

PC description: "A rotting animal skull clad in shadows sits atop a withered human body, a fat, tentacled tail trailing behind."

Intro:

"This desiccated horror is a nightmare pulled from the mind of the Prince of the Undead himself. A demonic undead pig that, like a slug or an octopus, shifts along the ground along dozens of fat, writhing plague-ridden tentacles that trail eight feet behind it, its humanoid chest held high, rotting pig skull of a head ominously lowered. Its thin arms are peppered with pus, bloody, half-healed wounds and insects that crawl out of holes in its body. Its fingers end in yellowed claws. It's jagged bones show and only papery skin covers its gashed body, but its ominous aura suggests it can kill you in an instant. A dark, faint black cloud surrounds its body as it slowly and purposefully moves towards you. Where its eyes should be in its large skull are dark shadows, only it knows what creeps behind them. Worms writhe around its flesh, embedded in its withered gashes. Its open mouth shows diseased but sharp curved teeth. A cacophony of buzzing noises and the scuttling of insects travel with the beast. Pain, suffering, eternal death radiates from the body of this silent menace... flies are waiting..."

From *Undead Servitors: Accounts of Exploration from a Retired Adventurer* by Ihuzo Nagasaki

Part 1: General Lore

The Rogs are undying servants of The Goat, The Demon Prince of The Undead, Orcus. The Silent Deaths never speak directly, muttering vile blasphemies out loud and gazing into the soul of fearful mortals. They can communicate telepathically in an indescribable voice that seems to come from all directions and inside them at once. They can communicate without words into the souls of mindless creatures.

They could be considered the "Captains" in Orcus' undead armies, each Rogs are given a few thousand personal minions at their disposal and they give orders and orchestrate the movements of several demonic leaders usually Balors or Molydei, who in turn command five to eight legions of undead and lesser fiends themselves.

Each of Orcus' Overseers commands a few dozen Rogs, and occasionally a Rog that shows potential is promoted into their ranks. Some overseers even reach the status of nascent demon lord or, in a precious few cases, a true demon lord. They are given control over either a larger portion of their current Abyssal property, or are granted an entire layer to call their own. But The Goat makes sure to never give a favored servant too much power, or his reign will crumble and his former slave will take his throne. When the Prince of Undeath senses this is the case, he either demotes the suspected rival, sends them on a mission for an extended period of time, or, when needed, slays the rebel Overseer and takes away its free will when the Rog is reanimated. This is usually not the case, however, since Orcus can exercise control over the mind of Rogs he has created himself.

Rogs are reclusive creatures who shun company and only associate with others of their kind when forming strategies in their wars... or murdering them. Rogs care nothing for laws, they simply believe organization occasionally benefits them. Balors despise them and covet their power, questioning their authority and sometimes rebelling. When Balors do so, the Rogs bring swift wrath and even death upon these lesser commanders. Borrowing from sahkils, their presence spreads fear among almost all other beings, particularly the fear of decay. They enjoy bringing sickness and pain to anything lesser than them, but (in the case of those who have turned from The Goat), grudgingly obey their new masters, until the time comes when they rebel.

Part 2: Physiology

Rogs reach heights of nine to eleven feet. Their bodies secrete fluids as they travel along the ground, usually blood, generic slime, or urine. Their measured pace on the ground can fool observers into assuming that they are sluggish brutes, but woe be to them, for those fiends can zip through the air at bewildering speeds.

Most of their physical traits serve no real purpose other than to strike fear in their victim's hearts. Their writhing tentacles can grab small objects and animals, and the hooks that cover them can dig into a leg, arm or other body part the tentacles have taken hold of and tear deep into their skin, dealing serious damage or, depending on the size and placement of the wound, death.

But Rogs have no obligation to limit themselves to one attack. Their withered hands can lash out at enemies, slashing through their bodies, spreading debilitating diseases and sapping away their life energy. Rogs are also capable of temporarily turning into incorporeal spirits, becoming barely visible dark shadows of their physical selves and flying through the living, eating at their minds and hearts. Rogs possess a host of other abilities, most of all their power to call most demons forth at will to fight battles for them. But Rogs don't really have to use their attacks, for they are perfect masterminds and connivers, and they decide the battle plan of an army to relay to Balor generals, they don't meddle with the worthless mortals or their temporary issues. Yet when confronted in a battle, Rogs will do anything they can to survive, and fight with all their might and the might of the demons under their dominion.

Part 3: Origins

Orcus has openly declared that he formed the Rogs himself, from the raw essence of the Abyss and likely his own divinity. Iggwilv postulates the Prince of the Undead personally slew a demon-possessed giant boar with the Wand of Orcus and returned to the Abyss to reanimate its soul embedded in a mountain of holy priests fallen to a plague, giving rise to the first and greatest Rog. It served the Abyssal lord with utmost loyalty (no small feat among demons), proved excellent at strategizing and organizing combat, and spread fear and submission at a psychological level unparalleled by other Tanar'ri, and thus proved superior all-around compared to any other demon, including Balors and Molydei. At this time, The Goat was a young demon lord, and he saw the potential these abominations had in advancing his power. He now forms Rogs out of a speck of his essence, and that's all it takes with Orcus' current capabilities. Rog generals (Overseers) are formed from ordinary Rogs given additional unholy power, though rarely their existence is sparked from the will of the Abyss itself.

Part 4: Identification

"I can't imagine why you'd need to identify one demon from another.", reasons Jagalik. He's probably right, readers the likes of you have no need to discriminate one horror or the next. However, for knowledge' sake, we must continue.

Rogs are rare and unique creatures, and you'll probably know one when you see it. Rogs command practically all other demons, occasionally contending with Molydei, and will accordingly be found behind the shadows of every fight they deign to observe. Their wounded heads are shaped faintly in the likeness of Orcus, and tell-tale symbols, jewelry, or totems of their master's faith give away their status. Unlike Grothlut fleshwarps, their fleshy tails end in tentacles and their bodies are mutilated in no way that would tone down their physical strength. Their chest is that of a thin, sickly humanoid, unlike the pus-filled fat

of Grothluts, and their skull is that of a dead boar or a Nucol sahkil. Above all, their malevolent sentence is what sets them apart from similar life forms.

Part 5: Location & Range

Normal Rogs are not Demon Lords in almost all cases and therefore do not govern an entire layer of the Abyss. However, they do preside over a portion of a layer, their claims spanning the extent of an island to a significant mortal kingdom. They often consist of a single vast city (or more accurately an organized network of buildings) in a system where the Rog has absolute authority and the most forceful, manipulative demons constitute the highest level of Abyssal society. Like the Archdevils, laws within their domain are present but strict and brutal.

Notwithstanding Rogs do this out of no sense of duty, goal, or even necessity. They merely conclude that, in the moment, regulations will enable Rogs to retain positions of authority for extended periods of time. In their hearts, they are manifested chaos, evil, cruelty and pain; ironically only bound by their loyalty to the demon-god Orcus, which is barely something to advocate.

The cities under their so-called "rulership" incorporate Balors, Mariliths, and Vrolikai, among a few others, in the upper hierarchy, Hezrous, Grerors and tanar'ri of similar capacity in the middle class and a host of others comprising the lower ranks. Soul larvae, manes, dretches and from time to time rutterkin are treated as food or worthless slaves. They are kept piled up in pens, fermented in jars or fluids or strung up dead and ready for consumption. Rogs are intelligent and plan ahead, and would conserve resources such as these lesser demons if they felt it would benefit them, but in these towns of terror they see no value for their inferiors other than food, sadistic torture, sexual debauchery or other forms of enslavement.

When a Rog leaves its domain, it leaves the strongest and/or most trusted demon in its place. When the Rog returns it will more often than not find that it has been usurped by its acting substitute ruler, and the renegade demon will be executed or banished, the Rog can imagine no further need for a traitor. The rules of a Rog's city are never set in stone, and what is right in its eyes changes in an instant. As a result its many subordinates learn never to push too far or assume what is a Rog's opinion, they risk the most painful of disciplines.

A Rog's domain cannot be physically altered by the fiend, at least not at the scale of a demon lord. They can collaborate to shape the terrain more effectively but this can typically not be accomplished without catching the notice of a demon lord or nascent demon lord on the brink of change, who can alter their Layer's landscape by themselves with no difficulty. Rogs typically build their cities, lairs, castles or other hideouts on the peak of a mountain, taking advantage of their power to force stairways, rocks to grip onto or a ledge that would break a fall disappear, or vice versa. They also find it convenient to live inside craters, ravines, or other difficult terrain for the same reason; though they take care to make it possible for themselves and their superiors to enter a Rog's refuge easily so as to not attract their ire, though it is trivial for a demon lord to get rid of these obstacles.

Most of these undead abominations roam around Thanatos, the 113th layer of the Abyss, but can be encountered almost anywhere in the lower planes, via spontaneous incarnation, missions to other areas, bargains between demon lords or gifts to favored cultists.

Part 6: Life Cycle

Like all demons, Rogs are born fully mature. They have an ingrained, detailed knowledge of the Abyss and its history, particularly of The Goat and Thanatos. Rogs rarely evolve spontaneously from other

demons, but if a demon showing promise that is particularly fearsome and vile is noticed by the Prince of the Undead, he might promote them into that new form. Most, however, are handmade out of Orcus' demonic strength or by his top-ranking servants. These Rogs can be created from the souls of faithful cultists, cursed paladins, or heaps of dead bodies, harnessing dark energy from the immediate area to birth these atrocities. After birth, Rogs are given basic missions to test their strength, intelligence, and loyalty. Others are sold to wicked powers in exchange for secrets, information on Orcus' enemies, treasure, or other slaves. After a Rog returns from a mission (some do not), they are evaluated by Rog Overseers or Orcus' other generals. Those who fail are immediately slaughtered. Those who do mediocre work are sent to roam as sentries around Thanatos or sold off to those who pledged their service to The Goat. Those who excel at their duties are given command of legions of undead and those who go above and beyond their call are instantly granted the status of Overseer. A Rog will stay in its appointed position until The Generals see fit.

Part 7: Notable Rogs

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Part 8: Connections With Other Creatures

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Part 9: Battle Tactics

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Part 10: Adventure Tools

Each Rog is a unique creature ranging in power from CR 21 to CR 23. Rogs are generally considered beyond the reach of mortal heroes, and should not be placed in a campaign without careful consideration. In most cases, they are best used as the final enemies of long campaigns- especially those in which the PCs themselves are epic characters, and even getting an audience with one should be a memorable event. Yet even if Rogs are far outside the reach of PCs to combat directly, they can still be used as foes in campaigns of all levels, inspiring or directing monsters, mortals, and entire cults. Opposing and defeating a cult is a time-honored plotline for an adventure and a cinematic perhaps lead by the Rog where the cult's Demon Lord or his avatar manifests in the flesh with several Rogs, or for lower-level players a cult attempts to summon a Rog, can make an exciting capstone for a party's adventure, especially if the Demon Lord in question appears for a round or 2 to fight the players before the closing of the portal forces it to be sent back to the Abyss.

-Hooks-

1. A Rog is granted to a cultist that was previously inferior and no real threat. He/She uses their newfound power to wreak uncontrolled havoc on the land.
2. A cult attempts to summon Rogs to further spread the religion of Orcus.
3. Rogs stand guard in front of a vile artifact that would vastly decrease or increase a fiend's power.
4. A Rog possesses a mortal king and uses his authority to recover a dark, mysterious treasure.
5. A Rog slays a benevolent figure and the society of the ?celestial? crashes down.
6. Rogs lead Balors in the Blood War and score an unprecedented victory, turning the battle in their favor and taking over an entire layer of Hell.

7. A Rog suddenly gains extreme power and transforms into a Demon Lord, throwing off an influential deity in the Abyss.
8. Players are aided by a mysterious humanoid who gains information about the PC's plans and motivations, then gives the secrets to its master and ambushes the party.
9. Rogs discover the shard of Tenebrous' soul and use the deity's essence to restore Orcus' lost divinity.