

SKULLBEARERS

I heard a scream, I rushed forward, I saw her. The love of my life, unconscious in between the jaws of the creature. Blood dripping to the floor, life had left her. The rest of my group laid dead behind me, we never should have said yes to that mission. Despair took me. I fell to my knees, weak. The unholy creature started walking towards me. Soon my suffering would be over.

APPEARANCE:

Those creatures are quadrupedal, long claws at the end of their limbs, rot seeming to infiltrate every pore of their body. This very rot took away their sight, but it enhanced their other senses. Skullbearers lurk in the darkness, and feast on the poor souls that cross their path.

PRISON OF SOULS:

The skulls they have on their back reflect each soul they have ingested. As long as a skullbearer is alive none of the souls it has eaten can move on to the afterlife. No one know where they come from, but the best theory that's being thrown around is that they are the creation of devils wishing to harvest souls to fuel their endless armies.

UNSEEN LIGHT:

There are two types of Skullbearers, Gleaming and Umbral. Umbral ones have their candles extinguished whereas Gleaming ones should shine bright. But a strange phenomenon affects them, they do not emit light, even though all laws of physics indicate that they should. This mystery still puzzles wizards to this day.

One thing is sure, if you ever cross a Skullbearer with lights on, run.



UMBRAL SKULLBEARER

Large undead, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 + 21)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +5

Damage Resistances fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Condition Immunities blinded

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Infernal

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Limited Telepathy. The Umbral Skullbearer can magically transmit simple messages and images to any creature within 120 ft. of it that can understand a language. This form of telepathy doesn't allow the receiving creature to telepathically respond.

Snuff Out The Light. The Umbral Skullbearer can detect any healing spells being cast within 300 feet of it. If a healing spell is cast on a turn in that radius, the Umbral Skullbearer gains advantage on attack rolls against the caster for 1 minute.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Umbral Skullbearer makes two melee attacks: two with its claw and one with its Soul Tear. It can use Skull Throw in place of any melee attack.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed a Wisdom saving throw DC 11 or be frightened of the Umbral Skullbearer for 1 minute, an affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turn.

Skull Throw. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 60/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. On a hit the Umbral Skullbearer teleports in a space adjacent to the target within 5 feet of it.

Soul Tear. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage and the target must succeed a Constitution Saving Throw DC 11 or take 13 (3d8) necrotic damage and have their hit point maximum reduced by that amount. Creatures that are frightened of the Umbral Skullbearer have disadvantage on the save. If this effect reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, the creature dies. This reduction to a creature's hit point maximum lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or until it is affected by a spell like greater restoration. A creature killed by this ability cannot be resurrected until the Umbral Skullbearer who ate the soul is slain.

Circle Of Hell. Flames come pouring down from the skulls on the Umbral Skullbearer's back. All creatures within a 40ft radius of the Umbral Skullbearer but not within 10ft of it, must succeed on a dexterity saving throw DC 11 or take 5D6 fire damage, or half as much on a success.

GLEAMING SKULLBEARER

Large undead, neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +6

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunities fire

Condition Immunities blinded

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages understands Infernal

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Limited Telepathy. The Gleaming Skullbearer can magically transmit simple messages and images to any creature within 120 ft. of it that can understand a language. This form of telepathy doesn't allow the receiving creature to telepathically respond.

Fire Absorption. Whenever the Gleaming Skullbearer is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hit points equal to the fire damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Gleaming Skullbearer makes two melee attacks: two with its claw and one with its Soul Tear. It can use Skull Throw in place of any melee attack.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) necrotic damage, and the target must succeed a Wisdom saving throw DC 14 or be frightened of the Gleaming Skullbearer for 1 minute, an affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turn.

Skull Throw. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 60/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Soul Tear. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage and the target must succeed a Constitution Saving Throw DC 14 or take 22 (5d8) necrotic damage and have their hit point maximum reduced by that amount. Creatures that are frightened of the Gleaming Skullbearer have disadvantage on the save. If this effect reduces a creature's hit point maximum to 0, the creature dies. This reduction to a creature's hit point maximum lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or until it is affected by a spell like greater restoration. A creature killed by this ability cannot be resurrected until the Gleaming Skullbearer who ate the soul is slain.

Circle Of Hell. Flames come pouring down from the skulls on the Gleaming Skullbearer's back. All creatures within a 40ft radius of the Gleaming Skullbearer but not within 10ft of it, must succeed on a dexterity saving throw DC 14 or take 5D6 fire damage, or half as much on a success.