

# BATTLEZOO ANCESTRIES

## SWARMBLOODS



**ROLL FOR  
COMBAT** 

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**PATHFINDER**  
COMPATIBLE









## From the Archives of Aitheria Nyx

### One or Many

No one is a monolith. We seem to inherently understand this when thinking about ourselves. Our every inconsistent act is justified by circumstance or mood. But we oversimplify others and try to shrink down their expansive multifarious nature into a single label so that we can more easily reason about them or create a narrative. We don't have the time or attention to understand every person around us in full, but these simplified caricatures that allow us to function and attempt to make decisions can also do great harm. Even more so for beings who are composites. Almost every ancestry has members who are plural systems, but few more so than ancestries that are literally composed of many different living organisms and yet function as one creature. These creatures possess what is known as a hivemind, and they can appear in many different forms—a worm that walks, a mellifican hive, or a swarmblood.

For a swarmblood, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the gestalt is capable of anything a humanoid ancestry can do, while the individual swarm creatures inside can emerge as necessary to provide various benefits, in the same way that our blood is full of tiny structures smaller than the eye can see, each with their own function. The difference is that a swarmblood's internals are much larger and resemble Tiny animals that normally live independently in the world around them. This leads many people to treat swarmbloods apprehensively; when they've come to understand animals in the "normal" way they expect to encounter them, it's much harder to grasp their mind around a person with hundreds or even thousands of them inside. Even some who can understand the concept of the hivemind still look down on animals and thus assume that a creature composed of many animals on the inside must be bestial or unintelligent. This is far from accurate—in fact, swarmbloods are said to be able to multitask and process several trains of thought at once much better than other ancestries can, but it's a prejudice that persists nonetheless.

Understanding a swarmblood completely requires us to be willing to see them as a three-dimensional being composed of a multitude, just as every living creature can be. We have to abandon our heuristics and stereotypes, the simplifications that allow us to make snap judgments but prevent us from truly understanding the depths of another person. There aren't "good people" or "bad people," "saints" or "monsters," based purely on our first impressions or quick analysis to sort them into a category. There are only people, in their glorious, beautiful and messy complexity. Swarmbloods aren't so different. We, all of us, are many.

— Aitheria Nyx, Herald of the Space Element, Advocate of Monsters





# Swarmblood

*The uncanny sensation of movement pulsing beneath your skin, the knowledge that anything could wriggle inside your skull while you sleep, and the fear of a parasite making your body its home and stealing your vitality for itself are all very real. Swarmbloods are an unenvied few, humanoids whose bodies belong not only to themselves but who share their skin with an infestation with a thousand minds of their own.*

Linked as intrinsically to the cycles of the moon as they are to the strange, symbiotic creatures that live inside their bodies, a swarmblood is most accurately described as multiple creatures who live in a state of harmony: a humanoid host body and an unusual symbiotic swarm, called a “brood,” that lives inside that body, carrying out many processes and functions for the composite swarmblood that would normally be the role of various organs and fluids. While the brood often resembles a swarm of small animals like rats, crows, or bees, these creatures are a single collective bonded to each other and to their host by a weak telepathic net. Broods can’t survive independently; just as they serve a vital function in the host’s body, so too do they require the host in order to live. Once a swarmblood is born, the bond normally can’t be severed, and attempting to do so would, at best, kill both the host and the brood.

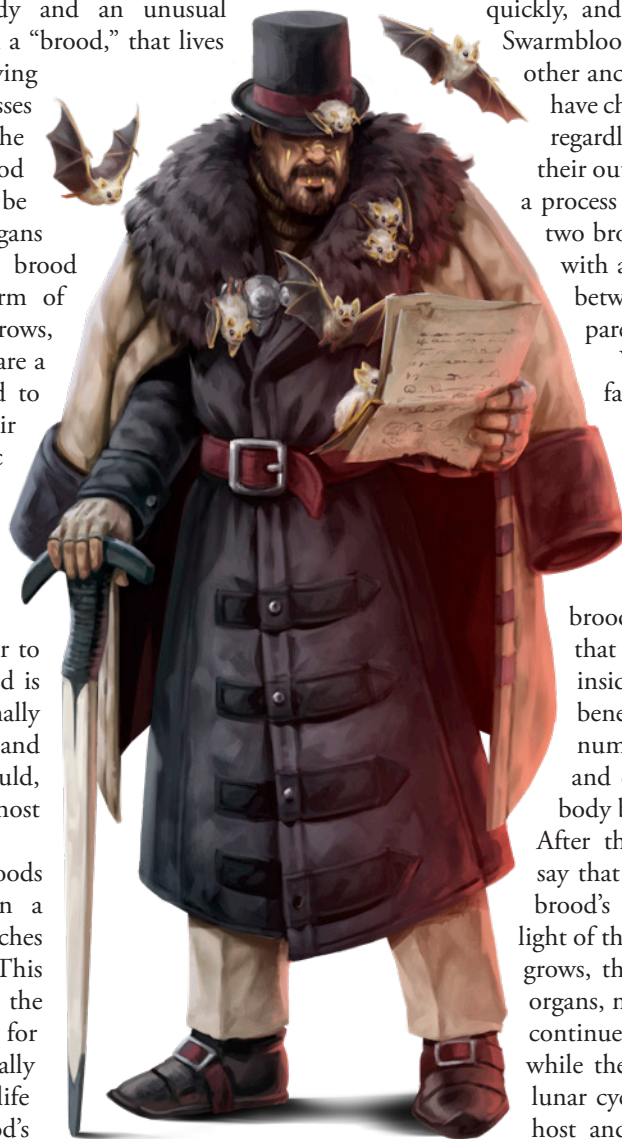
New swarmbloods are usually born when a swarmblood brood branches off into a new host. This donation weakens the swarmblood slightly for a time, so it normally happens to save the life of the new swarmblood’s host due to organ failure or a similar malady that inheriting the brood can fix. There are also tales of the majority of a brood passing on from a dying host into a new willing host,

causing the previous host and the remaining brood to die but some of their memories and legacy to live on in the new host. Both of these processes involve a large number of members of the brood, occur fairly quickly, and require a willing participant.

Swarmbloods usually can’t reproduce with other ancestries, but they can sometimes have children with other swarmbloods, regardless of the type of humanoids their outer bodies appear to be, through a process that involves a mixing of their two broods which can produce a child with a brood that look like chimeras between the two animals in the parents’ broods.

While these three methods are fairly benign, rumors abound of another possibility that some powerful swarmbloods with particularly sturdy broods can manage. Such a swarmblood, the legends say, could break off a single member of their brood from the collective. Then, that single member would crawl inside another humanoid, wriggling beneath the skin and laying numerous small, jelly-like eggs and quickly returning to their host body before the separation kills them. After that initial deposit, the legends say that over the following month, the brood’s eggs begin to hatch under the light of the changing moon. As the brood grows, they slowly consume their host’s organs, making space inside the body to continue to grow and reproduce... all while the host is still alive. After a full lunar cycle, the infestation is complete: host and brood united as both many and one by their swarmblood state.

While some believe this rumor is unreliable, especially the connection to the moon, which could be simply based on distorted stories of wercreatures, many





swarmbloods attest to the sense of peace and solace their brood feels when they are bathed in moonlight.

Whether performed quickly to save a life or slowly by a powerful swarmblood infesting another with eggs, the transformation into a swarmblood is painful and often frightening, and the process of choosing a new host for the brood requires great prudence and care. While the curse could heal those with weak or dying organs, a host with a frail enough constitution might not survive the change; the stress on their body could kill them during the process, especially the slower month-long infestation, which requires time for the brood to mature. Understanding both the advantages and drawbacks of living with an infested brood, most swarmbloods value consent above all else in the process, which is part of why unwilling infestations remain a legend. Even those who choose this path voluntarily might not be prepared for the pain of the transformation or the unnerving changes it brings about.

If you want to play a character with a horrifying secret hiding under their skin, who has a swarm of tiny creatures inside of them and at their command, or to explore the trauma of undergoing a frightening transformation and suddenly sharing a body with creatures who have never known another home, you should play a swarmblood.

## You Might...

- Think of yourself and your brood as a collective (we) rather than an individual (I).
- Identify any group of people you regularly associate with as a community with collective interests, seeking out actions and solutions that maximize the benefit to the whole group rather than the individual.
- Focus on keeping your swarm fully under your skin and out of sight when dealing with others who don't understand you.

## Others Probably...

- Avoid your company, finding you or your presence creepy and discomforting.
- Misunderstand the connection between you and your swarm if they are even aware of it.
- Worry you might be a zombie or other type of undead creature or a parasite likely to infect them.

## Physical Description

Swarmbloods can be difficult to tell apart from other humanoids of the same type as the host. Excepting those times when a few members of the brood make themselves known by leaving the host body to crawl across their face or scuttle along the ground, the infestation leaves few physical tells. Some swarmbloods might have strange, hard lumps under their skin that wander across their bodies, or others might find that the fine details of their features, like the angle of their cheekbones or lengths of their fingers, can sometimes shift from one day to the next. In extreme situations, typically involving a swarmblood who suffered from major external wounds or burns before their infestation, portions of a swarmblood's outer body might be composed of specialized members of the brood that appear, while lying still, to be normal pieces of flesh, scales, feathers, or whatever their host's outer body normally looks like. In those cases, there are always thin telltale lines in their flesh where the brood members connect with each other, and those portions of the swarmblood's outer body can detach like any other brood members, leaving behind a hole revealing more of the brood crawling underneath.

### RARITY

Rare

### HIT POINTS

6

### SIZE

Medium or Small

### SPEED

25 feet

### ABILITY BOOSTS

Constitution

Intelligence

Free

### ABILITY FLAW

Wisdom

### LANGUAGES

Common

Additional languages equal to 1 plus your Intelligence modifier (if it's positive). Choose from Abyssal, Aklo, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnomish, Goblin, Halfling, and any other languages to which you have access (such as the languages prevalent in your region).

### TRAITS

Swarmblood

Aberration

Humanoid

### LOW-LIGHT VISION

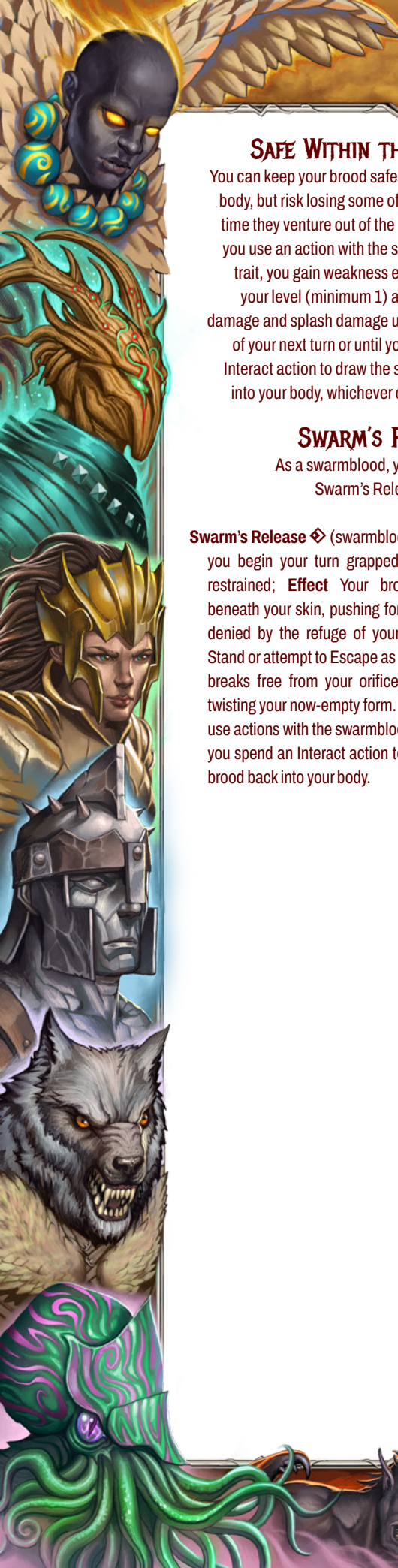
You can see in dim light as though it were bright light, so you ignore the concealed condition due to dim light.

### HOLLOW HUSK BODY

Your hollow body houses a swarm instead of fluids and organs. The DC for you to recover from persistent bleed damage is 10 instead of 15 (or 5 instead of 10 if you have particularly effective assistance).

(continued on page 6)





### SAFE WITHIN THE NEST

You can keep your brood safe inside your body, but risk losing some of them each time they venture out of the nest. When you use an action with the swarmblood trait, you gain weakness equal to half your level (minimum 1) against area damage and splash damage until the end of your next turn or until you spend an Interact action to draw the swarm back into your body, whichever comes first.

### SWARM'S RELEASE

As a swarmblood, you gain the Swarm's Release ability.

**Swarm's Release** ♦ (swarmblood) **Trigger** you begin your turn grappled, prone, or restrained; **Effect** Your brood pulses beneath your skin, pushing for a freedom denied by the refuge of your body. You Stand or attempt to Escape as your swarm breaks free from your orifices, lifting or twisting your now-empty form. You cannot use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

Most swarmbloods are comfortable around animals that humanoid societies have deemed macabre, like spiders, insects, rodents, snakes, and bats. Their condition also leaves many of them accustomed to the feeling of something constantly crawling under and over their skin, and they are rarely frightened or disgusted by branches that suddenly brush across their arms or unexpected creatures making their way up their legs. Still, some never get used to the feeling of their brood's constant motion, forever unable to find peace or stillness within their bodies. These swarmbloods might move their bodies in strange and sudden tics, struggling for a sense of comfort that never comes.

Swarmbloods who live among other humanoids can develop reputations for being creepy or dirty, though it can be challenging for the swarmblood's neighbors to articulate exactly what they find off-putting. Many have only vague and half-forgotten recollections of the time they spotted a cockroach crawling up a pant leg or a wriggling creature inside a stranger's ear. These little odd moments are easy to rationalize away as a mistaken puff of lint or loose hair when someone thinks about them too hard, but they nonetheless leave behind an uncomfortable feeling that something must be wrong with the swarmblood.

## Society

Swarmbloods are a diverse group originating from many other ancestries and a wide variety of different backgrounds. They are united only by the symbiotic brood they carry with them. There is no single society shared by all swarmbloods; despite the changes wrought by the infestation, most simply carry on living something akin to their old lives, remaining in their homes and continuing to adhere to the societal norms of the civilization into which they were born. For many, these community and societal connections are even dearer to their hearts than before they became a swarmblood as they become more in tune with the community around them. Many swarmbloods quickly realize that the way they support and are supported by their local communities is a parallel to their brood and host body on a larger scale. It's common for the transformation to shift a swarmblood's perspective to favor collectivism, though these changes are usually minor.

Though less common, some swarmbloods uproot their lives entirely following their transformation, moving away from other ancestries to live among other swarmbloods of similar broods. Others might move on from their old lives for other reasons, perhaps because they feel disconnected from their families or after being rejected by a community that discovered their transformation.

Newly infested swarmbloods can't always cope with the changes, even if they understood theoretically what the process would entail. Even after making the decision, it's not unheard of for a swarmblood to attempt to reverse the process. These new swarmbloods often must accept their brood by themselves before they feel ready to return to their swarmblood progenitor and learn from them, though not all accept their situation. Some never return.

On the other hand, the rare few swarmbloods who are born to two other swarmbloods typically have the fewest problems adapting, as they've had the mixed brood as part of them since before they were even born. They tend to have the strongest tendency to identify with their brood of any swarmbloods.



## Hives

While swarmbloods rarely build societies together with other swarmbloods, they do share several schools of thought, which swarmbloods have come to call hives. Depending on who you ask, the term “hive” might be short for hivemind, with the idea that they aren’t physical hives but rather collectives of swarmbloods who think more alike on various philosophical topics. The following are the most common hives among swarmbloods.

### The Covenant

For most swarmbloods, passing a brood on to another person and creating more swarmblood (or choosing never to do so, even to save a life) is among the most meaningful and serious choices of their lives. Outside of the rare conception between two swarmbloods, finding a new host is usually the only way for a brood to reproduce. The covenant are a hive of swarmbloods who take the relationship between those who share a common brood as a familial bond between them all.

To a coven seeker, their coven is a swarmblood family, a tightly connected network of infested all created from and connected by a shared, single brood that proliferated across each one of their bodies. Members of a coven are all siblings to each other, though elders are acknowledged as such and treated with respect by those newly infested. Among the covenant, there is a strong belief that when a new swarmblood is born, it is their progenitor’s duty to teach the new younger sibling about the transformation and their brood before ultimately presenting them before the coven so they can know their family and appreciate the totality of their brood.

Most covens live together in tightly knit communities, whether they are within swarmblood enclaves of larger cities or in small, secluded villages founded by the coven where they can live quietly and in peace. From the coven’s perspective, their way of life represents the true core of swarmblood society, and those who choose to live outside their norms are a minority group of rebels and outcasts. Members of the covenant maintain that all swarmbloods become members of their brood’s coven when they receive the gift of the brood, even if they aren’t aware of that coven’s existence or never meet their siblings. They take the fact that swarmbloods with a common brood can sometimes feel a minor symbiotic connection with each other across their bodies as proof of their claim. However, this position causes great frustration for those who reject the idea of covens, especially the scattered.

### The Hidden

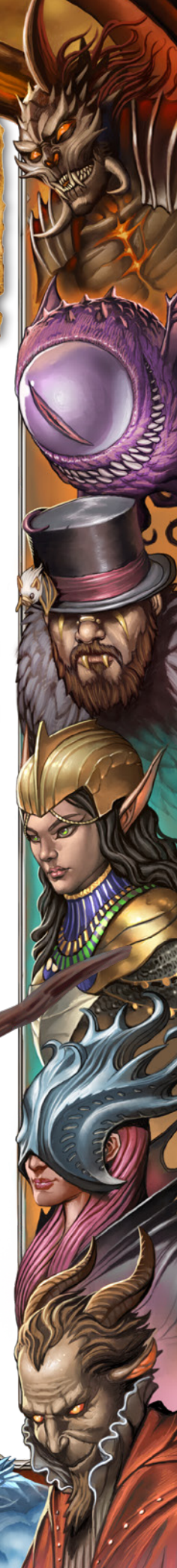
The hidden are the largest hive, representing a plurality of swarmbloods, and possibly even a majority. Hidden

## Swarmbloods and Body Horror

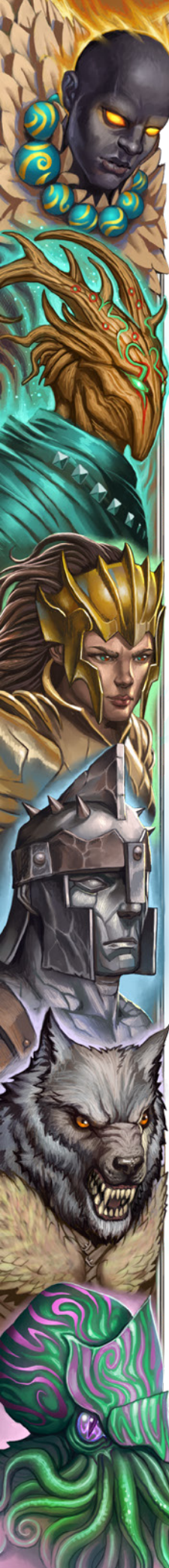
The swarmblood ancestry has some descriptions that could be disturbing or nauseating for some players, so talk to the other players in your group about playing a swarmblood and you can potentially tone down some of the visual descriptions or change which creatures constitute your brood if spiders are a problem but mice aren’t.

simply continue going about their old lives, remaining in their same town and hiding their brood as best they can, or staying with the same adventuring party if they were infested over the course of their adventures. Despite the difficulties of concealing the curse from all but a trusted few, many swarmbloods are able to maintain this unsteady equilibrium for years, or even their entire lives.

Because most laypeople don’t know that swarmbloods exist, concealing their transformation is often easier than most new swarmbloods expect it to be. It’s rare for anyone without an extensive knowledge of unusual magical physiologies to connect a sudden increase in







the local pigeon population to someone within the community who recovered from organ failure, and even if they did, it would seem implausible to others. However, the longer a swarmblood remains in one place, the greater the risk of discovery becomes. All but the most careful of hidden, along with those who manage to become accepted for who they are, are eventually exposed. This usually all but forces them to move and start a new life every few years, and this need for a transient life makes it challenging to form satisfying connections in their communities. Of course, this is all the more frustrating given their increased affinity toward such societal connections.

### The Scattered

To the scattered, the swarmblood transformation is a curse. It's common at first for new swarmbloods, even

though they rationally accepted the transformation, to find that part of them rejects the melding with their other selves within the brood. These swarmbloods flee from their progenitor for a time, and while many ultimately return seeking guidance and support, not all do.

Those who come to despise their swarmblood state are part of the hive known as the scattered. Needless to say, compared to those who voluntarily became swarmbloods, or those who were infested involuntarily, are especially likely to follow this hive's philosophy. On the other hand, the rare swarmbloods born of two other swarmbloods are almost never scattered.

The scattered are openly antagonistic to the covenant and any covens they come across, and they loudly proclaim their transformation as a terrible curse to any who they trust and know their secret. It's common for the scattered to feel afraid, confused, and alone, and to blame their progenitor swarmblood for the pain of their transformation. That doesn't mean that most scattered seek to rile up angry mobs to wipe out other swarmbloods. While they might have antipathy or resentment for their progenitor, they more often see covenant swarmbloods as confused victims in desperate need of the guidance and help that they stubbornly refuse to accept. Meanwhile, since most swarmbloods who initially recoil at their state eventually return to their progenitors for guidance, covenant swarmbloods often think of scattered as "simply going through a phase." Even though neither means to be actively antagonistic, both hives are oversimplifying the others' lifestyles, and it's a common cause of friction between swarmbloods and occasionally even open conflict.

Other scattered are simply angry.

Ultimately, they are often truly angry with themselves for choosing to agree to the transformation, but they often deflect that anger outward as a self-preservation mechanism, justifying their actions by rationalizing that their progenitor undersold the pain of the transformation and the unease of their new life while overselling the benefits, misleading them into making a huge mistake. Some remain outraged for the rest of their lives, and this outrage defines their relationship both to their own brood and to all other swarmbloods. Those who despise their swarmblood nature the most posit a different reason for the name of their hive, a secret meaning that they consider to be the true one: they are scattered not because they are foolish lost souls but because they will someday find a "cure" for the swarmblood curse, scattering the broods of all swarmbloods, and returning sovereignty over their





bodies. They believe any swarmblood who opposes their cure to be brainwashed and are determined to provide it to all, whether they want the cure or not.

Unfortunately for these scattered, they have yet to make any breakthroughs on a cure, but as with most things magical, all it takes is one genius mage or lucky experiment to change the world.

## The Seekers

Sometimes, new swarmbloods feel that the transformation has changed them too much to remain in their old lives, reject the familial lifestyle of the covenant, and resentment of the scattered. They instead feel sheer wonder of becoming swarmblood and wish to seek their own path through the world. These rare few call themselves the seekers.

Seekers are ever curious and willing to experiment to help them find the place that feels right for them. As such, they often become wanderers or pursue an adventurer's life. Others might move to a remote hermitage for a time where they can live in solitude with their brood without fearing the day they are discovered by their neighbors, giving them a chance to quietly reflect on a journey of self-discovery until they're ready to move to the next phase of their life. Sometimes, a seeker finds what they were searching for, either on the road or within themselves, allowing them to put down roots. Other seekers consider this a joyous occasion and the culmination of the seeker's path. They sometimes call those who have succeeded "the found" to indicate this momentous milestone, but they use this as a term of respect, and not as a way to isolate these seekers by elevating them. To other seekers, the found are ultimately still seekers, and they might later discover that there's another stage to their journey they have yet to begin.

## Beliefs

Swarmbloods come from many backgrounds and consequently have many perspectives on life, and nowhere is this more exemplified than in the diversity of attitudes toward reproduction. For instance, swarmbloods of the covenant believe that finding new hosts willing to become swarmbloods is necessary for their collective survival, something both good and imperative for them to do. On the other hand, the scattered more often resent receiving the transformation and believe convincing another to accept the infestation to be unethical, even if it would save their life. Other swarmblood hives often fall somewhere in the middle, perhaps longing for the connection of family or feeling a deep connection to the brood's desire to create a legacy while avoiding an active search for new hosts either to help remain hidden or because they prioritize seeking

## Swarmblood Adventurers

Swarmbloods can come from all walks of life before their curse, but many only feel the call to adventure after they become swarmbloods. Those with the animal whisperer background might feel a stronger connection to the creatures of their swarm, while scattered swarmbloods who leave their communities after their infestation might have the nomad or hermit background. Because those with the sturdiest fortitude fare best in their transformation, many swarmbloods have a high Constitution score and choose classes that benefit accordingly, such as kineticist, barbarian, or champion.

out their own path.

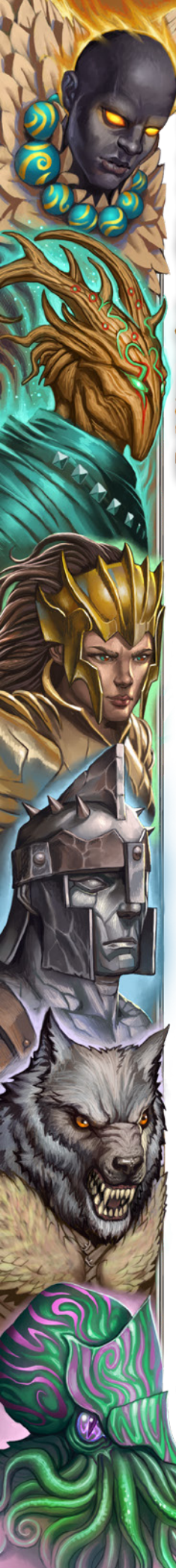
Swarmbloods are usually no more or less religious than other humanoids of the same ancestry as the host, though their slight tendency to collectivism also lends itself to a collective religious faith. Though the deities worshiped by swarmbloods are diverse and often influenced by their homelands and backgrounds, some faiths do attract more swarmblood followers than others, and those who become devout only after their infestations gravitate toward those deities. The worship of deities associated with the moon, such as Talir, the dragon deity imprisoned in Alacar's moon, help swarmbloods to connect with the primal or mystical nature of their being. These lunar swarmbloods often build kinships with lycanthropes among these faiths out of their shared experiences of being transformed into something more monstrous. Deities of community, civilization, and cities, like Tovah the Father or Castili the Marquis of Civility on Alacar, are also popular. These faiths recontextualize the swarmblood's brood as the inhabitants of their body, much like the swarmblood inhabits a city or wider community, and they also help the swarmblood maintain their humanoid connections with the people around them. Deities of nature and animals, such as Than Dat and Chira on Alacar, are also popular, particularly among pest swarm and wingswarm swarmbloods whose broods take on the shapes of holy animals.

For those who were devout prior to their infestation, it's common to remain with the same faith even after the transformation. The infestation rarely prompts religious swarmbloods to lose their faith or move to a new church. When it does happen, it's primarily followers of deities whose doctrines are incompatible with life as a swarmblood or with the philosophy of their hive.

**Popular Edicts** protect and preserve your brood, find and cherish family where you can, pass on a legacy you can be proud of

**Popular Anathemas** prioritize the few over the many, refuse to accept that a person has many facets, make a unilateral decision that changes another's life without their consent





## Swarmblood Settlements

The largest swarmblood settlements are formed by the most populous and influential covens among the covenant. They form enclaves carved out within huge metropolises and remote villages sequestered between mountain passes where siblings of a single brood can live together.

A coven with a brood of small crabs lives in the docks district of Kraken in the Indigo Isles, where they operate the fishing boats of the East Pearl Fishery. Across the world at the summit of Kenovar Mountain, a wingswarm coven of a white dove brood lives in the peace and seclusion of the village of Rochaven, descending the mountain once each year with a wagon filled with small wicker goods to sell.

## Names

Though not all swarmbloods feel compelled to choose a new name, some do, and these names often either reflect their new lives as a collective of many minds or take after the creatures of the swarmblood's brood. A collective noun normally used for a group of the animals in a swarmblood's brood are also popular choices, such as Mischief for a swarmblood infested by rats. Among the covenant, it's customary for a progenitor to bestow a new name to a swarmblood child they infest once their transformation is complete, though those who flee the transformation might not receive this new name until their return. Some particularly self-loathing scattered who think of themselves as accursed monsters rather than people also change their names, choosing deprecating monikers like Sack or Intrusion, or adopting the cruel jeers of suspicious layfolk for a new name.

Swarmbloods who keep their birth names often find it helps them to feel grounded in their previous identities, and it's typical for those swarmbloods from hives other than the covenant to have names that are customary among their ancestry or homeland.

## Sample Names

Finley, Flock, Gossamer, Hookbeak, Intrusion, Mischief, Plague, Plume, Quill, Sack, Silkwing, Vagabond, Whisker.

## Swarmblood Heritages

Each group of infested interacts with their brood in slightly different ways, depending on the different types of creatures that make up their brood. Choose one of the following swarmblood heritages at 1st level.

### Aquatic Swarm

Inside your body, a host of small aquatic creatures such as fish, eels, plankton, or mollusks make their home.

The water in your body is enough to support your brood even while you are on land, but they thrive when your body is fully submerged in water. You gain a swim Speed of 30 feet, but your land speed is only 20 feet. In addition, you gain the amphibious trait, and like all creatures with the amphibious trait, you can breathe both water and air.

### Crawling Swarm

A swarm of crawling insects, spiders, snakes, or small geckos live within your body. Your brood usually takes refuge beneath your skin, but they sometimes crawl out through your orifices and creep across the outside of your body. You gain the Creeping Crawlers reaction.

**Creeping Crawlers** ⤵ (mental, swarmblood) **Frequency** once per 10 minutes; **Trigger** A foe touches you with hostile intent, such as by Grappling you, successfully hitting you with a melee unarmed attack, or using a spell with a range of touch against you; **Effect** The crawling creatures of your brood instinctively slither from your body to wriggle all over the foe who dared to attack you. The triggering foe must attempt a Fortitude save against the higher of your class DC or spell DC. On a failure, they're sickened 1, and on a critical failure they're sickened 2 instead.

### Pest Swarm

You share your body with a colony of rodents, weasels, or other terrestrial vermin. You gain imprecise scent with a range of 30 feet. This means you can use your sense of smell to determine a creature's location. The GM will usually double the range if you're downwind from the creature or halve the range if you're upwind. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks to Seek a creature or object within the range of your scent.

### Vespin Swarm

Your body contains a swarm of arthropods with stingers, such as wasps, hornets, scorpions, or bees. When threatened, members of your brood slip out of your mouth or nose and sting your enemies. You gain a stinger unarmed attack that deals 1d4 piercing damage and 1 poison damage; the piercing damage is the unarmed attack's weapon damage die, but if you have multiple damage dice (such as from a *striking rune*), the poison damage increases to 1 per weapon damage die. Your stinger is in the brawling group and has the finesse trait.

### Wingswarm

Scores of flying creatures, such as bats, birds, or moths live under your skin and behind your eyes. When you fall, your brood vigorously flaps their wings to carry you aloft. You take no damage from falling, regardless of the distance you fall.



## Ancestry Feats

The following feats are available to swarmblood characters.

### 1ST LEVEL

#### COMPOSITE KINSHIP

FEAT 1

##### SWARMBLOOD

Communicating with your brood every day grants you insights into communicating with hiveminds and other beings composed of many connected individuals as well as the ability to speak to similar animals. You can ask questions of, receive answers from, and use the Diplomacy skill with animals who match the animals that comprise your brood, whether they're in a swarm or not. You can attempt to Coerce, Demoralize, Feint, Make an Impression, and Request against swarms and other creatures with multiple conscious minds even though they would normally be immune. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and Intimidation skill checks made to take these actions against swarms and animals

matching your brood. If you're a master in the skill, the circumstance bonus increases to +2 using that skill.

#### FLUTTERING HEART ♦

FEAT 1

##### SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** wingswarm heritage

Your brood all emerge and flap their wings at once to carry your body for a brief flight. You Fly. If you don't have a fly Speed, you gain a fly Speed of 15 feet for Fluttering Heart. If you aren't on solid ground at the end of your movement, you fall.

#### PLAGUE SWARM

FEAT 1

##### SWARMBLOOD

Your brood sometimes brings in plagues and diseases to course through your body harmlessly, inoculating you and boosting your body's immune response. Each time you succeed at a Fortitude save against an ongoing disease, you reduce its stage by 2, or by 1 against a virulent disease. Each critical success you achieve against an ongoing disease reduces its stage by 3, or by 2 against a virulent disease.







## SCATTER! ♦

AUDITORY SWARMBLOOD VISUAL

In a spectacular cacophony of chaos and sound, your brood vacates your body and flees in every direction. In the confusion, you can Step 10 feet (instead of the usual 5 feet) and then roll a Deception check to Create a Diversion. If your Step moved you to a spot where you have cover or concealment, you can remain hidden even after the end of your turn. You can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

## SWARM FAMILIAR

SWARMBLOOD

One member of your brood can leave your body and act independently, scouting and carrying out complicated missions. You gain a familiar, and this familiar must match the animals that comprise your brood. If you have the aquatic swarm heritage, your familiar must have the swim familiar ability, and if you have the wingswarm heritage, your familiar must have the flier familiar ability.

## FEAT 1

## SWARMBLOOD LORE

SWARMBLOOD

Since your infestation, your connection to your brood has helped you to gain a deeper understanding of your condition and the behaviors of other creatures with multiple consciousnesses. You gain the trained proficiency rank in Nature and Intimidation. If you would automatically become trained in one of these skills (from your background or class, for example), you instead become trained in a skill of your choice. You also gain the Additional Lore skill feat in Swarm Lore.

## FEAT 1

## WATCHING SWARM ♦

CONCENTRATE SWARMBLOOD

The creatures of your brood crawl out of your body and across your skin, looking in all directions. You gain all-around vision until the start of your next turn. This lets you see in all directions and prevents you from being flanked.

## FEAT 1

## 5TH LEVEL

## EMPTY BODY 2

SWARMBLOOD

Frequency once per minute

**Trigger** An enemy's Strike against you is a critical hit.

Your brood surges out of your body to escape sudden danger. The triggering attack deals only the amount it would deal on a hit (typically full damage instead of double damage). Any other effects caused by a critical hit still occur. The shock of your swarm escaping when you were unprepared leaves you sickened 1, and you can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

## FEAT 5

## FRACTAL WINGS

SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** Fluttering Heart

Your brood flows out of you and interlocks themselves together tightly, forming huge wings capable of carrying you aloft for a greater distance than their independent flapping could. The fly Speed you gain from Fluttering Heart increases to 25 feet.

## FEAT 5

## RESURGENT HOST

SWARMBLOOD

You've managed to get your brood to mimic more of your old internals than usual (though ultimately it's still just a mass of creatures connecting together and appearing as flesh and organs), and you've gotten in touch with your roots. You gain the Adopted Ancestry general feat for the ancestry you once were before becoming a swarmblood, and you also gain one 1st-level ancestry feat from that ancestry.

## FEAT 5



## SHIFTING SWARM

FEAT 5

### SWARMBLOOD

You have learned to manipulate the members of the brood beneath your skin capable of appearing as flesh to come together over your body in different configurations, changing your appearance drastically and assisting your humanoid disguises. You don't need a disguise kit to Impersonate and can assume any humanoid form of your size in 1 minute. You can shed your disguise and return to your body to its natural shape with a single action, which has the swarmblood trait. When you use shifting swarm, your Impersonate action gains the primal and transmutation traits, and you don't take circumstance penalties for disguising yourself as a creature of a different humanoid ancestry.

## TESSELLATED SHIELD ↗

FEAT 5

### SWARMBLOOD

**Frequency** once per hour

**Trigger** you would take damage from a physical attack

Members of your brood leave your body and weave themselves together in a tight tessellation, creating a barrier between you and the oncoming attack. You gain resistance equal to twice your level to all physical damage you would take from the triggering attack.

## VIGILANT WATCHING

FEAT 5

### SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** Watching Swarm

Your swarm can watch over you easily. You can use Watching Swarm as a free action, instead of a single action. If you do, it only prevents you from being flanked by creatures of your level or lower, rather than all creatures.

## 9TH LEVEL

## EMBRACE OF HOME FEAT 9

### SWARMBLOOD

Feeling the embrace of your brood coming home to your body fortifies your resolve. When you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body, you gain temporary Hit Points equal to your level. You lose any remaining temporary Hit Points at the end of your next turn or the next time you use a swarmblood action, whichever comes first.

## ETERNAL FRACTAL

FEAT 9

### SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** Fractal Wings

You can seamlessly use your fractal wings without exhausting your brood, allowing you to fly at will whenever you want and for as long as you need. You gain a fly Speed equal to your land Speed. Using the Fly action with this fly Speed gains the swarmblood trait, as it requires releasing your brood to do so, and if you use an Interact action to draw your brood back while flying in this way, you remove your wings and you fall.

## GRASPING HOLD

FEAT 9

### SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** crawling swarm heritage or pest swarm heritage

Your swarm crawls across your body and covers your limbs, grasping tightly onto surfaces to allow you to move and climb with ease. You gain a climb Speed of 15 feet.

## LINGERING TOXIN

FEAT 9

### SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** vespin swarm heritage

When you achieve a telling blow with your stinger, you leave lingering poison within your foe's body. On a critical hit with your stinger unarmed attack, the foe takes 1d4 persistent poison damage.

## SCHOOL OF FINS ↘

FEAT 9

### CONCENTRATE SWARMBLOOD

**Prerequisites** aquatic swarm heritage

**Requirements** You are underwater

Your brood spreads out around you in a school of fins to conceal you from foes. You become concealed until the end of your next turn or until you use an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body, whichever comes first.







## Before the Infestation

During the transformation into a swarmblood, the brood consumes their host's organs and takes their place inside their body. While a swarmblood might superficially maintain the appearance of their previous ancestry, they do not keep that ancestry's physiology and consequently are no longer members of that ancestry for most purposes. If your swarmblood preserved their connection to their previous ancestry's culture or abilities following their curse, consider choosing the Adopted Ancestry general feat to represent that part of your character, especially via the Resurgent Host feat.

### SWARMKIND FORM ◆

FEAT 9

**CONCENTRATE** **POLYMORPH** **PRIMAL** **SWARMBLOOD** **TRANSMUTATION**

You release your brood and shed your skin, transforming into an animal of the same type as your swarm and allowing you to scout an area by yourself, posing as an innocuous-looking animal. You gain the effects of a *pest form* spell, except that you must assume a Tiny battle form that matches the creatures of your swarm. You can use this action again to return to your normal form.

**Special:** If the creatures of your brood can fly and you have the fractal wings ancestry feat, you gain the effects of a 4th-level *pest form* spell and your swarmkind form gains a fly speed.

### SWARMREACH SPELL ◆

FEAT 9

**CONCENTRATE** **METAMAGIC** **SWARMBLOOD**

**Prerequisites** Able to cast spells

**Frequency** once per hour

Your brood spills out from your body and delivers a spell effect at an increased distance. If the next action you use is to Cast a Spell that has a range and that requires two or fewer actions to cast, increase that spell's range by 30 feet as your swarm delivers it. As normal for increasing spell ranges, if the spell normally has a range of touch, you extend its range to 30 feet. You can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

### SWARMSHIELD ◆

FEAT 9

**SWARMBLOOD**

Your brood spreads out across your form, interlocking with each other and forming a shield to protect you from harm. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your AC. This bonus lasts until you use an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body. You can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

## 13TH LEVEL

### CONSUME THE SELF ◆

FEAT 13

**SWARMBLOOD**

**Frequency** once per day

You cannibalize your swarm to keep yourself alive. You absorb a portion of your brood into your body and steal their vitality to heal your injuries, regaining 1d8 Hit Points per level you have. Losing this

significant portion of your brood leaves you fatigued, and you can't take swarmblood actions while fatigued in this way.

### DISCARNATE ◆

FEAT 13

**SWARMBLOOD**

**Frequency** once per hour

**Trigger** a creature hits you with a melee Strike during that creature's turn

Your brood discorporates, shredding your body and fleeing with chunks of bone and skin to escape the incoming attack. You gain resistance 20 to all physical damage against the triggering attack. During the triggering creature's turn, your swarm takes up your original space and retains resistance 20 to all physical damage. At the end of the triggering creature's turn, your swarm coalesces and your body reforms in an unoccupied space within 15 feet.

### POLYPSYCHE SPELL ◆

FEAT 13

**CONCENTRATE** **METAMAGIC** **SWARMBLOOD**

**Prerequisites** Able to cast spells, Composite Kinship

Your familiarity with swarms and the assistance of the swarm within you allow you to weave magical effects that treat their disparate minds as one. If your next action is to Cast a Spell with the mental trait that normally affects a single creature, you alter the spell to affect an entire swarm instead. That spell can target and affect a swarm or other creature with the swarm mind immunity, instead of affecting a single creature.

### SHED THE SKIN ◆◆

FEAT 13

**CONCENTRATE** **MANIPULATE** **POLYMORPH** **SWARMBLOOD**

**Frequency** once per hour

Your brood is discharged from your body and carries pieces of your body along with it, assuming the state of a stirring swarm of many creatures for up to 10 minutes. In this state, you become a highly shapeable swarm. You lose any item bonus to AC and all other effects and bonuses from armor, and you use your proficiency modifier for unarmored defense. You gain resistance equal to half your level to physical damage. You can't cast spells, activate items, or use actions that have the attack, manipulate, or swarmblood trait, and you retain your weakness to area and splash damage for using a swarmblood action as long as you remain in your swarm form. You gain a fly, climb, or swim Speed equal to half your land Speed (whichever best suits the creatures that comprise your swarm) and can slip through tiny cracks. You can spend one action, which has the concentrate trait, to reassemble your body in your new location and draw your brood back within.

### TOGETHER AS ONE ◆

FEAT 13

**PRIMAL** **POLYMORPH** **SWARMBLOOD** **TRANSMUTATION**

**Prerequisites** Swarmkind Form

**Frequency** once per day

Your brood reconfigures into the shape of a single animal that matches its appearance, with the effects of a 5th-level *animal form*, *insect form*, or *aerial form* spell, whichever spell is most suited to the types of creatures that comprise your brood.



## 17TH LEVEL

### EYE OF THE SWARM ♦♦

FEAT 17

#### SWARMBLOOD

**Frequency** once per hour

Your brood streams out of your skin, interlocking with each other and surrounding you with chains of their bodies. You become concealed until the end of your next turn, as do any allies adjacent to you during the duration as long as they remain adjacent to you. You can Sustain the effect for a maximum duration of 5 rounds. When an ally who is concealed by Eye of the Swarm would take damage from an attack, as a reaction, you can reduce the damage to that ally by 40; after you do, Eye of the Swarm ends. You can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body.

### REJUVENATING SWARM ♦♦

FEAT 17

#### NECROMANCY PRIMAL SWARMBLOOD

**Frequency** once per day

Your brood pours out onto the surface of your body and rejuvenates you from all harm, continually healing you for 1 minute. You gain regeneration 15 for the duration, which restores 15 Hit Points to you at the start of each of your turns. While you have regeneration, you can't die from damage and your dying condition can't increase to a value that would kill you (this typically stops you from going beyond dying 3), though if your wounded value becomes 4 or higher, you stay

unconscious until your wounds are treated. You can't use actions with the swarmblood trait until you spend an Interact action to draw your brood back into your body, and if you do, the regeneration ends immediately. If you take area or splash damage, this disrupts your swarm's ability to heal you, and your regeneration deactivates until after the end of your next turn. Each time you regain Hit Points from this regeneration, your swarm reconstitutes one damaged or ruined organ (though in most cases, you don't have organs as the swarm replaced them). During the effect's duration, you can also reattach severed body parts by spending an Interact action to hold the body part to the area from which it was severed, causing the swarm to crawl over the gap between and restore the connection.

### REVIVAL RECURSION ↻

FEAT 17

#### SWARMBLOOD

**Frequency** once per week

**Trigger** you die

Your body dies, but your brood escapes with your consciousness and resuscitates you. The GM secretly rolls 1d4. A number of rounds after your death equal to the result, your brood coalesces and your body reforms in an unoccupied space within 15 feet of your choice. Your new body has 1 HP and no spell prepared or spell slots, no focus points (or any expandable resource granted by your class, feats or ancestry). You are stunned for 1 round after reviving, and you are clumsy 2, drained 2, and enfeebled 2 for 1 week; these conditions can't be removed or reduced by any means until the week has passed.





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Serve Fate or live free  
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Master the magic of the waves  
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Become a magic spell given life  
Study your formula and unlock greater depths  
Understand the meaning of your existence!

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## OGRES



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Become a hungry giant  
Devour your foes to mutate and grow  
You are what you eat!

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# BATTLEZOO ANCESTRIES

## REDCAPS

**COMING IN 2025!**

Continue the ability to play as amazing monsters and creatures of legend throughout 2025 with The Year of Titans! Dip your cap in blood and wade into battle as a vicious redcap!

Become a bloodthirsty battle fey  
Make a fashion statement with your trademark bloody cap  
Gleefully dance through fields of carnage!

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# BATTLEZOO ANCESTRIES

## SATYRS



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Become a woodland fey  
Party up with your satyr side or live a quieter life with your faun side  
Choose your own destiny!

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# BATTLEZOO ANCESTRIES

## SNOWSOULS

**COMING IN 2025!**

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Let the storm rage on as an icy snowsoul!

Become a being of ice and snow  
Control the powers of the blizzard  
Understand the feelings within your frozen heart!

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Become a child of the fallen gods  
Grow and evolve  
Survive and thrive in a world that's passed you by!

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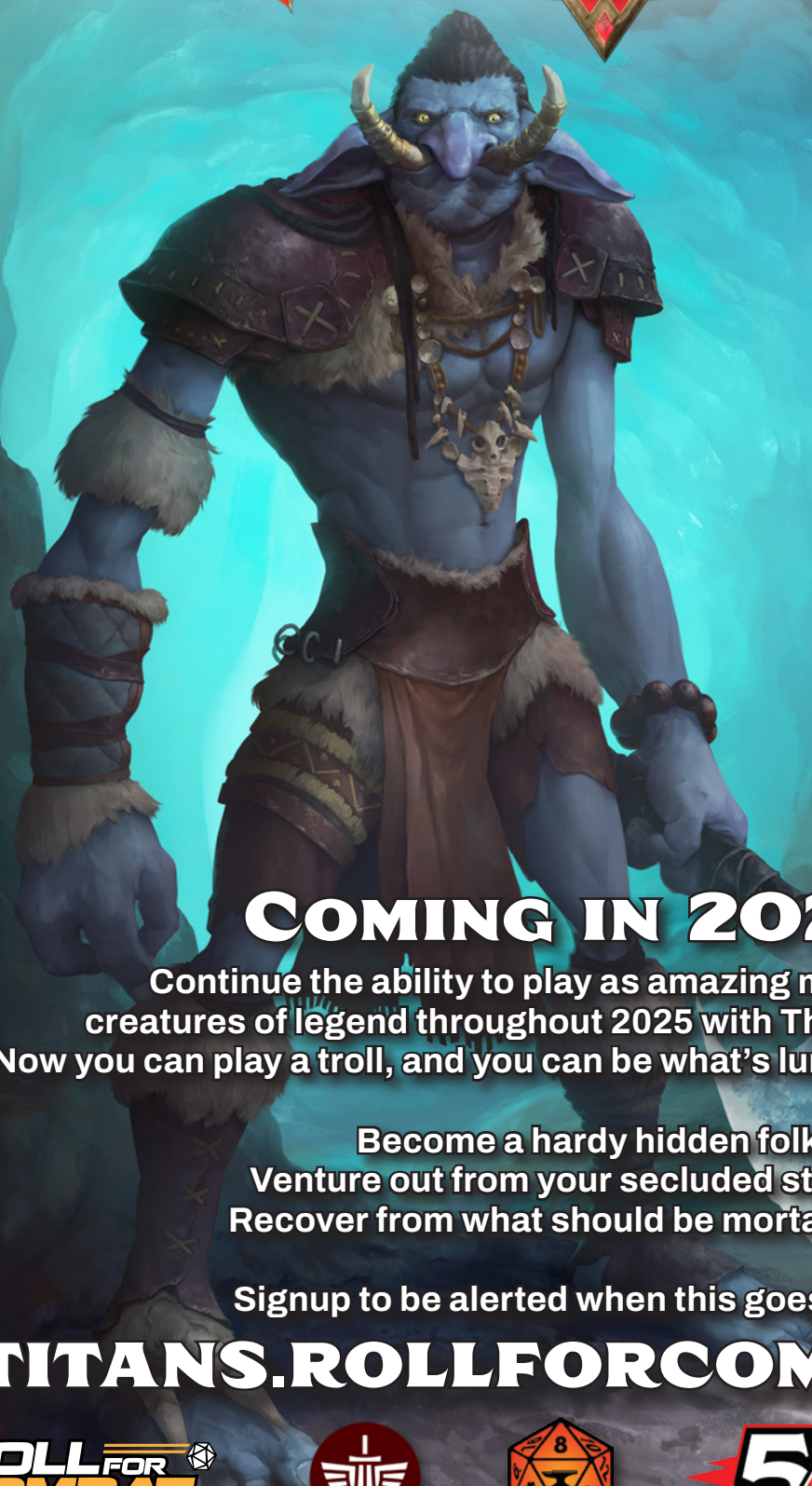
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