

Hammer & Helm Web Enhancement

Requires the use of the *Dungeons & Dragons*, Third Edition Core Books, and the *Psionics Handbook*, published by Wizards of the Coast

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The following material extends some of the ideas found in *Hammer & Helm: A Guidebook to Dwarves*. The first section describes an organization of dwarves dedicated to fighting giants, along with feats and equipment these dwarves have developed to use against their foes. The second section details a psionic prestige class along with a few psionic feats and items. Any of these ideas can easily be incorporated to an existing campaign.

- The Belnar Gianthunters -

Nearly a dozen years ago, a group of dwarven soldiers and clerics encountered a group of hill giants and trolls near an ancient stone monument known as the Belnar Carins. The giants, showing better organization and more sophisticated tactics than normal for their kind, engaged the dwarves in a running battle. Both sides suffered losses, and as the battle progressed through the hills, many powerful dwarven adventurers were called with *sending* spells and similar magic. As reinforcements arrived for both sides, the lists of casualties mounted, and the dwarves soon realized that they had stumbled on a major gathering of giants and their allies. In fits and starts, the fighting continued for several days. As the surviving spellcasters worked to bring more allies to the fray, more and more giants poured out of the hills. After five long days of fighting, the giants were driven back. The final cost in dwarven lives was tremendous, and many of the fallen were among the most powerful heroes of the clans. Acting as one, the survivors pledged to remain vigilant against the threat of giant raids, working to give their people more warning of raids and gathering by their ancestral foes. This group took the name of the battlefield on which they fought, using it to remember those who had fallen in battle against the surprise threat. The Belnar Gianthunters, formed after that fateful battle, remain vigilant and determined to protect civilization against giants.

The Belnar Gianthunters search constantly for seasoned adventurers, especially dwarves, willing to work with them to fight against giants. Even those uninterested in allying themselves directly with the organization often agree to relay information about giants and their activities to the dwarves, and the gianthunters' efforts to build a network of allies and scouts has made the group one of the foremost authorities on giants and their activities.

Organization and Tactics

All told, the Belnar Gianthunters number fewer than fifty members. A mixed lot of warriors and spellcasters, the gianthunters rely on news from adventurers and wanderers of all sorts as well as divinatory magic to carefully plan small strikes against dangerous giants. Comprised primarily of ex-Cavernsgaard soldiers and accomplished adventurers, the gianthunters are a dangerous and proficient group. Despite their skill, however, the gianthunters are cautious. Even the most powerful individuals do not engage a group of giants lightly, and gianthunter raids are carefully planned and executed. Gianthunters who enter a giant's den lacking exacting information about the number of giants present and their capabilities rarely return from their missions.

The organization works tirelessly to identify and isolate giants who pose a threat to the civilized areas of other races. They know that they lack the power to destroy large tribes of giants, but by focusing on leaders and tribes likely to raid into the cities of other races, they keep the tribes fragmented and disorganized.

Signature Feats

Although the gianthunters are an eclectic mix of warriors and spellcasters, all share a hatred of giants and giant kin. The organization is too diverse and too widespread to support a consistent training program, but its members have developed a few tricks and techniques for fighting giants. These techniques, represented by the following feats, also illustrate how an organization can have a unified set of tactics and abilities without requiring all of its members to take levels in a specific prestige class.

Focus Spell [Metamagic]

You can shape your spells so that they are much harder for one type of creature to resist.

Prerequisites: Spellcaster level 5+.

Benefits: When you prepare a focused spell, choose a creature type. The spell's DC is increased by +2 when cast against creatures of the chosen type. Against other creature types, the spell's DC is reduced by 4. A focused spell uses up a spell slot of the same level as the spell's actual level.

Giant Crusher [General]

You can use your smite ability more effectively against creatures with the giant type.

Prerequisites: Smite evil.

Benefits: When you use your smite ability against a creature with the giant type, you deal additional damage equal to twice your relevant class level. If your smite ability is limited by alignment (like a paladin's smite evil ability) the creature must still be of the correct alignment for the smite to work.

In addition, you may use your smite ability an additional time each day, provided that this additional use is against a creature with the giant type.

Normal: When you use your smite ability you deal additional damage equal to your level.

Focused Fighting [General]

You gain bonuses to your attack and damage rolls against a specific kind of foe.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3, Str 13+

Benefits: When you take this feat, choose a creature type. You gain a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls and melee damage against creatures with the chosen type.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, you must choose a new creature type against which the bonus applies.

Equipment and Supplies

Gianthunters never enter battle without careful preparation and equipment tailored to their foes. The following items represent some of the gianthunters' most effective weapons against giants.

Special and Superior Items

Mind Fog

This light, airy dust, the product of long experimentation by a pair of alchemists allied with the gianthunters, can cloud the mind for brief periods of time. Although its powers are limited, mind fog has proven effective against lesser giants. While even the weakest giants are daunting foes in a toe-to-toe fight, few are able to resist mind-clouding effects. The gianthunters turned to their alchemist allies, hoping to find a way for even raw recruits to capitalize on this weakness.

Mind fog comes in light packets designed to burst on impact. Mind fog requires a ranged touch attack to strike a target, and it has a range increment of 10 feet. Creatures struck by a packet of mind fog must make a Will save (DC 12) or be stunned for one round. Mind fog's stunning power is a non-magical, mind-affecting effect.

Cost: 45 gp; **Alchemy DC to Create:** 25; **Weight:** ½ lb.

Specific Magic Items

Gianthunter Banner

Although the gianthunters rarely march openly through giant-infested territory, occasional pitched battles are unavoidable. These magical banners serve as rallying points for troops scattered by a giant's attack while simultaneously demoralizing and weakening giants who come near the banner. Although the banners carry the emblem of the gianthunters, they are occasionally loaned or sold to adventuring groups planning missions against giants.

Any giant within 100 feet of a *gianthunter banner* must make a Will save (DC 16) or be shaken. This effect lasts until the giant leaves the area. Giants must make this saving throw when they first enter the affected area, but a giant that has resisted the effect cannot be affected again by the same banner for one day.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *fear*; **Market Price:** 1,500 gp; **Cost to Create:** 750 gp + 60 xp; **Weight:** 10 lb.

Fellbane

This +2 *dwarven battlehammer bane vs. giants* was forged to shield its wearer from at least part of the massive blows that giants deal. Anyone wielding *Fellbane* gains a special damage reduction of 10/- that applies only to damage dealt by creatures with the giant creature type.

Fellbane is among the greatest treasures the gianthunters possess. Twice it has been lost in fights against giants, but

it has always been recovered on subsequent raids. The gianthunters are careful to bring *Fellbane* into battle only at the gravest need, unwilling to risk its loss in a routine raid or skirmish.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Arms and Armor, *stoneskin*; **Market Price:** 19,500 gp; **Cost to Create:** 9,750 gp + 780 xp; **Weight:** 20 lb.

Blind Bolt

As their name implies, these magically enhanced crossbow bolts cause blindness in any creature they strike. *Blind bolts* are +1 *crossbow bolts*. Whenever a creature is struck by a *blind bolt*, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be blinded as the *blindness* spell.

Gianthunters know that giants are resilient and likely to resist the effects of a single *blind bolt*, so they only use these items when multiple *blind bolts* can be brought to bear against a single giant.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Arms and Armor, *blindness/deafness*; **Market Price:** 346 gp; **Cost to Create:** 173 gp + 14 xp; **Weight:** –.

Astral Shard

Arcane spellcasters in the gianthunters organization realize how easily a giant can destroy them in melee combat, and standard gianthunter tactics require all spellcasters able to

cast the spells to keep one *teleport*, *dimension door*, or similar spell in reserve in case a giant closes with them. This policy, when combined with the *astral shards* in the gianthunters' arsenal, has proven effective at killing giants and keeping the organization's spellcasters alive.

Astral shards function only when used as an extra material component with *dimension door*, *teleport*, *teleport without error*, or *word of recall*. When used in conjunction with one of these spells, an *astral shard* explodes, releasing a burst of deadly crystal shards in a 20-foot radius, centered on the spellcaster's location before casting the spell. The caster and other creatures affected by the spell are not harmed by the explosion, but creatures near the point of departure are. Creatures caught in the area can make a Reflex saving throw (DC 19) to avoid half of the damage. The damage of the shard explosion varies based on the size and power of the crystal. Crystals can be created in sizes capable of dealing from 1d6 to 10d6 points of damage. Only one astral shard can be used with a single casting of an appropriate trigger spell.

Caster Level: 11th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Arms and Armor, *shard rain*; **Market Price:** 150 gp (1d6), 300 gp (2d6), 450 gp (3d6), 600 gp (4d6), 750 gp (5d6), 900 gp (6d6), 1050 gp (7d6), 1200 gp (8d6), 1350 gp (9d6), 1500 gp (10d6); **Cost to Create:** 75 gp + 6 xp (1d6), 150 gp + 12 xp (2d6), 225 gp + 18 xp (3d6), 300 gp + 24 xp (4d6), 375 gp + 30 xp (5d6), 450 gp + 36 xp (6d6), 525 gp + 42 xp (7d6), 600 gp + 48 xp (8d6), 675 gp + 54 xp (9d6), 750 gp + 60 xp (10d6); **Weight:** –.

- Prestige Class: Stoneghost Assassin -

Where others must tunnel, the stoneghost walks unhindered. Where others prepare for battle, the stoneghost kills with precision. Where others find treasures and the pleasures of craft, the stoneghost finds only the grim duty of taking on those burdens that few dwarves are prepared to accept. Honorable and true, most dwarves prefer to meet their foes in open battle, but to a select few, the stoneghost clan among them, falls the duty of seeking out the hidden threat, wielding the subtle knife that halts a war before it begins, or traveling alone into the enemy's lair.

Ancient and honored, the stoneghost clan is unique in dwarven society. Never large, it has always stood staunchly by the leaders of the dwarven people, yet no thane has ever come from the stoneghost halls. Never known as magical, the clan trains those rare dwarves gifted with psionic powers.

Stoneghost assassins are the pinnacle and secret task of the stoneghost clan. Practiced in stealth and wielding exotic mental powers, the stoneghost assassins are the silent guardians of dwarven kingdoms, the unseen escort of a dwarven diplomat, and the source of the poison in the orc warlord's cup.

Few dwarves seek the tasks of the stoneghost, for they at times stray into the gray areas of morality that dwarves disdain. Those who seek the path of the stoneghost are almost exclusively rogues with pre-existing psionic talent and

training. Occasionally a dwarf will train only as a psychic warrior before becoming a stoneghost assassin, but most split their training between the psychic warrior and rogue classes.

Abbreviation: Stg
Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +5.
Hide: 5 ranks.
Move Silently: 5 ranks.
Psicraft: 5 ranks.
Feats: Ghostblood, Inertial Armor.

Class Skills

Autohypnosis (Wis), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Psicraft (Int), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following abilities are all class features of the stoneghost assassin prestige class.

Stoneghost Assassin

Level	Attack	Fort.	Ref.	Will	Power Points/Day	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	+3	Sneak attack +1d6
2	+1	+0	+3	+0	+5	Death attack
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	+5	Incorporeal armor (+1)
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	+5	Sneak attack +2d6
5	+3	+1	+4	+1	+7	Meld into stone
6	+4	+2	+5	+2	+7	Incorporeal armor (+2)
7	+5	+2	+5	+2	+7	Sneak attack +3d6
8	+6	+2	+6	+2	+9	Stoneghost
9	+6	+3	+6	+3	+9	Incorporeal armor (+3)
10	+7	+3	+7	+3	+9	Ethereal stalker, sneak attack +4d6

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Members of the stoneghost assassin prestige class gain no new proficiency in arms or armor.

Sneak Attack (Ex)

At 1st level, a stoneghost assassin gains the ability to make sneak attacks as a rogue. At 1st level, the stoneghost assassin deals an extra 1d6 sneak attack damage when his target is denied a Dexterity bonus to AC or when flanking his target. This ability follows are the normal restrictions of the rogue's sneak attack ability. The extra damage increases to +2d6 at 4th level, to + 3d6 at 7th level, and to +4d6 at 10th level.

Death Attack (Ex)

If the stoneghost assassin studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (stoneghost assassin's choice). This ability functions exactly like the assassin's death attack power as described in *DMG*.

Incorporeal Armor (Ex)

At 3rd level, a stoneghost draws power to harden the field of protective energy around him. With this ability, the armor

bonus granted by the character's Inertial Armor feat increases by +1. In addition, as long as the character is standing on a stone surface, his Inertial Armor remains effective even if he is completely depleted of reserve power points.

This ability increases to +2 at 6th level and +3 at 9th level.

Meld into Stone (Sp): At 5th level, stoneghost assassins can *meld into stone* as the spell of the same name as standard action. Use of this power requires the character to spend 3 power points for every 10 minutes he spends within stone. Should the character choose to leave the stone within a 10-minute period, the ability ends and the character must pay the activation should he wish to reenter the stone. Stoneghost assassins often use this ability to study those they have marked for assassination.

Stoneghost (Ex)

At 8th level, a stoneghost assassin may spend psionic power points to increase his powers of stealth. Each point spent provides a +1 psionic bonus on the character's Hide and Move Silently skill checks. These bonuses last for 10 minutes.

Ethereal Stalker (Sp)

At 10th level, a stoneghost assassin can become ethereal for short periods of time. Becoming ethereal requires the character to spend 8 power points. This ability lasts for 1 minute.

- Psionic Feats -

The following feats represent special psionic abilities dwarves have developed from their generations-long association with elemental earth and fire. For more information on bloodgift feats, see *Hammer & Helm*.

Body to Mind [Psionic]

You depend on your innate toughness and little else to shatter the will of your foes.

Prerequisites: Con 13+, must know at least one psionic attack mode or defense mode.

Benefits: Choose a psionic attack or defense mode that you know. Once you make this choice, that attack or defense mode is always modified by your Constitution modifier rather than its normal base ability. You may not change the attack or defense mode affected by Body to Mind.

Special: You may take this feat more than once, applying it to a different attack or defense mode each time.

Stoneheart [Bloodgift, Psionic]

Your strong dwarven heart carries you through mental assault as well as physical attacks.

Prerequisites: Stoneblood.

Benefits: You gain mental hardness equal to your Constitution bonus. This hardness does not stack with mental hardness from other sources.

Tandem Psi [Psionic]

Your training in cooperative fighting allows you to blend your psionic defenses with a trusted ally.

Prerequisites: Back-to-Back*, reserve power points 1+.

Benefits: When you are adjacent to an ally who also has the Tandem Psi feat, you gain a +4 bonus to all saving throws made to resist psionic powers and attack modes.

*See *Hammer & Helm* for a description of the Back-to-Back feat.

- Special Psionic Equipment -

Dwarves see craft and invention as the natural path through which any talent can be improved upon, and psionics are no exception. The following items represent ways that dwarven innovation and craft have been used to enhance dwarven psionic powers. Members of the stoneghost clan are the only ones who carry such equipment with any frequency.

Thoughtfuel Essence

This thick gray liquid grants a temporary boost in psionic strength. When imbibed, a vial of thoughtfuel essence provides 2 power points. These points are the first points used for psionic powers and psionic combat, but if not used within an hour, they are lost. Thoughtfuel essence drains the user's mental facilities, and an hour after imbibing the substance, the user begins to suffer distracting headaches and mental sluggishness. Starting one hour after first imbibing thoughtfuel essence, the user suffers a -2 alchemical penalty to Intelligence. This is not damage, and thus cannot be healed

by normal or magical means. The penalty fades away after 8 hours of rest.

Cost: 50 gp; **Alchemy DC to Create:** 30; **Weight:** -.

Keeper Crystals

These small crystals are imbued with fragments of psionic power, but they provide tremendous short-term benefits when the wearer must resist a psionic effect or other hardship. *Keeper crystals* are worn on a chain, taking the place of a necklace, but multiple crystals can be worn on one chain. Any time the wearer fails a saving throw, she can (as a free action taken out of turn) activate a *keeper crystal* and re-roll the saving throw. Only one *keeper crystal* can be used to re-roll against a single effect. A *keeper crystal* is consumed on use.

Manifester Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Universal Item, *fate of one*; **Market Price:** 400 gp; **Cost to Create:** 200 gp + 8 xp; **Weight:** -.

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