has one of its powers improved when it is bloodied.
- **"Predatory" Power:** Adult and older chromatics have a new "predatory" power.
- **Replaced Resistance:** A more exciting feature has replaced the chromatic's resistance.
- **Vulnerability:** Each chromatic now has a unique vulnerability savvy heroes can exploit.

A fight with a chromatic dragon shouldn't drag on. It should be one of the most dynamic fights in the game. Hope these revised chromatic dragons take the "drag" out, and turn "on" the awesome in your game.

Aaron

BLACK DRAGON

“Where is it? Where is it? Dear gods, it just dragged the cleric away!”

The black dragon is a cross between a crocodile and “things which go bump in the dark.” It’s always at the edge of your peripheral vision, waiting to strike your weakest member and drag them off into the swamp to drown them. Like any good horror flick monster, the black dragon stalks the adventurers one by one with a malign cunning, cloaked in perpetual darkness. Encounters with a black dragon have adventurers pulling out every trick they know to pinpoint the monster’s position, adopting a defensive strategy until then. However, it won’t be long before the black dragon slinks back into the shadows, so they’ll have to make most of these windows of opportunity. In the rare cases when a black dragon is flying (and visible), a foolhardy PC might try to jump on its back; the usual response is for the dragon to grasp the PC in its maw and dive into the nearest body of water to drown them.

Avoid “Stun Lock”

Shadowed Evasion: No Action, 1/round; When an attack misses the dragon while it has total concealment, the dragon may remove any one condition affecting it (but not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious).

~~Better When Bloodied~~

~~**Bite:** + “When bloodied double the ongoing acid damage.”~~

“Predatory” Power

Grasping Bite: Recharge when first bloodied; Free Action; When the dragon hits with a bite attack it may opt to grab with its bite, restraining the target and inflicting ongoing acid damage against the target until the target escapes the grab (i.e. a save doesn’t end the ongoing damage). When the dragon moves, flies, or swims, the grabbed target slides to any square of its choosing which must be adjacent to the dragon. While a target is grabbed the dragon can’t use its bite attack.

Replaced Resistance

Acid Shroud: When hit by an acid attack, the dragon recharges its cloud of darkness and uses it as a free action. If cloud of darkness is already recharged, it remains useable after this effect is resolve.

Vulnerability

Light Vulnerability: The first time a black dragon is forced into bright light it is blinded and cannot use cloud of darkness until the end of its next turn. While in bright light a black dragon grants combat advantage.

BLUE DRAGON

“Look out! It’s gone aerial again! Its next attack could come from anywhere!”

The blue dragon is the undisputed master of the skies, hurtling into the clouds to evade attacks only to descend upon the adventurers in a new more advantageous position. While airborne it is nearly undefeatable, so any fight against a blue dragon will focus on getting the damn thing to the ground (or at least facing it on equal aerial footing). If it is locked down on the ground, the blue dragon is vulnerable and rapidly grows frustrated, tossing foes through the air before unfurling its wings in a gust of wind to lunge into the skies once more. A foolhardy PC who jumps on a blue dragon’s back is guaranteed the dragon will fly straight up and attempt to gore them, sending the PC plummeting to the ground below.

Avoid “Stun Lock”

Aerial Counter: No Action (1/round); Recharge 4,5,6; When an attack hits the dragon while it is in flight, cancel all conditions the attack would inflict (but not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious), but not the damage or other effects of the attack. Remove the dragon from play until the start of its next turn. It reappears in any square within its fly speed from its original location.

Better When Bloodied

Gore: + “When bloodied it pushes the target an extra square.”

Speed: +2 fly speed when bloodied

“Predatory” Power

Wing Buffet: Recharge when first bloodied; Move Action; Close Burst 1; vs. Fortitude; Hit: Knocked prone; Hit or Miss: Push 1 square; Effect: Fly its speed.

Replaced Resistance

Lightning Ascent: When hit by a lightning attack, any mark, hunter’s quarry, assassin’s shroud, warlock’s curse, and similar effects on the dragon end. If it is on the ground, it immediately moves its fly speed without provoking opportunity attacks. If it is already airborne, it is removed from play until the start of its next turn where it reappears in any square within its fly speed from its original location.

Vulnerability

Ground Vulnerability: When a critical hit is scored against the dragon while it is grounded, its gore attack inflicts no extra lightning damage and it cannot use *lightning burst* or *breath weapon* until the end of its next turn.

GREEN DRAGON

“Take cover, it’s making another pass! Wait, it’s pushing us toward the cliff!”

The green dragon doesn’t fight fair. It is like the Biblical serpent – a cunning deceiver who makes others the instrument of their own doom. An encounter with one of these silver-tongued serpents will often involve some sort of tempting offer to one or more members of the party, a setup or betrayal by NPCs, or tricking the adventurers into a death trap. When possible, it avoids battle, but if it must fight the green dragon makes flyby attacks and hedges the PCs into dangerous terrain (or flushes them out from cover) before closing in to melee combat. Adventurers that let their guard down in melee, however, risk dire repercussions and have trouble keeping the serpent pinned down. A foolhardy PC who jumps on a flying green dragon’s back will quickly be wrapped in its coiled tail and used as a weapon to fend off flying adversaries, which usually results in the PC getting dropped prone.

Avoid “Stun Lock”

Cunning Ploy: No Action (1/round); When the dragon gains a condition (but not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious) while an adjacent enemy is suffering from a condition, the dragon may transfer the condition it would have received to that enemy.

Better When Bloodied

Flyby Attack: + “When bloodied, the dragon can also make a claw attack. If both the bite and claw hit the same target, slide the target 1/2/3/4 squares and knock them prone.”

“Predatory” Power

Coiling Tail: Recharges when first bloodied; Free Action; When a target is hit by its tail sweep, instead of knocking it prone, slide the target 1/2/3/4 squares and the target is immobilized and cannot make opportunity attacks (save ends both). A character can make a melee or close attack against the tail; if they get a critical hit then both effects end immediately. While a target is immobilized, any tail sweep attack the dragon makes slides the immobilized enemy to a square adjacent to the enemy it just attacked and inflicts equal damage to the immobilized enemy. The dragon can release the immobilized enemy as a free action, leaving them prone.

Replaced Resistance

Poisonous Blood: When the dragon is hit by a poison attack, all adjacent creatures take 5 ongoing poison damage (10 elder, 15 ancient).

Vulnerability

Cunning Vulnerability: Green dragons can’t resist a challenge of wits, such as a hide-and-seek game, a riddle contest, or ...The dragon is obsessed with outsmarting lesser races and delights in sowing the seeds of destruction, all the more so if the dragon can trick the lesser races into destroying themselves.

RED DRAGON

"It's got the rogue pinned! No, get back! It's trying to lure us close!"

The red dragon knows its power and flaunts it. Think Smaug from The Hobbit. These arrogant wyrms live holed up in their lairs and scoff at the idea of lesser mortals posing a threat. Battle with a red dragon is dangerous not only because of its sheer strength, but also because it enjoys having lesser creatures marvel at it. This often plays out as psychological games, such as pinning down a weaker foe to lure a more powerful enemy closer, endangering nearby innocents and destroying buildings to prove its might, or taunting an opponent into sub-optimal tactical decisions. Canny adventurers can turn the wyrm's egoism against it, however. A foolhardy PC who jumps on a flying red dragon's back may be snatched in the wyrm's claws and thrown into the mountainside or the red dragon might hang on to the PC as a trophy while it battles the party, making area effect powers a risky proposition.

Avoid "Stun Lock"

Draconic Pride: No Action (1/round); When a creature voluntarily moves (NOT shifts) adjacent to or provokes an opportunity attack from the dragon, the dragon removes one condition affecting it (not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious).

Better When Bloodied

Tail Strike: (rewritten) At-Will; Immediate Reaction; when an enemy moves (but doesn't shift); Reach X (2X when bloodied); vs. Reflex; damage and pull the target to a square adjacent to the dragon, this ends the enemy's movement.

"Predatory" Power

Pin Down: Recharge when first bloodied; Free Action; When the dragon hits with a claw attack, it may opt to grab the target, knocking them prone and restraining them. The target must escape the grab to end these conditions. While a target is grabbed, the dragon can't use Double Attack.

Replaced Resistance

Fiery Resplendence: When hit by a fire attack, the dragon immediately uses its frightful presence as a free action even if it has already used it this encounter.

Vulnerability

Ego Vulnerability: A PC who makes a Bluff check praising the dragon's power either provides all allies a +5 attack or damage bonus (ally chooses which) on their next attack against the dragon, or prevents the dragon from recharging any powers (save ends without the +5 save bonus). This ruse may only be used successfully once per battle. In addition, charm powers bypass the dragon's +5 save bonus (if they require a saving throw).

WHITE DRAGON

"Brace yourselves – it's coming! Expect no quarter!"

The white dragon is an engine of destruction, a cross between a shark and a bloodhound. It attacks with the unbridled fury of a winter storm, descending upon the adventurers from the mountain mists or pouncing upon them from a snow bank. Blood drives it mad, overriding any self preservation instinct, and savvy adventurers can exploit this incessant hunger to their advantage. Encountering a white dragon will have the adventurers grimly awaiting the beast's onslaught and attempting to avoid spending healing surges or provoking opportunity attacks. Leaders will want to buff the party and weaker PCs will often have to escape the beast's predations while suffering from being slowed. A foolhardy PC who jumps onto a flying white dragon's back can expect the dragon to plummet to the earth and willfully take falling damage in the hopes of killing the PC, or to fly through some obstacle in an attempt to shake the PC off.

Avoid "Stun Lock"

Implacable Predator: No Action (1/round); When an enemy spends a healing surge, the dragon removes one condition affecting it (not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious).

Better When Bloodied

Bite: + "When the dragon makes an opportunity attack against a bloodied foe, it makes an additional bite attack against another enemy as a second opportunity action."

"Predatory" Power

Hurling Assault: Recharge when first bloodied; Standard Action; if flying descend up to its overland flight speed, if on ground shift (jump) half its speed through enemy squares; Target: all creatures in dragon's space or adjacent to it; Attack: vs. Fortitude; Hit: medium damage and knocked prone; Hit or Miss: pushed to any square adjacent to the dragon.

Replaced Resistance

Frost Flurry: When hit by a cold attack, the dragon unleashes a flurry of wind and snow, causing all adjacent squares to become difficult terrain and all adjacent enemies to be slowed until the end of its next turn.

Vulnerability

Hunger Vulnerability: A bloodied creature can lure the dragon 2 squares as a minor action, up to 6 squares if they take three minor actions. Only one bloodied creature can do this per round.

DRACOLICH

"It's hopeless, we cannot defeat this monstrosity!"

The dracolich is the embodiment of mortal fear. While it maintains the proclivities of its living chromatic kin – greed and power – its true delight is inspiring terror and sowing chaos among the ranks of mortals. In some ways it is the antithesis of dragonkind; chromatic dragons seek to exert their power in the world, while the dracolich jealously seeks to undermine power. A consummate thief, the dracolich enjoys amassing glistening treasures, seizing ruined keeps, even stealing the life force of its foes.

In my humble opinion, the RAW dracolich is one of the least interesting and most annoying foes in the game because of its copious ability to stun. Thus I've rewritten it extensively.

Bite (rewritten): At-Will; Standard Action; Reach 3; Attack: vs. AC; Hit: 2d8+16 damage, and against a dazed, mesmerized, or stunned target the attack deals an extra 2d8 necrotic damage.

Mesmerizing Gaze (rewritten): Minor Action (1/round); Close Blast 3; +20 vs. Will; Hit: the target is mesmerized until the end of the dracolich's next turn, a mesmerized creature cannot target the dracolich with powers; Miss: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls against the dracolich until the end of the dracolich's next turn.

Breath Weapon (rewritten): Standard Action; Recharge 5,6; Close Blast 5; +21 vs. Reflex; Hit: 2d8 +14 damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the dracolich's next turn; Miss: Half damage and the target is not dazed; Hit or Miss: The target loses any necrotic resistance it has and can't benefit from healing powers (save ends).

Avoid "Stun Lock"

Fear Devourer: No Action; When an enemy fails a saving throw, the dracolich removes a condition affecting it (not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious).

Better When Bloodied

Mesmerizing Gaze: + "Hit: When bloodied, the dracolich compels one mesmerized creature to make a basic attack against one of its allies."

"Predatory" Power

Life Siphon: Recharge when bloodied; Free Action; One creature the dracolich has damaged this turn is life siphoned (save ends). While life siphoned, each time the creature spends a healing surge the dracolich's attacks deal +10 necrotic damage (cumulative until the life siphon ends).

Replaced Resistance

Necrotic Empowerment: When the dracolich is hit by a necrotic attack, it gains a +2 to all saves until the end of its next turn and can remove a condition affecting it (not dying, helpless, surprised, or unconscious).

Vulnerability

Draconic Vulnerability: The dracolich maintains the vulnerability it possessed while living.

Greed Vulnerability: The dragon is lured by precious art objects and gems like a moth to a flame. Simply presenting such an item causes the dragon to be marked by the wielder and focus on obtaining the object.