

SHANTAK AND Y'GOLONAC

A Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game web enhancement
— By John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

Here's a surprise for fans of the Mythos... a bonus web enhancement from "the cutting room floor" of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*. The shantak monster and the Great Old One Y'golonac both were cut from the book late in the production process due to lack of space. Now they live again online in this exclusive web enhancement from the official *Call of Cthulhu d20* website: www.wizards.com/callofcthulhu.

SHANTAK

Huge Magical Beast (Lesser Servitor Race)

Hit Dice: 8d10+40 (84 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 180 ft. (average)

Armor Class: 16 (+1 Dex, -2 size, +7 natural)

Attacks: Bite +14 melee, 2 wing buffets +9 melee, tail slap +9 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+8, wing buffet 1d6+4, tail slap 1d6+12

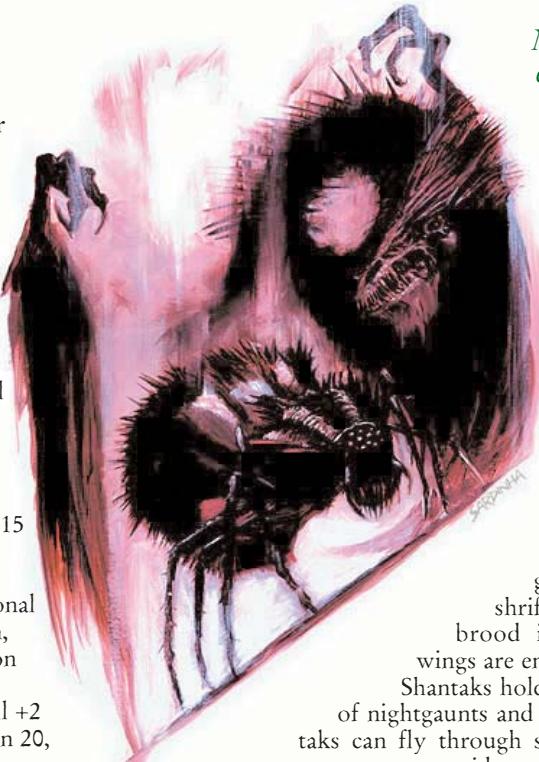
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/+1, dimensional travel, immune to vacuum, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +2

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +2, Wilderness Lore +5



Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any

Advancement: 9–16 HD (Huge); 17–32 HD (Gargantuan)

CR: 5

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Not any birds or bats known elsewhere on earth . . . for they were larger than elephants and had heads like a horse's The Shantak-bird has scales instead of feathers and those scales are very slippery.

—H.P. Lovecraft, *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*

Shantaks are massive, elephantine beasts that serve as aerial mounts for the Great Old Ones. A shantak's horselike head is attached by a sinuous neck to a grotesque body that shares equal shift with bird and bat. Shantaks brood in cavernous holes, and their wings are encrusted with rime.

Shantaks hold an extreme if unreasonable fear of nightgaunts and always retreat from them. Shantaks can fly through space, and have been known to carry an unwary rider straight to the throne of Azathoth.

Shantaks do not speak, though they understand the commands of their riders no matter what the language.

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This d20 System game utilizes mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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COMBAT

A shantak attacks with a bite, a pair of wing buffets, and a tail slap when commanded by a rider—otherwise, the creature generally avoids conflict. A shantak's tail can only strike targets in a 15-foot-diameter semicircle centered on the creature's rear.

Dimensional Travel (Su): A shantak moves at its normal speed in atmosphere. In the vacuum of space, a shantak can use a form of dimensional travel to transport itself and its rider(s) up to 5 light-years as a single move action.

Immune to Vacuum (Ex): Shantaks suffer no ill effects in the vacuum of space. They do not confer this immunity upon their riders, however.

Y'GOLONAC

Gargantuan Great Old One (Demigod)

Domain: Destruction

Hit Dice: 20d12+147 (277 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 80 ft.

AC: 20 (+20 base, +1 god, -1 size, +0 Dex)

Attacks: 2 hand-mouths +31 melee, 1 groin-bite +31 melee

Damage: Hand-mouth 2d6+11, groin-bite 3d6+11

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain

Special Qualities: Divine qualities, damage resistance 36/+4, SR 33, possess mortal, blindsight

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +13, Will +21

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 20, Wis 26, Cha 30

Skills: Balance +24, Climb +35, Cthulhu Mythos +29, Hide +23, Jump +35, Listen +32, Move Silently +24, Search +20, Spot +32, Swim +35

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Cleave

Climate: Any

Organization: Unique
Challenge Rating: 19

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Advancement: None

Sanity Loss: 1/1d10+1 to see Y'golonac's avatar, 1/1d20 to witness transformation, 1d10/1d100 to experience possession.

"He saw why the shadow on the frosted pane yesterday had been headless, and he screamed. As the desk was thrust aside by the towering naked figure, on whose surface still hung rags of the tweed suit, [his] last thought was an unbelieving conviction that this was happening because he had read the Revelations... but before he could scream out his protest his breath was cut off, as the hands descended on his face and the wet red mouths opened in their palms."

—Ramsey Campbell, "Cold Print"

Y'golonac's shape is known only through the vile distortions undergone by those he possesses. A character possessed by Y'golonac swells into a headless horror (increasing by one size category), a monster whose pallid, flabby flesh glows with a sickly luminescence. Even worse, a gaping sharp-toothed mouth opens in the palm of each hand of the naked figure, whereby the ravenous monster may feed. Sometimes a third mouth appears in its groin, huge and drooling and lined with improbably sharp teeth. The possessed character reverts to normal when the Great Old One withdraws. The victim should find new clothing, since the god's expanding bulk shreds everything the victim wears. The victim regains consciousness naked and drenched in blood—Y'golonac is a messy eater.

Y'golonac's true form is said to be that of a gargantuan headless giant imprisoned in a vast underground ruin behind a wall of bricks. It is possible that this is mere myth, and that he has no tangible existence outside those bodies he possesses. He can manifest at any time he likes through one he has suborned to his will. Many investigators have been disconcerted to see a maniac or cannibalistic serial killer they have cornered transforming into something even more inhuman and dangerous.

Y'golonac's mouths are clearly designed to rip flesh and drink blood, not exchange niceties. Therefore, he does not speak, although he stands and receives worship if sated with sacrifice—that is, if he is provided with someone to kill and mangle to his heart's satisfaction.

WORSHIP

Y'golonac desires a large cult, but has thus far been unable to attract one. Those few misguided souls who do worship him either learned how to evoke him by reading the blasphemous *Revelations of Glaaki* or were inspired by dreams and visions.

COMBAT

Y'golonac always attacks foes on sight (or his worshipers, if they have failed to provide him with a sufficient sacrifice), never breaking off until either he has slain and drained his foe or the body he possesses is dead. He never uses weapons.

Possess Mortal (Su): Y'golonac can possess any mortal who worships him. If the mortal resists, she must make a successful Will save (DC 30) to keep from being possessed—only a sane character can resist, however.



Blood Drain (Ex): Y'golonac's mouths inflict the damage listed above when they first bite. Thereafter, each round they automatically drain 1d3 points of Intelligence and 1d3 points of Wisdom. This is permanent ability drain, not temporary ability damage. A character whose Intelligence or Wisdom score reaches 0 becomes a vegetable. Thereafter, the Great Old One can possess that character at any time, using the body to satisfy his lust in whatever manner he sees fit.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Born in Watertown, S.D., **Bruce R. Cordell** earned a degree in Environmental, Population, and Organismic Biology from the University of Colorado. While working as a Research Associate in process chemistry he learned to synthesize DNA, but he could not resist the call of game design.

In 1995, after a few years as a freelancer and designer of online text-generated virtual worlds (specifically, the Tolkien-inspired Elendor MUSH), he abandoned science for a designer position at TSR (now Wizards of the Coast). His many design credits include the *Psionics Handbook*, *The Sunless Citadel*, *Heart of Nighthfang Spire*, the Origins Award-winning *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*. He also code-signed the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*.

Bruce lives in Seattle, Wash., with his wife Dee and their five cats and has just completed his first novel. Visit his website at <www.brucecordell.com>.

A noted Tolkien scholar with a Ph.D. in fantasy, **John D. Rateliff** has been gaming for 20 years. He has worked professionally in the industry since 1991, mostly at TSR and Wizards of the Coast.

Editor of *Night Below* and *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*, and co-editor of the new *D&D Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, he also designed *Return to the Keep on the Borderlands*, *Reverse Dungeon*, *The Standing Stone*, and *Song and Silence*. You can see his recent editing work in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting*, and he served as an editor and codesigner of the *Call of Cthulhu d20 Roleplaying Game*.

Don't ask him about the "catbite incident."