

Hruggek

(The Decapitator, the Master of Ambush)

Intermediate Power of Pandemonium, CE

PORTFOLIO:	Violence, combat, opportunism
ALIASES:	None
DOMAIN NAME:	Cocytus/Hruggekolohek
SUPERIOR:	None
ALLIES:	Khurgorbaeyag, Grankhul, Skiggaret
FOES:	Bargrivyek, Meriadar
SYMBOL:	Morningstar
WOR. ALIGN.:	LN, N, CN, LE, NE, CE

Hruggek (HROO-gek) the Decapitator is the dominant deity of the bugbear pantheon. He is not especially smart, but is wily, cunning, and manipulative. Like the dominant gods of the other goblinoid pantheons, the Master of Ambush is a powerful force of physical strength and combat. He delights in savage, individual combat, but unlike his brethren amongst the orcs and goblins, he has no interest in leading armies or military battles. He knows that, while individually powerful, his people are not numerous enough to meet other races in mass battle; thus he focuses on ambush and opportunism to gain the upper hand.

While Hruggek is the oldest and most powerful god in the bugbear pantheon, he does not rule it like the heads of the orcish or goblin pantheons rule theirs. He has an understanding with the other members of the pantheon; none of the other members actively work against him, and he leaves them to their own devices. None of the other members are powerful enough to challenge his power on their own, and they are too individualistic to combine their power in an attempt to remove him from power, and Grankhul is the only one who actually holds the ambition of rulership. Hruggek is no fool, however, and keeps a close watch on the other gods, just in case they have a change of heart. While this arrangement does not filter down to the priests, it has maintained the balance of power for centuries. He shares a portion of his power with Skiggaret, as do all the other members of the pantheon, using him as a messenger to the bugbear race.

While a violent and aggressive god, he is not one to hold grudge; as such, he holds few particular deities or pantheons as racial enemies due to past slights. He is perfectly happy to see any of them bonked on the head and tossed in his cookpot, although he is willing to work with almost any deity if it furthers his goals. The Decapitator cooperates with Khurgorbaeyag in a strategic maneuver to sow dissention amongst the goblin pantheon; he hopes to divide the pantheon and thus weaken their followers, as they compete with bugbears for resources. He constantly inflates Khurgorbaeyag's ego and pride, and compliments the vision and soundness of his plans while deriding Maglubiyet's own. By the same token, Hruggek holds a deep antipathy for Bargrivyek for the Peacekeeper's attempts to unify the goblins against outside threats. He takes any opportunity to try and stir Maglubiyet against him. In a similar vein, the Master of Ambush despises Meriadar, whom he sees as a meddler in the lives of bugbears, trying to turn them from their rightful and proper nature to one of peace and weakness. He takes any opportunity that presents itself to oppose the Tolerant One's actions.

Hruggek does not send an avatar to the Prime Material Plane if he knows another goblinoid deity is watching, with the exception of Khurgorbaeyag, as he does not wish to antagonize any of them. He may send an avatar to aid beleaguered bugbear tribes, but he will not engage in mass battle, only skirmishes. He will also occasionally dispatch an avatar to take the head of a powerful individual of a specific race if he does not already have a head from that race.

Hruggek's Avatar (Fighter 32, Priest 18, Thief 12)

Hruggek appears as a monstrous, muscle-bound bugbear with great fangs and large, powerful clawed hands and feet. He wears a heavily bloodstained leather vest and little else, preferring mobility over armor. His spells are drawn from spheres of all, combat, creation, divination, guardian, necromantic, protection, summoning, sun, and war (preferring reversed spells where appropriate).

Dmg 2d8+16 (*morningstar* +4, +10 STR, +2 spec. bonus in *morningstar*) or 1d6+30 (*javelin of lightning*, +10 STR, +20 electrical damage)
MR 30%; SZ L (12 feet tall)
STR 22, DEX 19, CON 16, INT 15, WIS 9, CHA 19
Spells P: 8/8/8/6/4/2
Saves PPDM 3; RSW 5; PP 4; BW 4; Sp 6

Special Att/Def: Hruggek fights with *Silentstroke*, an enormous seven foot long *morningstar* +4 that he wields with both hands. He also carries 1d4 *javelins of lightning*, which affect any creature struck as a *thunderclap* (as for a *staff of thunder and lightning*; save vs. rod, staves, and wands or be stunned for 1d2 rounds and deafened for an additional 1d2 rounds; those who save are deafened for 1d4 rounds). Once per day, he may speak a *power word, stun*. In any round in which he does not attack with *Silentstroke*, Hruggek may cause 2d8 points of shock damage to any single target within 60 feet simply by clenching his fist; no saving throw is allowed to reduce or avoid this damage.

The Master of Ambush is immune to fear. His bloodstained *leather vest* +3 also protects him against magical weapons of less than +2 enchantment.

Hruggek may, rarely, carry one of his many severed heads from Pandemonium for an encounter with a specific race. The specific details of such heads vary considerable, and it is left to the DM to determine what types of powers these heads will have.

Other Manifestations

The Decapitator watches over his race closely, but does not often manifest or send omens to his priests and followers. When he does, his omens usually take gruesome forms, the most common being guttural utterances from corpses and severed heads. These utterances are short directives and warnings, depending on the situation at hand. More rarely he will send bloody and violent dreams of combat and battle to his priests with messages heard in the warcries and death screams of the warriors. He may also manifest as a black cloud that envelops his followers. If his worshippers have pleased him or are performing a task he approves of, they will be affected as if by an *aid* spell and a *haste* spell. The effect lasts 6 turns (or until cancelled by other spells). If his followers have displeased him or are taking actions he disapproves of, they will be affected as if by a *cloudkill* spell and a *slow* spell (assuming they survive). In either case, the black cloud lifts immediately after affecting the creatures. Any being caught in the cloud that does not worship Hruggek is affected as if by a *stinking cloud* spell and a *curse* spell. Occasionally, if a lone, devout priest is surrounded by foes, Hruggek will manifest as a volley of spikes, similar to the *spikespray* spell, that strike at the enemies. Finally, and most rarely of all, the Master of Ambush will manifest as a bolt of lightning, as the spell *lightning bolt*, striking at a single specific foe of a devout follower.

The Decapitator is served primarily by exiled tanar'ri, particularly of the lesser variety, as well as abriars, albino wyrms, bears, black dragons, caterwauls, earth weirds, great cats, howlers, incarnates of anger, manticores, meazels, quasits, shadowhounds, wolves of all sorts, and yeth hounds. He rarely demonstrates his favor or displeasure through any particular discoveries.

The Church

CLERGY:	Clerics, specialty priests, shamans, witch doctors
CLERGY'S ALIGN.:	CN, NE, CE
TURN UNDEAD:	C: No, SP: No, Sha: No, WD: No
CMND. UNDEAD:	C: No, SP: No, Sha: No, WD: No

All clerics (including multiclassed fighter/clerics and cleric/thieves), specialty priests, shamans, and witch doctors of Hruggek receive religion (bugbear) as a bonus nonweapon proficiency.

Like most goblinoids, priests in bugbear society tend to be politically powerful. They are quite often tribal leaders and chieftains, at an even higher rate than is the norm in the societies of goblins, hobgoblins, orcs, and kobolds. They lead their tribes in skirmishing against other races, although all-out war is avoided, due to the bugbears' generally smaller numbers. They do not have rigid castes or hierarchies, with strength as the main determinant of positions of power relative to each other. Lesser priests are quick to take advantage of perceived weakness, and powerful

priests must be ever-vigilant of their juniors. They must also keep an eye on the priests of the extended bugbear pantheon, especially given the sneakiness of Grankhul's priests, ensuring that they respect Hruggek's authority and leadership within the tribe. Priests are careful not to let their rivalries endanger their tribe however, and the tribe's well-being is always a priest's foremost concern. The followers of the Decapitator are willing to ally themselves with a wide range of outside powers in order to secure power and territory for their tribes; in particular, they have a relationship of cautious cooperation with the followers of Khurgorbaeyag. They advise their tribes to work with orcs, kobolds, humans, gnolls, or any other race, so long as there is benefit to the tribe; although these other races need to watch their backs around the opportunistic bugbears, who are quick to break any alliances if situations turn sour.

Temples dedicated to the Master of Ambush are generally uncommon. They are usually only found within the warrens of large bugbear communities; most smaller tribes make do with more simplistic shrines. When bugbears build temples, they usually utilize slave labor from the more proficient miner races, such as goblins or dwarves. Temples tend to be long with a multitude of alcoves and niches along the side walls, where trophies and heads taken from enemies and captives are placed. At the far end of the entrance is a simple stone block stained dark red from the blood of sacrifices. Black cloth is commonly draped on the walls, and black and grey paint is used in copious amounts to make the temple feel dark and depressing. Favored trophies are by far the heads of fallen enemies, in emulation of their lord, the Decapitator. The priests try to arrange them to prominently display one of every race they've defeated around the altar, with the heads of powerful enemies displayed near the entrance to the temple and along the walls. Shrines follow these plans to a high degree, but on a much smaller scale.

Novices serving the Decapitator are known as the Unsharpened, while full priests are known as Claws of the Decapitator. Individual priests have their own titles based on personal achievements. Specialty priests are known as headtakers. The clergy of Hruggek is almost exclusively comprised of bugbears (95%), although a small number of goblins (3%) and hobgoblins (2%) eschew their racial pantheon in favor of the Master of Ambush. Despite being fairly independently minded, bugbears are just as prejudiced against females as other goblinoid races, thus the clergy is overwhelmingly male (97%). Hruggek's clergy includes shamans (28%), clerics (20%), headtakers (18%), witch doctors (18%), fighter/clerics (10%), and cleric/thieves (6%).

Dogma: Be opportunistic. Use stealth and wiles to gain victory over your enemies. Avoid mass combat, but when you battle, show no mercy. Work with whoever is necessary to further the interests of your tribe or bugbears as a whole, but do not hesitate to take advantage of their weaknesses. Hold no grudges, for that limits your options.

Day-to-Day Activities: Hruggek's priests are primarily concerned with the advancement of their tribes' interests, as well as the interests of the bugbear race as a whole. They use their positions as leaders and advisors to direct the tribe's activities. Priests frequently command skirmishing and raiding parties, making swift and stealthy attacks on other nearby races and tribes. They delight in brutal combat, although they try to ensure victory by not attacking groups that show the potential of being more powerful. They also maintain vigilance over the priests of other bugbear gods, to ensure the interests of the Decapitator remain paramount within the tribe.

Important Ceremonies/Holy Days: The only regular ceremony observed universally by followers of the Master of Ambush is the Taking. During this monthly ceremony, held on the eve of the full moon, priests emulate their deity by ritually beheading a prisoner in order to send Hruggek a tribute of blood. Any sentient creature available to the priests is likely to be sacrificed, although there is greater prestige in offering up a more powerful or rare individual. If a creature is particularly unique, there is a small chance the Decapitator will notice and impart a blessing upon the tribe.

Major Centers of Worship: As bugbears have little interest in temple construction, there are no major temples known to exist. Rumors have persisted for years that there is a large hidden temple dedicated to Hruggek in the Pomarj on Oerth, but this has never been verified.

Affiliated Orders: Generally, the priesthood of the Decapitator is not organized enough to create any martial orders. There are the occasional bandit group dominated by particularly charismatic or intelligent priests,

but these are not truly religious orders, and they tend to be fairly short-lived. There is at least one pirate group in the Grinder of Greyspace believed to be led by a group of priests of Hruggek; little is known about them since they rarely leave anyone alive when taking other ships. Lasting somewhat longer are the rarer still mercenary bands led by priests of the Master of Ambush; however, they are well known for switching sides even more readily than typical mercenaries.

Priestly Vestments: Hruggek's priesthood typically garbs themselves in black robes when performing religious rites. Such robes frequently include dark red, grey, or white belts and fringes, and they wear a bleached skull as a helmet. Skulls from sentient creatures are always preferred, with a more powerful creature's skull granting greater status. Occasionally, designs and decorations are painted on the skull using black, dark red or grey paint. The holy symbol used by the clergy is either a morning star or a skull or mummified head of an enemy the priest has personally slain.

Adventuring Garb: When adventuring, priests wear the standard clothing and armor of their tribe. If they wish to particularly intimidate their enemies, they will wear a skull helmet (often the same one used for ceremonies, although more utilitarian ones are also favored) and black armor, with a severed head or two tied to their belt.

Specialty Priests (Headtakers)

REQUIREMENTS:	Strength 15, Wisdom 9
PRIME REQ.:	Strength, Wisdom
ALIGNMENT:	CE
WEAPONS:	Battle axe, club, hand axe, flail, javelin, mace, morningstar, polearms, quarterstaff, spear
ARMOR:	Any
MAJOR SPHERES:	All, combat, guardian, protection, summoning, sun (reversed only)
MINOR SPHERES:	Creation, divination, war
MAGICAL ITEMS:	Same as fighters or clerics
REQ. PROFS:	Morningstar
BONUS PROFS:	Wild-fighting

- Headtakers must be bugbears.
- Headtakers are not allowed to multiclass.
- Headtakers may select nonweapon proficiencies from the warrior group without penalty.
- Headtakers can cast *compel* (as the 3rd-level priest spell) twice per day.
- At 4th level, headtakers can cast *enlarge* (as the 1st-level wizard spell) upon themselves once per day.
- At 7th level, headtakers can make three melee attacks every two rounds.
- At 7th level, headtakers can cast *hold person* (as the 3rd-level priest spell) once per day.
- At 10th level, headtakers can cast *undetectable ambush* (as the reverse of the 3rd-level priest spell *detect ambush*) once per day.
- At 13th level, headtakers can make two melee attacks per round.
- At 15th level, headtakers can cast *might of right* (as the 5th-level priest spell) once per day.

Hruggekan Spells

In addition to the spell listed below, priests of the Decapitator can cast the 3rd-level priest spells *compel* (note that the stricture for Torm's priests using the spell to immobilize foes does not apply to priests of Hruggek), detailed in *Faiths and Avatars* in the entry for Torm, and *detect ambush* (although they favor the reverse), detailed in *Powers and Pantheons* in the entry for Anhur, and the 5th-level priest spells *rage*, detailed in *Faiths and Avatars* in the entry for Malar, and *right of might*, detailed in *Powers and Pantheons* in the entry for Gilgeam.

2nd Level

Morningstar of Hruggek (Pr 2; Evocation)

Sphere:	Combat
Range:	0
Components:	V, S, M

Duration: 5 rds.
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Special

This spell conjures up a short-lived shadowy morningstar in the caster's hand that strikes with a +3 attack bonus, deals 2d8 points damage at a strike, and forces any creature struck to make a saving throw vs. paralysis or be stunned and unable to move or take any actions for one round. The morningstar vanishes if it leaves the possession of the caster and cannot be wielded by any other being.

The morningstar has a reach of 7 feet and must be wielded with two hands despite being almost weightless. It appears as a black, spike-headed, one-piece rod surrounded by dim, flickering, shadows.

The material component of this spell is an iron or steel nail, sliver, or fragment as well as a bone shard from a creature killed by the priest with a morningstar.

3rd Level

Glyph of Warding: Hruggek's Noose (Pr 3; Abjuration, Evocation)

Sphere: Guardian
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Until discharged
Casting Time: Special
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Special

A *glyph of warding* is a powerful inscription magically drawn to prevent unauthorized or hostile creatures from passing, entering, or opening. The *glyph of warding: Hruggek's noose* is favored by priests of the Decapitator. No other priesthoods are known to use it. The conditions, limitations, and material components for casting a *glyph of warding: Hruggek's noose* are the same as for a normal *glyph of warding*.

When triggered, *Hruggek's noose* causes a thin line of force to tighten about the neck of the creature that triggered it, causing 5d4 points of strangling damage; a successful save vs. spell will halve the damage. Unless magically healed, the *glyph* leaves a thin red scar encircling the neck of any target that took damage from it. Anyone slain by the *glyph* is decapitated.

4th Level

Spikespray (Pr 4; Conjuration)

Sphere: Combat
Range: 10 yds.
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 rd.
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: 2 spikes/level
Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell, a priest can conjure up a number of metal barbs or spikes, similar to those found on the head of a morning star, to spring with enough force to serve as missiles from his or her hand or from a designated space within 10 yards of himself or herself. The spikes fly up to 120 yards within the round of casting and strike as many targets as the priest wishes within the limits of the number of spikes able to be conjured. The priest may direct the spikes in any combination at any living or nonliving (a scroll, lantern, or wineskin) targets that she or he can see. The priest can conjure a maximum of two spikes per experience level.

The spikes strike only if a successful attack roll is made for each target. The attack roll is made as though the spikes were directly wielded by the priest and at a +4 attack bonus in addition to any other applicable bonuses the priest might have; no range penalties apply. The spikes inflict 1d2 points of damage each.

The missiles of a *spikespray* twist and turn in flight to follow moving targets and avoid obstructions, and are fast enough to catch most birds on the wing. *Spikespray* works underwater, but the priest has only normal attack rolls, and the range is reduced to 90 yards.