

GOLIATH

GOLIATHS CAN PROVE USEFUL ALLIES, BUT NEVER TURN to them in weakness. They are as hard and unforgiving as the mountain stone, as cold and pitiless as its bitter, cold winds. If you approach them in strength, they might consider you worthy of an alliance.

—Tordek, *A Guide to the Peaks*

At the highest mountain peaks—far above the slopes where trees grow and where the air is thin and the frigid winds howl—dwell the reclusive goliaths. Few folk can claim to have seen a goliath, and fewer still can claim friendship with one. Goliaths wander a bleak realm of rock, wind, and cold. Their bodies look as if they are carved from mountain stone and give them great physical power. Their spirits take after the wandering wind, making them nomads who wander from peak to peak. Their hearts are infused with the cold regard of their frigid realm, leaving each goliath with the responsibility to earn a place in the tribe or die trying.

DRIVEN COMPETITORS

Every day brings a new challenge to a goliath. Food, water, and shelter are rare in the uppermost mountain reaches. A single mistake can bring doom to an entire tribe, while an individual's heroic effort can ensure the entire group's survival.

Goliaths thus place a premium on self-sufficiency and individual skill. They have a compulsion to keep score,

counting their deeds and tallying their accomplishments to compare to others. Goliaths love to win, but they see defeat as a prod to improve their skills.

This dedication to competition has a dark side. Goliaths are ferocious competitors, but above all else they are driven to outdo their past efforts. If a goliath slays a dragon, he or she might seek out a larger, more powerful wyrm to battle. Few goliath adventurers reach old age, as most die attempting to surpass their past accomplishments.

FAIR PLAY

For goliaths, competition exists only when it is supported by a level playing field. Competition measures talent, dedication, and effort. Those factors determine survival in their home territory, not reliance on magic items, money, or other elements that can tip the balance one way or the other. Goliaths happily rely on such benefits, but they are careful to remember that such an advantage can always be lost. A goliath who relies too much on them can grow complacent, a recipe for disaster in the mountains.

This trait manifests most strongly when goliaths interact with other folk. The relationship between peasants and nobles puzzles goliaths. If a king lacks the intelligence or leadership to lead, then clearly the most talented person in the kingdom should take his place. Goliaths rarely keep such opinions to themselves, and mock folk who rely on society's structures or rules to maintain power.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Among goliaths, any adult who can't contribute to the tribe is expelled. A lone goliath has little chance of survival, especially an older or weaker one. Goliaths have little pity for adults who can't take care of themselves, though a sick or injured individual is treated, as a result of the goliath concept of fair play.

A permanently injured goliath is still expected to pull his or her weight in the tribe. Typically, such a goliath dies attempting to keep up, or the goliath slips away in the night to seek the cold will of fate.

In some ways, the goliath drive to outdo themselves feeds into the grim inevitability of their decline and death. A goliath would much rather die in battle, at the peak of strength and skill, than endure the slow decay of old age. Few folk have ever meet an elderly goliath, and even those goliaths who have left their people grapple with the urge to give up their lives as their physical skills decay.

Because of their risk-taking, goliath tribes suffer from a chronic lack of the experience offered by long-term leaders. They hope for innate wisdom in their leadership, for they can rarely count on a wisdom grown with age.

GOLIATH NAMES

Every goliath has three names: a birth name assigned by the newborn's mother and father, a nickname assigned by the tribal chief, and a family or clan name. A birth name is up to three syllables long. Clan names are five syllables or more and end in a vowel.



Birth names are rarely linked to gender. Goliaths see females and males as equal in all things, and they find societies with roles divided by gender to be puzzling or worthy of mockery. To a goliath, the person who is best at a job should be the one tasked with doing it.

A goliath's nickname is a description that can change on the whim of a chieftain or tribal elder. It refers to a notable deed, either a success or failure, committed by the goliath. Goliaths assign and use nicknames with their friends of other races, and change them to refer to an individual's notable deeds.

Goliaths present all three names when identifying themselves, in the order of birth name, nickname, and clan name. In casual conversation, they use their nickname.

Birth Names: Aukan, Eglath, Gae-Al, Gauthak, Ilikan, Keothi, Kuori, Lo-Kag, Manneo, Maveith, Nalla, Orilo, Paavu, Pethani, Thalai, Thotham, Uthal, Vaunea, Vimak

Nicknames: Bearkiller, Dawncaller, Fearless, Flintfinder, Horncarver, Keeneye, Lonehunter, Long-leaper, Rootsmasher, Skywatcher, Steadyhand, Threaddwister, Twice-Orphaned, Twistedlimb, Wordpainter

Clan Names: Anakalathai, Elanithino, Gathakanathi, Kalagiano, Katho-Olavi, Kolae-Gileana, Ogolakanu, Thuliaga, Thunukulathi, Vaimei-Laga

GOLIATH TRAITS

Goliaths share a number of traits in common with each other.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2, and your Constitution score increases by 1.

Age. Goliaths have lifespans comparable to humans. They enter adulthood in their late teens and usually live less than a century.

Alignment. Goliath society, with its clear roles and tasks, has a strong lawful bent. The goliath sense of fairness, balanced with an emphasis on self-sufficiency and personal accountability, pushes them toward neutrality.

Size. Goliaths are between 7 and 8 feet tall and weigh between 280 and 340 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Natural Athlete. You have proficiency in the Athletics skill.

Stone's Endurance. You can focus yourself to occasionally shrug off injury. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to roll a d12. Add your Constitution modifier to the number rolled, and reduce the damage by that total. After you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Powerful Build. You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

Mountain Born. You're acclimated to high altitude, including elevations above 20,000 feet. You're also naturally adapted to cold climates, as described in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Languages. You can speak, read, and write Common and Giant.

KENKU

THE MAP WE FOUND SHOWED THE ENTRANCE TO THE Priest King's treasure cache right in the middle of the ruined section of the city. We approached our destination without issue, but as we arrived at the burned-out building, a sudden cacophony erupted around us. Birds squawked, cats hissed, and dogs growled. Lidda hustled us back to the city's safer avenues. Only when we were back within the area patrolled by the guard did she explain that the noises indicated that the wingless folk had claimed that area, and that to trespass would be to court death.

—Gimble, Notes from a Treasure Hunter

Haunted by an ancient crime that robbed them of their wings, the kenku wander the world as vagabonds and burglars who live at the edge of human society. Kenku suffer from a sinister reputation that is not wholly unearned, but they can prove to be valuable allies.

AN ANCIENT CURSE

The kenku once served a mysterious, powerful entity on another plane of existence. Some believe they were minions of Grazz't, while others say that they were scouts and explorers for the Wind Dukes of Aaqa. Whatever the truth, according to legend, the kenku betrayed their master. Unable to resist the lure of a beautiful sparkling treasure, the kenku plotted to steal the item and escape to the Material Plane.

Unfortunately for the kenku, their master discovered their plan before they could enact it. Enraged, the entity imposed three dreadful curses upon them. First, the kenku's beloved wings withered and fell away from their bodies, leaving them bound to the earth. Second, because their ingenuity and skill had turned toward scheming against their patron, the spark of creativity was torn from their souls. Finally, to ensure that the kenku could never divulge any secrets, their master took away their voices. Once the entity was satisfied that they had been sufficiently punished, the kenku were set loose on the Material Plane.

Since then, the kenku have wandered the world. They settle in places that accept them, usually bleak cities that have fallen on hard times and are overrun with crime.

DREAMS OF FLIGHT

Above all else, kenku wish to regain their ability to fly. Every kenku is born with a desire to take to the air, and those who learn spellcasting do so in hope of mastering spells that will allow them to fly. Rumors of magic items such as flying carpets, brooms capable of flight, and similar objects provoke a great desire for the kenku to acquire the items for themselves.

Despite their lack of wings, kenku love dwelling in towers and other tall structures. They seek out ruins that reach to the sky, though they lack the motivation and creativity to make repairs or fortify such places.