

Cador

(The Shadow Knife, the Undying Curse)

Dempower of the Pandemonium, CE

PORTFOLIO:	Revenge, hatred, murder, curses
ALIASES:	None
DOMAIN NAME:	Agathion/Darkknife
SUPERIOR:	None
ALLIES:	Abbathor, Bhaal (dead), Erythnul, Kiaransalee
FOES:	Diinkarazan, Diirinka, Hoar, Moradin, the Morndinsamman (except Abbathor), the Seldarine, the drow pantheon (except Kiaransalee), the giant and goblin pantheons
SYMBOL:	A black knife
WOR. ALIGN.:	LE, NE, CE

Little known even among the Stout Folk, Cador (KAH-door) is a shadowy figure of revenge and curses. Worshipped almost exclusively by dwarves driven to murder by hatred and thoughts of revenge, he is a cold and heartless reflection of the Morndinsamman.

Cador's mythological origins seem to lie outside the Morndinsamman, for in no myth is he recorded as either a child of Moradin or one of the other members of the pantheon. In fact, the myths speak of the Shadow Knife as having once been a mortal dwarven priest, most often of Moradin, whose adult life is said to have been a string of tragedies with few bright moments. Most of the myths speak of him being a respected member of a strong clan with a large family, but one by one he loses all of his children to various battles and skirmishes over the course of a few years until they all lay dead. This is followed by the murder of his wife, for which he is falsely accused and is imprisoned for many years. In this time, the clan is struck by plague and natural disasters, until it is finally overrun by their foes. Throughout it all he prays to Moradin for salvation, but receives no answer, slowly turning him into an embittered and hateful creature. When the clan's foes find his cell, they have great fun taunting him before killing him, to which Cador responds with a lengthy curse that contains all the years of his bitter rage, transforming him into a shadowy creature that wreaks havoc on the forces that had overrun the clan's halls before stalking off into the darkness beneath the mountains. From here the myths indicate Cador slew so many creatures that his legend grew among dwarves to the point that they began invoking his name in their curses and thus attained the level of a true divinity.

As a manifestation of the hatred and desire for revenge that can be found among declining populations of dwarves on many worlds, Cador holds a place as a shadow of the true dwarven deities. He hates all of them save Abbathor, with whom he has a grudging, secret arrangement. Whether he ascended before or after the exiling of Laduguer is unknown, but that rift has not kept the Master of Crafts from joining the rest of the pantheon in Cador's hatred. Diirinka and particularly Diinkarazan are also lumped in with the other members of the Morndinsamman, although it appears the Shadow Knife's apotheosis was after their exiling, with Cador replacing Diinkarazan as the deity of vengeance among many non-derro dwarves. For this reason Cador has a great desire to slay the Mad God in order to supplant him entirely, although Ilsensine's prison is far too strong for the Shadow Knife to attempt to break into. Many sages speculate that the elevation of Cador to dempower status must have involved other deities, with speculation ranging from a counter-curse from the Queen of Air and Darkness's black diamond, to a side effect of the apotheosis of Mellifleur. No concrete evidence has been offered by any of these sages, however.

Outside of the dwarven pantheon, Cador's hatred is just as strong. The traditional foes of the dwarves among the giant and goblin pantheons earn his ire for all they've done to dwarves, and the animosity that sometimes exists between dwarves and elves has also transitioned to blind hatred in the Shadow Knife. At some point in the past, he crossed paths with Hoar the Doombringer in a clash that neither was able to win or carry out their goals of revenge, and the pair have been bitter enemies ever since. Not all of his relations are as negative, however. He has established alliances with Kiaransalee and Erythnul, and once was an ally to Bhaal before that deity's death. In these powers he found kindred

spirits of a sort, or at least spirits that he could tolerate for a time to focus on other vengeful plots.

The Shadow Knife is unable to dispatch his avatar to the Prime Material Plane on his own, yet he has somehow found a way to do so, for he frequently prowls worlds with large dwarven populations. He carries out his own ideas of revenge on behalf of these dwarves, heedless of whether they wish it or not. Sages speculate he has acquired an item to aid him in dispatching his avatar, or that another power lends him the power to do so, but none know for sure.

Cador's Avatar (Thief 24, Fighter 16, Cleric 10)

Cador appears as a slightly translucent and shadowy dwarf. He is always bald and beardless, with black soulless eyes. He wears black mail that is completely silent. He draws his spells from all spheres save creation and law, and he never uses spells that create light.

AC 0; MV 12; HP 172; THAC0 5; #AT 5/2
Dmg 1d4+11 (*dagger* +3, +6 STR bonus, +2 spec. bonus in daggers)
MR 20%; SZ M (5 feet tall)
STR 18/00, DEX 20, CON 19, INT 16, WIS 15, CHA 16
Spells P: 6/5/3/3/2
Saves PPDM 4; RSW 1*; PP 5; BW 4; Sp 1*

* Includes dwarf +5 CON save bonus to a minimum of 1. The CON save bonus also applies to saves vs. poison to a minimum of 1.

Special Att/Def: Cador wields the *Shadow Knife*, a *dagger* +3 made entirely of shadowstuff. Any creature struck with this weapon must make a saving throw versus paralyzation or be *held* for 3d6 rounds. Against undead, blows from this weapon act as a command undead attempt at 12th level, although shadows are always controlled if struck. Further, normal skeletons and zombies struck by this weapon are transformed into shadows completely under Cador's control if they fail a saving throw versus death magic.

The Shadow Knife can cast *shadow magic* and *shadow door* at will, and once per day he can cast a finger of death. He can extinguish any magical light at will, even those created by a divine source of less than Greater Power status. In any sort of bright light (daylight, continual light, etc.), he suffers a -2 penalty to his attack rolls and saving throws, and loses one melee attack each round. However, in shadowy areas, (twilight, the edge of torchlight, campfires, light spells, etc.), his Magic Resistance doubles and he gains a -2 bonus to his Armor Class, as well as gaining an extra melee attack every round.

Cador can only be struck by magical weapons, unless he is in an area of shadows, when only those weapons with a +2 or better enchantment can harm him. He is immune to poison, paralyzation, and shadow magic, and suffers half damage from cold.

Other Manifestations

Cador rarely manifests his powers openly. His most common manifestations are strategically placed and unnoticed regions of shadow and dim light that hide a follower from pursuit or otherwise allow them to move about unseen. More rarely he will manifest as a cold breeze that puts out candles, torches, and even minor magical lights, plunging a chamber or location into darkness at just the right moment. These manifestations only occur to aid a follower in movement and never at a point when they will enact their revenge, for he expects his followers to perform these actions with their own powers and guile. His rarest manifestation is a direct answer to a supplication by any dwarf on their deathbed or just before a fatal blow lands that transforms them into a revenant or a shade, allowing them to gain their revenge after a week's time. Such a supplication must be made with great hatred in the dwarf's heart, and even then few such calls are heeded.

Cador is served by incarnates of anger, invisible stalkers, revenants, shades, shadows, slithering trackers, and slow shadows. He displays his favor through the discovery of black tourmaline, hematite, jet, and smokey quartz stones, and his disfavor only manifests through the misfortune and failure of a follower in the pursuit of their revenge.

The Church

CLERGY: Clerics, crusaders, specialty priests

CLERGY'S ALIGN.: LE, NE, CE
 TURN UNDEAD: C: No, Cru: No, SP: No
 CMND. UNDEAD: C: Yes, Cru: No, SP: Yes

All clerics (including multiclassed cleric combinations), crusaders, and specialty priests of Cador receive religion (dwarven) and reading/writing (dwarven) as bonus nonweapon proficiencies. Clerics of Cador (including multiclassed clerics) cannot command undead before 7th level, but they always strike at +2 on all attack and damage rolls against undead creatures. At 7th level and above, clerics (including multiclassed clerics) can command undead as other clerics do, but as a cleric of four levels less than their current level.

The worship of Cador is considered anathema in most dwarven communities. Unlike the avarice of Abbathor, relatively few dwarves have felt the unrestrained hatred and overwhelming desire for revenge that he embodies. He is seen as almost an interloper on the pantheon, a dark stain that has not been removed. Dwarves who do worship the Undying Curse do so in secret, often brought to his faith through subtle promises of revenge for great wrongs, although some join simply to sate an undwarven bloodlust within themselves. Any discovery of a cult of the Undying Curse is sure to send shockwaves through a dwarven community.

No temples are dedicated to Cador, although small, well-hidden shrines are constructed when a cult is founded. These shrines are built in shadowy chambers lit only by candles, and feature an altar of wood or stone with a knife embedded, blade-down, on the top surface. Black cloth is draped over the edges, and placed above these objects is some item that is representative of the cult's target for revenge.

Novices in the service of Cador are called Seekers, while full priests are called Blades of Revenge. There is a simple hierarchy within cults based on seniority and age, but no formal titles to differentiate these ranks. Specialty priests are known as revengers. The majority of Cador's priesthood consists of specialty priests (70%) with a much smaller component of clerics (including multiclassed clerics of various combinations; 20%) and crusaders (10%). It is said that some especially primitive dwarven communities in the multiverse have shamans instead, but this is as yet unproven. Males (88%) are drawn to the Shadow Knife's faithful in far greater numbers than females (12%). Of the dwarven subraces, mountain dwarves (40%) and hill dwarves (35%) are most commonly drawn to Cador's faith, although duergar (15%), sundered dwarves (4%), deep dwarves (4%), and jungle dwarves (2%) are not unknown within the priesthood. Arctic dwarves, derro, gully dwarves, and urdunnir have never been known to be members of the Shadow Knife's faith.

Dogma: Those who have committed harm upon others must have it revisited upon them in kind. Take an eye for an eye and a life for a life. Any who have a history of killing and warring on dwarvenkind deserve nothing but destruction themselves. Revenge is justice, and justice is revenge. An everlasting and undying curse is a just result for long-term harm.

Day-to-Day Activities: Members of Cador's cult live nominally normal lives, and can occupy nearly any position in dwarven society. However, in privacy, they are often consumed by hatred and plot the destruction of those they believe have wronged them. If there is an actual cult consisting of multiple individuals, they may form a sort of assassin's guild, both to enact their vengeance, as well as cover up and fund their activities with mundane murder-for-hire. Many members of the church are paranoid to some degree or another if the targets of their revenge are within their own community.

Outside of dwarven communities, members of the cult act as guerrilla warriors against foes of their community, even when that is against the interests of their society. More than one truce or peace deal dwarven leaders signed has been destroyed because of the vicious acts of Cador's faithful.

Important Ceremonies/Holy Days: The only holy day celebrated by the church of Cador is the Shadening, typically held at the twilight hour on the last full day of summer. The date can vary, as it is linked to some great defeat of the dwarven peoples on a given world, such as the fall of a fabled and ancient kingdom or citadel to elves, giants, goblinkin, or some other race. The services during this ceremony are fairly simple, with a ritualized recitation of those the cult has sworn revenge upon, and the

perceived crimes for which the revenge is deemed necessary. Any successes over the past year are also detailed by the clergy.

Major Centers of Worship: The secretive nature of The Shadow Knife's cult precludes major holy sites and pilgrimages those might entail. Known locations of final battles in defense of now-lost kingdoms are considered sacred by the faithful, however.

Affiliated Orders: The cult of Cador is too small and secretive to sponsor any martial or monastic orders, although occasionally assassins' guilds take the Shadow Knife as a patron.

Priestly Vestments: When performing services, the clergy of Cador us dark robes and armor as their sacred vestments. Due to the insular nature of the priesthood, no two cults utilize the exact same style of vestments, and even nearby communities can host cults of Cador with wildly different sacred appearances. The one exception is that all members must shave their heads and beards entirely for all services; this is seen as a symbolic cutting of ties with the Morndinsamman. The holy symbol used by the priesthood is a completely black miniature dagger with a curved blade.

Adventuring Garb: Members of the cult of the Shadow Knife utilize whatever weapons and armor are common for their society, although they prefer those that are concealable to a degree. Most members also make use of false beards and wigs to disguise their shaven heads and faces, as well.

Specialty Priests (Revengers)

REQUIREMENTS:	Wisdom 9
PRIME REQ.:	Wisdom
ALIGNMENT:	CE
WEAPONS:	Any
ARMOR:	Any
MAJOR SPHERES:	All, charm, combat, elemental (earth), guardian, necromantic, summoning, sun (reversed), time, war
MINOR SPHERES:	Chaos, elemental (fire), healing (reversed)
MAGICAL ITEMS:	Same as clerics
REQ. PROFS:	Blind-fighting, tracking
BONUS PROFS:	Disguise

- While most revengers are hill dwarves or mountain dwarves, dwarves of nearly every subrace are called to be specialty priests of Cador's clergy.
- Revengers are not allowed to multiclass.
- Revengers may select nonweapon proficiencies from the warrior and rogue groups without penalty.
- Revengers can Backstab, Move Silently, and Hide in Shadows as a thief of the same level.
- Revengers must always have a target of their revenge. This can be either an individual, a clan or kingdom, a racial group, etc. The chosen target must have caused some harm to the revenger, his family, clan, or other group with a personal connection to the priest. For example, the target could be an individual who killed the priest's father, a tribe of goblins that have raided the revenger's clan for decades, or all of humankind for past wars against the priest's kingdom. The revenger must always be working towards affecting revenge on the target, and should they achieve their goal, they must select a new target for revenge.
- If a revenger chooses to affect their revenge through direct combat, they can spend three rounds building up their anger and hatred to put themselves into a berserker rage for one turn. For the duration of the berserker rage, they gain a +2 bonus to their attack and damage rolls, but suffer a -2 penalty to Armor Class. This can only be used in combat against the target of their revenge.
- If a Revenger dies before being able to enact their revenge against an individual target, there is a 25% chance they will return as a revenant after seven days. Similarly, if a revenger is fighting a defensive battle against the target of their revenge, and they are clearly going to lose, they may call upon Cador for aid. There is a 5% chance that the Undying Curse will transform the revenger into a shade just before the final blow falls. The revenger will be forever tied to the area in

which they became a shade, working in the shadows to continue their revenge until they are finally destroyed.

- At 2nd level, revengers can cast *curse* (as the reverse of the 1st-level priest spell *bless*) or *darkness* (as the reverse of the 1st-level priest spell *light*) once per day.
- At 4th level, revengers can cast *gaze of the revenant* (as the 2nd level priest spell) or *nondetection* (as the 3rd-level wizard spell) once per day.
- At 6th level, revengers can cast *bestow curse* (as the reverse of the 3rd-level priest spell *remove curse*) or *minor malison* (as the 3rd-level wizard spell) once per day.
- At 9th level, revengers can cast *cause serious wounds* or *poison* (as the reversed versions of the 4th-level priest spells *cure serious wounds* and *neutralize poison*, respectively) once per day.
- At 14th level, revengers can cast *invisible stalker* (as the 6th-level wizard spell) once per day.

Cadorite Spells

2nd Level

Gaze of the Revenant (Pr 2; Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Charm
Range: 20 yds.
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 rd.
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: 1 creature
Saving Throw: Neg.

After casting this spell, the priest's gaze is filled such hatred and malevolence that a creature who meets his gaze is paralyzed with fear. The caster can only use this gaze on one individual, and only in the round following the casting of the spell. However, the caster may utilize this gaze in addition to any other actions normally allowed in a combat round. The target of this gaze, who must be capable of seeing the caster, is allowed a saving throw versus spell to avoid the effects. If this saving throw is failed, the victim stands paralyzed and unable to act for 2d4 rounds. Spells that grant immunity to fear offer no protection from this gaze attack, and it cannot be reflected.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a pinch of dirt from an anonymous, unmarked grave.

4th Level

Aura of Revengeance (Pr 4; Alteration, Invocation/Evocation)

Sphere: Combat
Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 rd./level
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: The caster
Saving Throw: None

With this spell, the caster creates an aura of shadowy retributive force surrounding themselves. This force instantly strikes back at any creature that injures the caster in the same manner as the injury, provided the attack was launched within 20 yards. Damage dealt back to an attacker is of the same type and amount as the caster suffers. For example, a long sword strike against the caster dealing 6 points of damage would deal 6 points of slashing damage back to the attacker. Similarly, if the caster suffers 8 points of damage from a *burning hands* spell, the one who used the spell would suffer 8 points of fire damage in return. If the caster protected by an *aura of revengeance* has protections against a certain type of damage, such as an *endure cold* spell, the attacker suffers reduced damage as well. In addition, if the attacker has protections against certain damage types, that reduces the damage they receive back as well, such as the case of a creature immune to fire using a fiery attack on the protected caster.

The *aura of revengeance* protects the caster against attacks of any form, including melee and missile weapons, magic, and spell-like powers, provided they are launched from within a 20-yard radius. Attacks

originating from outside this radius affect the protected caster normally, but have no retributive effect. Magic resistance of the attacker applies to the returned damage, but it does not eliminate the aura if it succeeds. Spells like *globe of invulnerability* will protect the attacker even if the originating spell that harms the protected caster is of a higher level than the globe can protect against. *Stoneskin* can protect against retributive damage of a slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning type, but not other sorts, and the retributive strike counts as an attack for determining the duration of the spell. Spells like *protection from normal missiles* offer no protection against the retributive damage, however.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a small steel ball with dozens of spikes protruding from its surface.

Summon Stalking Shadow (Pr 4; Conjuraction/Summoning, Necromancy)

Sphere: Summoning
Range: 10 yds.
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1 rd.
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

Similar to the 6th-level wizard spell *invisible stalker*, this spell summons an undead shadow from the demiplane of Shadow to perform whatever tasks the caster sets before it. Most often, the task is to follow and attack a specific target. Like the creature summoned by the wizard spell, the shadow can follow a target with unerring accuracy if set upon the trail within one day of the target's passing. It will follow tirelessly until it catches its quarry, whereupon it will attack from darkness when the target is alone. Unlike the elemental creature in the wizard spell, the undead shadow serves loyally, for it enjoys the hunt and the kill; it is free to slay other creatures along its path so long as they pose no risk to its mission. In all other respects it is a normal shadow.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a one-inch sphere of obsidian (worth at least 25 gp), the latter of which must be smashed against the ground.

5th Level

Summon Revenant Spirit (Pr 5; Necromancy)

Sphere: Necromantic
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1 turn
Area of Effect: 1 corpse
Saving Throw: None

This spell allows the caster to summon a vengeful spirit from Cador's hall in Pandemonium to animate a corpse as a revenant. The corpse to be inhabited must be one killed by another creature, whether in cold blood, fair combat, or a simple accident. The newly animated revenant will then seek out the killer and attempt to enact revenge for their death; it needs no rest and instinctively knows the direction of their victim so long as they are on the same plane. The caster has no control over the revenant, and cannot influence once it has been animated and set on its course. The revenant will avoid combat with any creatures other than its victim, but will defend itself or attack if physically prevented from carrying out its revenge. Besides its own destruction and the death of its victim, the revenant can be destroyed with a *dispel evil*, *abjure*, or similar spell. It cannot be dispelled.

The material components for this spell are the priest's holy symbol and a canine skull that is smashed when the spell casting is completed.