

# PLAYING GNOLLS

by Keith Baker

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“SAIRA?” Faris said. A cloud had passed over the moon, and the woods around him were a maze of shadows. Saira’s voice had drawn him away from the campfire, but each time she called, it seemed to come from a new direction; he just couldn’t pin it down. “Saira, what’s wrong?”

“I need you . . .” Her voice was weak, rough—it was clear she was in pain. “Help me . . . please, help me . . .”

She was straight ahead of him. Faris pressed forward, thrashing his way through briars and vines. Then his foot caught on something and he stumbled, falling across a soft and wet mass—a human body with skin cold to the touch and blood matting her hair. It was Saira’s corpse.

“I need you.” It was her voice, rough and pained, but it wasn’t Saira who spoke. The speaker towered over Faris, a bloody axe clutched in one hand. Sharp teeth gleamed as the gnoll burst into laughter—a mocking, fluting cry that was quickly echoed on all sides as others stepped out of the woods. The moon broke through the clouds just in time to catch the blade of the gnoll’s axe as it rose and fell, silencing Faris’s cries.

Gnoll legends trace the origin of their species to the demon prince Yeenoghu. Known as the Beast of Butchery and Ruler of Ruin, Yeenoghu sought to spread his hand across the mortal world by creating an army that would sow discord and terror across civilized lands. His demons



numbered too few and could not remain in the mortal world indefinitely. But Yeenoghu took a few of his mightiest and most savage demons and fed them to a pack of mortal hyenas. The essence of the demons fused with the animals, and their children were the first of the gnolls—fierce humanoid creatures combining the traits of cunning hyena and vicious fiend. Yeenoghu charged the gnolls to spread horror in his name, bathing the lands in blood and bringing suffering to all things unfortunate enough to cross paths with the Children of Yeenoghu. Through this butchery, they earn a place of honor in the domain of the demon prince.

This is the tale gnoll mothers tell their pups and the story the scourge uses to exhort his troops. Whether it is truth or mere legend, it is easy to see the inspiration for the myth. A gnoll looks much like a humanoid hyena and shares many traits with the animal, including its haunting laughter. And the strength and savagery of these creatures is enough to suggest demonic blood; the typical gnoll band strikes without fear or mercy, tearing into enemies with the fury of fiends incarnate.

## FERAL FIENDS

Beyond the mechanics, what makes a gnoll marauder different from an orc raider or hobgoblin soldier? All three are dangerous foes that might oppose the PCs. So what defines the gnoll?

All gnolls share certain traits. There is a strong, instinctive bond between gnolls of the same bloodline. Gnoll clans can and do fight one another, and they see struggles for dominance within a clan, but pack mentality is a powerful force within gnoll life. This is reflected in battle: Gnolls are pack hunters who work together to bring down their prey, ganging up on an enemy instead of striving for individual

glory. Beyond this, gnolls are shaped by two forces: the primal nature of the hyena, and the pure malevolence of the demon. When you develop a gnoll clan, consider which aspect is at the fore and let that be your guide.

## THE BUTCHER'S BROOD

The gnoll followers of Yeenoghu embrace the fury of the fiend, which results in their legendary brutality. Aggression is a tangible force within the soul of the gnoll. A demonic desire to shed blood and spread chaos drives gnolls toward the chaotic evil alignment. Such gnolls do not claim lands of their own; instead they live in nomadic bands accompanied by hyenas and slaves, wandering the frontiers and fringes of civilized nations in search of prey. They attack any traveler or settlement they believe they can defeat, and the only people who survive such an attack are those taken as prey. This is no mercy. Gnoll prisoners are tortured physically and psychologically; every clan has slavers (known as *tantekurash*, or “spirit breakers”) who specialize in this work. These gnolls possess the insight to ferret out weaknesses and to spot when a victim has truly given in or when a spark of hope remains. Those who cannot be broken are soon devoured by their carnivorous captors, typically in front of other prisoners as a further act of torment. Those who surrender become slaves and are forced to maintain the camps of the nomadic gnolls between raids. Those who excel at this work might be kept alive; otherwise, they eventually are consumed by their vicious masters.

Although the experience is a horrific one that can leave scars on those who survive it, it is still possible to rescue someone from such slavery. It might take weeks or months for a victim to recover, but eventually they shake off the horror. But an unfortunate few fall into a deeper abyss. Broken by the horrors they have witnessed, they respond by embracing

what they have seen and devoting the remnants of their lives to Yeenoghu. Known as *kryshyantel* (“savage souls” in the Abyssal tongue favored by these gnolls), these slaves accompany the gnolls into battle. Most of the savage souls are little better than beasts; the gnolls treat them much the same as the trained hyenas they hunt with. A rare few embrace the creed of the Beast of Butchery with their intelligence intact, effectively becoming gnolls in human form. These savage souls are the most dangerous of all; they travel ahead of the clan in search of victims, evaluate the defenses of villages, and perform acts of sabotage before their gnoll “kin” strike.

For the gnolls of Yeenoghu, cruelty and bloodshed are a source of joy and a reason for living. They have no interest in conquest. They don't seek honor or glory. They revel in the hunt and kill. Gnolls take great pleasure in life, and a gnoll victory feast is a wild frenzy of celebration.

The pack instinct of the gnoll remains strong among the Butcher's Brood, and they rarely turn on their own. However, this loyalty doesn't extend to other clans. Gnolls might form temporary alliances to take down a powerful target or if the scourges say it is the will of Yeenoghu. Clans of equal strength could agree to take separate paths, ensuring they won't compete for the same prey. But should a clan come upon a wounded or weaker clan, odds are good that they treat it like any other potential prey; the lessons of the Ruler of Ruin are hard and bloody.

Yeenoghu's children enjoy large-scale acts of destruction, and the clan as a whole massacres villages and settlements. However, gnolls enjoy the hunt as well as the slaughter, and occasionally a smaller pack splits off from the main clan in search of diversion. Although such a group might attack a party of adventurers outright, they might also use mimicry or other tricks to split up a party, drawing out the conflict. Gnolls occasionally choose to let prisoners escape so that they can hunt them down again; such

a refugee could stumble across the path of a group of PCs, with the gnolls in near pursuit. If the PCs are clearly too powerful for the gnolls to defeat, they do not engage in a frontal assault, but they might make a sport of trying to kill the former



prisoner by refusing to engage the PCs directly and sniping at the innocent.

## THE SOUL OF THE HYENA

Gnolls agree that Yeenoghu crafted their race from demon and beast. But not all gnolls worship the Beast of Butchery. Though the fury of the fiend runs through the blood of the gnoll, some reject this demonic heritage and find solace in the spirit of the

hyena that lies within them. Over the course of generations, this has produced clans of gnolls that are less savage than the Butcher's Brood. Typically unaligned as opposed to chaotic evil, these gnolls still live as nomadic hunters on the fringes of society. However, they are more likely to hunt wild beasts than civilized creatures, and they take no joy in torture or unnecessary cruelty. These gnolls still love the thrill of the hunt, especially when tracking together with others of their pack; it is this that keeps them tied to the wild life, instead of settling down to form static communities. But they do not attack peaceful villages without serious provocation. They love to hunt and track—not to slaughter.

Such gnolls usually come to terms with the humans or other settlers who share their lands, and they might sell their services as trappers or hunters. Although they trade with members of other species, gnolls prefer the company of their own kind, along with their hyena companions. They do not take slaves, and while they do not kill peaceful humans who come to their camps, neither do they make them feel welcome. These gnolls are still predators and carnivores; while they are not quick to anger, a visitor to a gnoll camp would be wise to mind his manners.

When dealing with these gnolls, think of how their primal nature might play into their personalities. A gnoll is more comfortable in the wilds than in a town. He is a pack animal and prefers the company of his kin to solitude. Like the hyena, he is content to scavenge others' kills—but like the hyena, he is a hunter and predator, ready to fight if provoked. Gnolls that follow the path of the hyena make excellent rangers; they might lack the brutal talents of the torturer of Yeenoghu, but they typically have excellent Nature and Perception skills. At the DM's discretion, a gnoll that follows this path can exchange the standard +2 racial bonus to Intimidate checks for a +2 racial bonus to Nature checks.

## CURIOUS CREATURES

Whether they draw on their primal heritage or fiendish blood, all gnolls share many unusual traits. Many of these relate to their similarity to the hyena; others are unique to the gnolls.

**Bone Eaters:** Gnolls are carnivores. Like the hyenas they resemble, gnolls possess strong jaws and powerful digestive juices, which allows them to consume and digest almost every part of their prey, including teeth and bones. When the Butcher's Brood strikes a village, it's not just a case of leaving no survivors—they don't even leave corpses. Gnolls have no aversion to eating carrion, and stories speak of wandering gnolls digging up graveyards and consuming the corpses; such tales posit a connection between Yeenoghu and Doresain, the demon prince of ghouls.

**Gender Issues:** The physical build of a female gnoll is almost identical to that of its male counterpart, and in many clans the females are larger than the males. As a rule, it is difficult for a member of another race to tell the gender of a gnoll unless it's pregnant or actively nursing. Females and males are equally aggressive, and both males and females actively take part in hunting. Although the leader of the clan is typically the strongest gnoll (male or female), lineage is usually traced through the mother.

Because of the difficulty involved in identifying the gender of a gnoll, there are folktales based around the idea that gnolls are hermaphrodites or can change their gender; however, neither of these things are true.

**Friendly Intimidation:** Humans typically find that even friendly gnolls seem aggressive. When performed correctly, gnolls do not consider intimidation to be a hostile act; instead, the speaker is asserting its strength and seeking to establish its place in the pack hierarchy. One of the simple ways that this comes across is that a gnoll almost never makes requests; when possible, it makes demands,

or at the least firm statements. Instead of “Can I help you?” the gnoll says “Tell me what you want!”—pushing the target to take action.

**Childish Games:** Gnolls aggression starts young. As soon as a gnoll pup is capable of walking, it starts fighting with other young gnolls. Pups seek out small tunnels that adults can’t fit into; in these mazes, they fight to the death. This practice weeds out weaker gnolls, but it also keeps their numbers down—one reason these vicious creations don’t pose more of a threat to the world at large.

**The Voice in the Darkness:** Folktales say that gnolls can mimic voices to lure enemies into danger. And there is truth to these tales; the Butcher’s Lure feat allows a gnoll to use the *ghost sound* cantrip at will. Some say this is a gift of the gnolls’ demonic blood, a weapon forged by the Ruler of Ruin—and the power is more common among the clans of Yeenoghu. However, there is nothing innately evil about the power itself. Any NPC gnoll can possess this power, at the DM’s discretion; a PC gnoll can acquire it by taking the feat.

**The Language of Demons:** The gnoll language is the strongest evidence supporting the theory that gnolls have fiendish blood. Gnolls have an innate knack for the Abyssal language; even if a pup is raised outside gnoll society, the words come to the gnoll from dreams and vague memories. Gnolls also have a knack for the path of the infernal pact warlock. This need not reflect service to Yeenoghu; some gnolls find that they have a gift for harnessing the infernal power that lies latent in their blood, which is a gift of distant demonic heritage.

## THE COMPANY OF HYENAS

Gnolls have a strong affinity for hyenas, and gnoll clans are accompanied by hyena families that have been with the clan for generations. Every clan has at least one gnoll who specializes in training the

creatures. Between this training and instinctive empathy, hyenas work closely with their gnoll companions in battle, using their *harrier* and *pack attack* abilities to bring down enemies.

Gnolls who embrace their fiendish heritage are found in the company of cacklefiend hyenas (*Monster Manual*, page 166). Stories say that gnolls breed with these beasts—but little evidence exists to back this up.

## RELIGION

The common religion of the gnolls is the worship of Yeenoghu, the Ruler of Ruin. The gnolls of the Butcher’s Brood are fanatically devoted to their demon prince. They believe that his blood flows through their veins, and beyond this, that their devotion justifies every terrible atrocity they commit. The more philosophical among them believe that they were created to scourge the weak from the face of the world—that through their merciless destruction, they serve a higher place. It is this belief that gives the gnoll leaders their name: the demonic scourges who lead the other gnolls into battle.

Despite their devotion to Yeenoghu, gnolls have little interest in ritual, and few priests or shamans are among them. Their devotions are acts of slaughter, and any gnoll can consecrate a murder to the demon lord. They paint the eye of Yeenoghu on weapons and armor so he can see what ruin is wrought in his name, plus they howl his name in battle, and that is usually enough. However, a few clan leaders follow the path of the infernal warlock, drawing fearsome powers from their pacts with the Beast of Butchery. Guided by visions from Yeenoghu, these gnolls perform frightful rituals. One of the most horrifying is the Corruption of the Soul Consumed. Living victims are devoured by cacklefiend hyenas, who then swiftly give birth to

litters of newborn demons—evistros or barlguras formed from the tormented souls of the victims.

Those gnolls that turn away from Yeenoghu follow many paths. Some see the deities as being no different from demons, and they refuse to worship any higher power. Such gnolls seek to strengthen their bond to the natural world, searching for connection to a primal force deeper than they can have with any divine power. However, some gnolls have embraced the worship of the common gods. The Black Moon Clan is sworn to the Raven Queen, and her followers stain their fur with dark dyes. The Storm Chasers revere Kord. A number of clans are dedicated to Melora. The best of these hunt aberrations in her name, seeking to drive unnatural beasts from the wilds. But all too many take the message of Melora to extremes; in their efforts to protect the wilderness from the forces of civilization, they can be as merciless as the Butcher’s Brood.

## SCAVENGING

Like the hyenas they resemble, gnolls have no qualms about scavenging the kills of other predators as a source of food. But for the gnolls, scavenging plays a deeper cultural role. The gnolls of Yeenoghu create little of their own; the vast majority of their belongings are things they have claimed from their kills. Few among the Butcher’s Brood have any gift for metalworking, and they rely on victories and heirlooms as a source of arms and armor. This creates an unusual aesthetic to gnoll armor, which is largely pieced together from multiple victims. Gnoll chainmail is rarely a single shirt, but rather strips torn from multiple corpses and sewn haphazardly onto leather; a single plate pauldron might be included in the suit.

In part, this is a practical action. The gnolls need weapons and armor for their bloody work, and the

goods of their victims are better than anything they could make themselves. But there is also a social significance to it. The children of Yeenoghu believe that they were placed on the world to slaughter lesser creatures, and that their place in the afterlife is determined by their kills. The things they scavenge from their fallen foes are trophies of these victories. The gnoll who wears haphazard chainmail remembers the story of each strip of metal and enjoys reminiscing about each kill. Its patchwork armor is a map of its life and achievements. Some gnolls prefer less practical tokens; a gnoll might take a fingerbone from each victim, wearing these on bracelets or even binding them to the haft of its weapon. But almost everything a gnoll owns has a story—and almost all of it is scavenged.

Those gnolls who have turned from the demon's path are more civilized than the Butcher's Brood, and so they might make their own weapons and armor. However, they still keep trophies of difficult hunts or great victories. This could range from the tooth of a fallen beast to a single ring of chainmail from a human enemy. Gnoll trackers focus on scent, keeping strips of cloth that they have rubbed in the sweat and blood of a fallen foe; in peaceful moments they choose a strip and savor the scent, reminiscing about the glorious battle.

## GNOLLS IN OTHER SETTINGS

The Children of Yeenoghu can find a place in almost any campaign. Even if Yeenoghu is not present in the world, the basic principle can still stand: offspring of an ancient blend of demon and hyena that roams the wilds and preys on those unfortunate enough to cross their path.

However, a particular setting can suggest a different path for gnolls. In the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, gnolls served as soldiers in the Age of Demons, and savage gnolls still roam the Demon Wastes and other wild lands. However, in the region of Droaam, gnolls turned their backs on their barbaric past. The scourges gathered together at Znir and shattered the great statue of their demon lord; together, the clan leaders pledged to find a new path for their people and to stand together. Droaam is a dangerous land, and, if not for this alliance, clans would likely have been enslaved by giants, oni, or other powerful creatures. But thanks to the Znir Pact, the gnolls have become a stabilizing force respected by all the warlords—a force that has considerable influence in the young nation. In many ways, the gnolls of the Pact are similar to those who follow the path of the hyena, as described earlier. But they are more organized than their wild kin, and gnolls of different clans stand by one another. Although they prefer the company of their own bloodline, the gnolls of Droaam consider all gnolls to be united under the Pact, and they know that it is this unity that has allowed them to prosper in Droaam. They maintain the strong pack instinct found in all gnolls, but they have extended this loyalty to the entire pact.

This is just one example of a different path that gnolls could follow. When adding gnolls to a setting, consider the things that make them unique: the aspects of the hyena and ancient demon blood. Does the setting you're developing have an especially interesting path for either of these? Is there a different demon lord or evil god who could take the place of Yeenoghu? Or might the different gnoll tribes be agents of independent demons, with the actions of the gnolls in the mortal world affecting the balance of power in the underworld? Alternatively, you could abandon the demon connection entirely and make them feral defenders of the wild—furious guardians who battle orc and elf alike in an effort to preserve the sanctity of nature.

## LEAVING THE PACK: GNOLL PCS

Gnolls can be interesting player characters. The question the player needs to answer is why the gnoll has split from its clan, leaving the wilds to live among humans and their cities. Here are a few paths to consider.

**The Fugitive:** Among the Children of Yeenoghu, the greatest crime is compassion. There is no room for mercy in the Butcher's Brood, and a gnoll who lets victims live is stealing blood and souls from the Ruler of Ruin. The fugitive is a rare gnoll who turned against a fiendish upbringing and found light in the darkness. Perhaps this happened while killing a spirit breaker to help prisoners escape or perhaps the gnoll turned of its own accord in the midst of a massacre. Whatever the crime, the fugitive is now hunted by its own clan.

**The Exile:** The exile might have similar roots to the fugitive—the gnoll who turned against the savage ways of its people. But it is not being hunted. This gnoll is the child of a powerful scourge, and Yeenoghu has shown her visions of the PC's destiny. She claims that her offspring will become the greatest scourge of all, spreading blood and terror across the land—and that this time of wandering is part of this destiny. The exile has been branded with a mark that speaks of its destiny, and the gnolls of its clan do not hunt it—nor do they have anything to do with the exile until its time for it to become a monster of legend. Can the PC become a hero? Or is it the exile's epic destiny to become the right hand of a demon prince, spreading terror across the land? This is an especially interesting path for an infernal pact warlock. Your power is drawn from your demonic heritage—by developing it, are you committing yourself to the dark path?

**The Gladiator:** Gnolls are powerful warriors, and in lands that have yet to outlaw slavery, gnoll pups can fetch a healthy price. The gladiator was raised to



fight and kill, and to use its feral instincts to earn gold for its master. Perhaps it escaped captivity; perhaps the gladiator killed its master and ran. Either way, the gladiator has lived a harsh and brutal life, and it has seen little to love in the human world. This gnoll is grim and stoic—but perhaps its PC companions can help the gladiator find hope and a reason to live besides slaughter.

**The Orphan:** This gnoll was found as a child and raised by members of another race. As such, it hasn't inherited the brutal ways of its ancestors; despite its frightening appearance, this gnoll can follow almost any path imaginable. At the same time, it might find strange and savage instincts lurking in its soul. One of these is the Abyssal tongue, which comes to

it unbidden. This gnoll might discover that it is an effort to restrain itself in battle and that its blood calls it to slaughter. Can the orphan ignore these primal impulses, or will they drag it down?

Whatever draws a gnoll away from its clan, many instincts remain. The pack is a powerful force for a gnoll, and it is difficult for a gnoll to be alone. Whether exile or orphan, a gnoll is drawn to find companions; this makes a gnoll a natural member of an adventuring party which will become its surrogate clan. Although a gnoll is likely to test and challenge other members of the party at first, seeking to establish a clear social hierarchy, once that is in place it will likely be loyal to its friends, to the point of laying down its life for its chosen pack.

The aggressive behavior and fearsome appearance of a gnoll can be difficult to deal with—but if you earn the friendship of a gnoll, you will find it to be a powerful bond.

Fierce and feral, the gnolls are truly creatures of the wild. Driven by predatory instincts and the ancient touch of demon blood, gnolls are deadly hunters. They prefer to roam with their packs on the edges of civilization, and those who lose their clans might choose to create a new pack by joining a band of adventurers.

Play a gnoll if you want . . .

- ◆ to be a fierce hunter driven by instinct.
- ◆ to be an outsider in the civilized world—a scion of a race known for its cruelty and brutality.
- ◆ to be swift and deadly, striking enemies with surprising force.
- ◆ to be a member of a race that favors the rogue, ranger, and warlock classes.

## PHYSICAL QUALITIES

Gnolls tower over humans, with the average gnoll standing over 7 feet tall. Despite their physical strength, gnolls are lean; gnolls are rarely musclebound, and they move with remarkable speed. Their eyes are bright green or yellow, and gleam whenever they catch the light. Gnolls are covered with a thick coat of fur, which generally ranges from light to dark brown; depending on the clan, this might be a uniform color, or broken up by stripes or spots. A number of gnoll bloodlines have members (both male and female) who possess crestlike manes of hair that run from the head and down the spine; these rise up when gnolls are frightened or angry.

Although these are general traits, the traces of demonic blood in gnolls can produce unusual features. An obvious example of this are the talons of the gnoll claw fighter, but this can manifest in lesser ways. A gnoll might have gleaming red eyes, or black fur with fiery orange spots; a wide range of variation is possible.

Gnolls mature with remarkable speed for intelligent humanoid; some cite this as proof of their demonic heritage and suggest that it is unnatural for a creature to be ready for battle so soon after birth. They have short life spans—in fact, they rarely live longer than thirty years, but they typically remain remarkably strong and vigorous right up to the end of their days. When their strength leaves them, it is a sudden and catastrophic decline.

## PLAYING A GNOLL

Gnolls are primal creatures, and instinct plays a powerful role in their lives. Pack and family bonds are important to them, and while they might squabble to establish lines of dominance, between such challenges gnolls are steadfast allies. In battle, gnolls are strong team players, and they set aside any thought of personal glory to assist an ally. When separated from their own kind, gnolls seek a surrogate pack and are loyal to those they choose as friends.

Gnoll behavior seems aggressive to other creatures; a gnoll is more likely to demand an answer than ask a question. Among gnolls, this sort of intimidation isn't considered a hostile act; it is a way of establishing strength.

Gnolls are natural predators, and they love the thrill of the chase and the challenge of the hunt. Most prefer the wilds to civilization, but some adapt and come to see the city as another sort of jungle. Gnolls are natural scavengers, and they love to collect trophies of their victories and experiences; these can range from grisly remnants to simple objects that remind them of an event.

Tales say that gnolls were born of the blending of beast and demon, and this is something that should be kept in mind with any gnoll character. The ferocity of the fiend lies within even the noblest gnoll, and this could manifest in many ways.

**Gnoll Characteristics:** Aggressive, carnivorous, cunning, feral, fierce, loyal, predatory, primal, swift, tough, wild

**Male Gnoll Names:** Dagnyr, Dhyrn, Doryc, Ghyrryn, Gnasc, Gnoryc, Gnyrn, Hyrn, Lhoryn, Lhyr, Mognyr, Sorgnyn, Thyryn, Toryc, Yrgnyn, Yrych

**Female Gnoll Names:** Dagnyra, Gnara, Gnora, Gnyrl, Hyra, Hyrgna, Lhyra, Lhyrl, Malgna, Myrl, Sargna, Shyrla, Tarnyra, Yrgna

## GNOLL

### RACIAL TRAITS

**Average Height:** 7' 0" - 7' 6"

**Average Weight:** 280-320 lb.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Constitution, +2 Dexterity

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 7 squares

**Vision:** Low-light

**Languages:** Abyssal, Common

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Intimidate, +2 Perception

**Blood Fury:** While you're bloodied, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls. This increases to a +4 bonus at 21st level.

**Pack Attack:** You deal an extra 2 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of your allies adjacent to it.

**Ferocious Charge:** You can use ferocious charge as an encounter power.

### Ferocious Charge

### Gnoll Racial Power

*You lunge toward the enemy and, with a tirade of curses, unleash the wrath of Yeenoghu upon your hapless foe.*

#### Encounter

#### Standard Action

#### Personal

**Effect:** You charge, and deal an extra 2 damage on a successful attack. Increase the extra damage to 4 at 11th level and 6 at 21st level. If you are bloodied, double the extra damage and gain an equal number of temporary hit points.

## GNOLL ADVENTURERS

Three sample gnoll adventurers are described below.

Dagnyr is a gnoll ranger. His clan turned from the path of Yeenoghu and swore themselves to the goddess Melora, only to be slaughtered a generation later by their own demon-worshiping kin. As the last of his clan, Dagnyr opposed all demon cultists—both the gnolls who slaughtered his pack and humans who follow the infernal path.

Lhya is a gnoll rogue whose strength and speed make her a force to be reckoned with. Taken as a child and raised in the arena, she had to learn to kill or be killed. When her captors finally dropped their guard, she killed them and escaped, living a feral life in the alleys of the great city. Now she has found a new pack in her fellow adventurers, and she has sworn to use her deadly talents to protect her new family.

Hyrn is a gnoll warlock raised in the Butcher's Brood. Prophecies say that he will become a mighty servant of Yeenoghu and scourge the world, but he has a strange streak of compassion for a gnoll and fled his fate. His infernal powers have continued to grow, but he has sought to defy destiny by using these gifts for noble purposes; nonetheless, he can feel the darkness of the demon roiling within him, and he fears what he could become.

## OPTIONS FOR GNOLLS

The *Monster Manual* provides gnolls with a number of interesting abilities that are not automatically possessed by gnoll player characters. The following racial feats provide gnoll PCs with a way to develop their pack tactics or demonic heritage.

## HEROIC TIER FEATS

Any feat in the following section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

### BUTCHER'S LURE

**Prerequisite:** Gnoll

**Benefit:** You can use *ghost sound* as an at-will ability and gain a +2 feat bonus to Bluff checks when using *ghost sound* to mimic specific people or sounds.

### CARRION EATER

**Prerequisite:** Gnoll

**Benefit:** You receive a +4 feat bonus to saving throws against poison and Endurance checks made to resist disease.

### CLAW FIGHTER

**Prerequisite:** Gnoll

**Benefit:** You possess vicious claws, which you can use as weapons with a +3 proficiency bonus and 1d6 damage. For purpose of powers and feats, you can treat your claws as light blades, and you are considered to have a weapon in each hand. You cannot enchant your claws.

### GNOLL TRACKER

**Prerequisite:** Gnoll

**Benefit:** You gain a +5 feat bonus to Perception checks made to track and to Insight checks made to penetrate an illusion or disguise. You can use this bonus during a skill challenge if you can convince the DM that scent is relevant to the check.

## PARAGON FEATS

Any feat in the following section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

### FIERCE CHARGE

**Prerequisites:** 11th level, gnoll, *ferocious charge* racial power

**Benefit:** When you use your *ferocious charge* power, you can choose to make an at-will melee attack instead of a melee basic attack.

### SWIFT BITE

**Prerequisite:** 11th level, gnoll


**Benefit:** When you bloody a foe, you can choose to deal an extra 1d6 + Strength modifier damage with a bite against the target.

## EPIC FEATS

The feat in the following section is available to a character of 21st level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

### BRUTAL CHARGE

**Prerequisites:** 21st level, gnoll, *ferocious charge* racial power, Fierce Charge

**Benefit:** When you use your *ferocious charge* power, you can choose to make an encounter melee attack power instead of a melee basic attack. 

### About the Author

**Keith Baker** has been an avid fan of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® since grade school. His life took a dramatic turn in 2002 when he submitted the world of EBERRON® to the Wizards of the Coast® Fantasy Setting Search. In addition to developing the *Eberron Campaign Setting* and *Shadows of the Last War*, he has worked for Atlas Games, Goodman Games, and Green Ronin.