

# BESTIAE

## Bean Nighe (ban-nee, pl. mnathan nighe)

*Creature of Folklore and Legend*

Some say a bean nighe is cursed to crouch at river's edge and scrub blood from the clothes of someone about to die until the day that would have marked the creature's own death, had she not died giving birth. Others claim it's a fate the Washer at the Ford will never escape. But all agree that to see a bean nighe is to know death is near.

Clothed in a green cloak with a pointed white cap, mnathan nighe appear as old hags with webbed red feet, a single protruding tooth, and one nostril larger than the other. Their long breasts hang low, and those brave enough to suckle from them – and stealthy enough to sneak up on a bean nighe unseen and unheard – can claim fosterage and beg a boon from the creature.

Despite the dire foreboding a bean nighe presents, the creature is not malicious. If approached with no ill intent and asked with respect, she will tell whose funeral clothes it is she washes, giving those who see the bean nighe a chance to save someone in danger.

The mnathan nighe are found in Britannia, Caledonia, and Hibernia.

## Drac

*Creature of Folklore and Legend*

An oarsman guides a boat down the Rhodanus. A glint of gold catches his eye – a gold chalice at the bottom of the river, just a few feet away. The oarsman looks over his shoulder to see if any of his companions have spotted the treasure; they haven't. He leans over the side of the boat, reaching down into the water. He's almost got the chalice, his fingers brushing the cup's lip, when something unseen wraps around his arm and yanks him beneath the water's surface. His companions turn at the splash as the oarsman disappears. They call his name, circle back and scan the river's bottom, but he's gone.

Dracs are water dragons found in rivers and underwater caverns throughout Gaul. These shapeshifters lure people into rivers by mimicking gold rings, cups, or bowls. When an unsuspecting person leans out of a boat or wades into deeper water to claim the prize, the drac grabs him and pulls him down to its underwater lair. Most people unfortunate enough to fall prey to a drac's ruse are eaten, but some become servants, particularly nursemaids to a drac's offspring. The latter are returned to land once the offspring reaches maturity, about seven years, but are often so changed from the ordeal that those who knew them before no longer recognize them.

Although dracs are invisible to humans, anyone who rubs the fat from something a drac has eaten into his eye can see

### Bean Nighe, washerwoman with bad news

Char.	Rolls	Averages
STR	2D6	7-8
CON	3D6+3	14
SIZ	3D6	10-12
INT	3D6	10-12
POW	4D6	14-16
DEX	3D6	10-11
APP	1D6	2-3

Move 8

HP 12

Av. Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Grapple: 45%, damage special

Claws 45%, damage 1D4+db

Bite 45%, damage 1D3+db

Armor: None

Spells: Augur\*, any others the Keeper desires

Sanity Loss: 1/1D4 to see a Bean Nighe. 1/1D6 if the clothes she's washing are the investigator's own.

\*Always successful, but only as pertains to someone's death. Mnathan nighe will use this as an attack, describing a person's death to him in detail to horrify him, with a 1/1D6 SAN loss per round while the recitation continues. Can only foresee one person's death at a time.

### Drac, devious water dragon

Char.	Rolls	Averages
STR	3D6+30	40-41
CON	8D6	28
SIZ	1D4X10	40
INT	4D6+3	18
POW	5D6	16
DEX	4D6+3	18

Move 8/10 swimming/10 flying

HP 34

Av. Damage Bonus: +5D6

Weapons: Grapple: 75%, damage special

Bite 50%, damage 2D6+db

Claw 55%, damage 1D6+db

Armor: 8 points of scaly hide

Spells: Bait Humans, Breath of the Deep, any others the Keeper desires

Sanity Loss: 0 when invisible or shapeshifted to human form, 1/1D8 when visible in dragon form

the creature, even recognizing it in a shapeshifted form. However, if a drac realizes that a human can see it, the creature will blind the person by ripping out the transformed eye. For this reason, most people choose to treat only one eye so they won't be left completely blind if a drac uncovers their secret.

Dracs are found in Gallia.

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## Hamadryad

*Creature of Folklore and Legend*

Although its shape is that of a beautiful woman, a hamadryad is more than simply the spirit of a tree. With bark for skin and leaves for hair, it is the tree itself. The hamadryad is born when the tree sprouts, and it will die when the tree does. It cannot move from its tree, but will fiercely protect itself both with magic and by calling upon nearby spirits for help. While at heart a peaceful creature, this forest nymph will forever bar those who have injured it from entering forests. Those who protect it will be blessed with its aid for years to come.

Although typically found in forests or groves, lone hamadryads have appeared, particularly near temples or by the homes of people highly respectful of nature.

Hamadryads are found in Achaea.

## Strix

*Creature of Folklore and Legend*

A strix is a nocturnal beast resembling an owl that feeds on human flesh and blood. Originally cannibalistic humans who were cursed by the gods to become birds, striges prefer to prey on babies. A strix tears its food apart with its razor sharp beak and claws, rendering the remaining corpse unidentifiable.

Striges call to each other during the night, emitting unearthly howls and calls that send the wisest of people running for safety. A typical clutch of striges contains five or more of the birds. Striges can be placated with an offering of pork and warded off by the leaves of the arbutus plant.

Tales of striges can be found throughout Roman history and culture from the earliest days of the Kingdom. Ovid even tells that a strix tried to kill the infant king Procas of Alba Longa. The first mention of striges is found in Boios' Ornithologia and details the transformation of Polyphonte and her sons into striges for practicing cannibalism. The beasts thrived, with stories of their foul acts recorded throughout history.

Striges also figure in Roman magic. Horace mentions that the feathers of a strix are a necessary ingredient in love philters. Roman augurs consider a strix an ill-omen and harbinger of death.

Striges are found in Italia.

### Hamadryad, tough-skinned nymph

Char.	Rolls	Averages
STR	3D6	10-12
CON	4D6+3	15
SIZ	3D6	10-12
INT	3D6	10-12
POW	3D6	10-12
DEX	3D6	10-12
APP	5D6	16-18

Move 0 HP 14

Av. Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Punch: 50%, damage 1D4+db

Claw 35%, damage 1D6+db

Armor: 4 points of bark-like skin, piercing weapons only do 1 point of damage

Spells: Siren's Song, Command Animal, any the Keeper desires

Sanity Loss: 0/1 to see a hamadryad

### Strix, foul owl

Char.	Rolls	Averages
STR	2D6	7-8
CON	3D6+3	14
SIZ	2D6	7-8
INT	3D6	10-12
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11

Move 12 flying HP 11

Av. Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Grapple: 45%, damage special + blood drain

Rend 45%, damage 1D6+db

Call 45%, damage 1D3 SAN

Armor: None, but striges are immune to non-magical attacks

Spells: any the Keeper desires

Sanity Loss: None to see a strix. 0/1D3 to hear a strix howl.

Blood Drain: A strix that successfully grapples its foe is able to drain 1D6 STR each round from the victim. Once STR reaches 0, the strix drains CON at the rate of 1D6 points per round. When the victim's CON reaches 0, he is dead. Each point of STR and CON drained by the strix can be added to its POW or HP. If the victim escapes the strix before CON reaches 0, lost STR and CON regenerate at the rate of 1 point of STR or CON per day.