



TARCHAEOLOGY

AN ADVENTURE FOR
9TH, 14TH, 20TH LEVEL

"WHOSE BRIGHT IDEA WAS IT TO BUILD
A MINE ABOVE A DEAD TARRASQUE?!"

HELIANA



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USING THIS BOOK

Get ready to dive into a world of dangerous hunts, challenges, and monsters. This book presents all the tools you will need to run an entertaining adventure.

RULE ZERO

You are encouraged to use whichever pieces of this book you like and change the ones you don't. If there is a DC that seems off, a name that doesn't fit, or a quest hook that seems incongruous, then make it your own. Remember: if you're all having fun, you're doing it right.

RUNNING THE HUNT

The adventure in this book is referred to as a hunt. It is a type of adventure in which you find clues, prepare for the fight ahead, and then have a big battle. This hunt can be run at a variety of different average party levels (APLs), listed in the hunt's introduction. The hunt uses the following structure:

Introduction. The name and level of the hunt, as well as a brief synopsis.

Background. The information the GM needs to know about why a monster needs to be hunted! This includes:

- A summary of the monster
- Three quest hooks: curiosity, morality, and compensation
- Monetary and XP rewards
- Brief biographies of key NPCs

Location. The location where the hunt takes place, sometimes containing descriptions of unique flora and fauna or other rules.

Know Thy Enemy. Clues about the monster that, if discovered by the player characters, help them prepare for the battle.

The Battle Ahead. The creature's lair actions, any environmental effects, composition of each wave, and triggers for moving between waves.

Aftermath. This section wraps up each quest hook of the hunt and suggests ways this story can continue and shape your world. The Loot Tavern's bard, Cacophonics, has the link to the song he writes for the party here.

Treasure. Discoverable loot related to the specific boss monster, as well as information related to the optional Tracking and Crafting rules found in the *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* book.

Beyond Deadly. Death is inevitable. In this book, it is a little *more* inevitable than usual, especially if your party doesn't pick up on the clues and prepare accordingly.

If you have fewer than four player characters or a lower APL than that for which the hunt is balanced, consider lowering the difficulty. This can be achieved by removing some creatures, replacing them with lower CR versions, or using the 'Helping Hand' paragraphs within each hunt to reduce the difficulty. The hunt's boss fight is designed to use a party's entire resources for a day's adventuring, which exceeds the daily XP budget at higher levels.

AVERAGE DAILY XP BUDGET PER HUNT

Level	Daily XP Budget Used per Hunt
1-4	100%
5-10	130%
11-16	160%
17-20	200%

Clues. This hunt contains at least three clues that can be conveyed to the players before combat starts. Understanding the clues is the key to your players preparing for the fight ahead and feeling empowered when their preparations pay off. Every clue has at least one example of how you can convey the information to your players. Note, these are examples! It's still up to you as the GM to make any necessary changes to the story and roleplay interactions to make sure your players understand these clues.

Be obvious when delivering clues. The more you can repeat and illustrate a clue, the more the players will understand it. In addition, prompting the adventurers to summarise what they've learnt by using an NPC to ask questions can engender a much-needed dialogue between players. Furthermore, player characters need time to prepare in a way that allows them to meaningfully act on the clues. It is often both enjoyable and less deadly for players to take a long rest to recover resources, prepare spells, and design a plan that exploits a monster's weaknesses. Be sure to give them the opportunity to prepare!

INTRODUCTION

This hunt, *Tarchaeology*, is intended for 3 to 7 characters and is optimised for a party of 4 with an average party level (APL) of 9, 14, or 20. Characters who complete this hunt should earn enough experience to progress one-third of the way to 10th level or two-thirds of the way to 15th level. The adventurers must travel to the tar flats of the Great Airy Plain and tackle a strange plague of oily menaces.

While travelling to the tar flats, where Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.'s mining works are located, the party finds a small research outpost studying tar elementals. The party can use the clues found in the outpost, as well as those discerned from an encounter with a minor tar elemental, to prepare for the battle ahead. After arriving at the mining works, increasingly violent earthquakes herald the arrival of a swarm of tar elementals that become empowered when in proximity to arcane power sources. The party can kill these possessed creatures or find a way to disable them. Subsequently, the bones of increasingly dangerous creatures are animated by the tar, culminating in a battle against the main monster: the tar-rasque.

BACKGROUND

If there's a natural resource to be exploited, expect Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc. to be there! To the annoyance of the Archaeological Society's Systematic Excavative Study (the ASSES), BBB Inc. have begun extracting tar from the tar flats of the Great Airy Plain, a vast expanse of dry, thunderous wildland that was, according to chronomancers, once a lush and humid swamp. The ASSES have been trying to excavate as many dinosaur bones as possible since the Baron's mining works rolled up and have just stumbled on an incredible find: the skeleton of a tarrasque!

Using the friction between the miners and archaeologists as a smokescreen, Baron Bodrum's alter ego, Murdob'narob, is engaged in some villainous and deceitful activity. The tar extraction is less profitable than previously estimated and he now seeks to destroy both the miners and archaeologists in an attempt to defraud his insurance company. In addition, he is using his accomplice, Branton Quark, to test a new type of technology: a fusion of elemental tar and arcane power sources.



Weeks ago, Branton Quark planted a large arcane power source within the head of the tarrasque skeleton being unearthed by the archaeologists. Controlling the arcane crystal from his research station, Quark has managed to channel bursts of arcane, primordial energy that animates the nearby tar, causing it to erupt from the ground and attack with undirected rage. It is these disturbances that caused Archdruid Xyxl, a patron of the ASSES, to contact Heliana for assistance in protecting the workers.

FUTURE HOOKS: MURDOB'NAROB

Though not explored in this hunt, the exploits of Murdob'narob can act as a quest hook for you to develop into your own story!

SUMMARY

Here's the main info to assimilate:

Which Monster? Tar elementals, enchanted by Murdob'narob's lackey, Branton Quark. These elementals can animate bones and become more powerful. Quark aims to have the tar animate the bones of the tarrasque and destroy both the miners and the ASSES.

Monster's Motivation. The tar elementals' aim is the destruction of archaeologists and miners. They can't be reasoned with.

Monster's Previous Actions. The mining and archaeology works have been frequently disrupted by small earthquakes, after which tar elementals of all shapes and sizes harass both parties.

Where's the Monster? Quark has planted a large arcane power source within the head of the tarrasque skeleton. As he refines his arcane science, larger and larger beings are animated by the tar. Eventually, he finds the perfect frequency, and the tar-rasque itself emerges.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

In this classic tale of conservation vs exploitation, players can take the moral high ground or reap the rewards of corporate greed. Little do they know, a third party has alternative plans and destruction awaits. Use any of the following hooks that you think might motivate your party:

- **Curiosity: A Tar-rifing Endeavour.** Elementals made of tar! Whoever heard of such a thing? News of corpses reanimated by bands of shiny black liquid terrorising workers in the distant Great Airy Plain must surely have an interesting cause... Such rumours can be heard from passing travellers, in taverns, and from town criers.
- **Morality: Archaeological Preservation.** "Isn't it typical that a big corporation acts in its own interest and not that of the general population?" berates Heliana. "The only way to ensure our spawn learns of the wonders of dinosaurs is to make sure those archaeologists are protected against whatever menace those miners are stirring up, and recover those dinosaur bones!"
- **Compensation: Baron Bodrum's Bonus.** A poster on a town notice board, hunter's guild, or in the Loot Tavern describes a great reward for any who can prevent the Archaeological Society's Systematic Excavative Study from stirring up more oily enemies. The notice bears the seal of Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.

Archdruid Xyxl. If the party goes for the 'morality' hook, Archdruid Xyxl is their contact for this quest. He is a patron of the ASSES, and works to make sure nature is respected in the area.

Branton Quark. Branton Quark represents Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.'s interest in the area. He is actually also working for the nefarious Murdob'narob, who he doesn't realise is Baron Bodrum's alter ego, to test out a new technology: elemental tar infusion. If this hunt takes place after you run the *Mecha Koboldzilla* hunt, Quark has been re-employed by BBB Inc. as a 'special liaison'. Branton Quark's quick reference info can be found on page 32.

HUNT REWARDS PER PLAYER CHARACTER

Hunt Level	Gold	XP*
9th	2,300 gp	4,200
14th	5,750 gp	8,000
20th	12,250 gp	—

*Includes all monsters, traps, and puzzles, averaged for a party of 4.

GREAT AIRY PLAIN

The vast Great Airy Plain is home to enormous herds of migrating beasts, thunderous storms that sweep unhindered across its yellow expanse, and aeons-old bones of creatures that fell into its swampy quagmire millenia ago. Despite this, small washes cut through the red rock, creating deep and wide ravines, caves, and even passage-ways to The Low.

Prospectors working for Baron Bodrum have travelled the land extensively, searching for any resources to be exploited. They occasionally leave narrow trails, cairns, and camps in their wake, an eerie reminder of the inevitable tide of development and exploitation.

TRACKING

Finding Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.'s mining works isn't difficult, but the trek is long and following the trail markers from the air is not always possible. The party can make **Wisdom (Survival) checks** against an appropriate DC to find it. You can also use the optional Tracking rules available in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*. It is suggested that 4 checks and 1 success are required to find the mine, with each check taking one day. On the penultimate check, the party can bump into Branton Quark's vacant research station, where the party can find several of the clues for the battle ahead. (see Know Thy Enemy, page 6).

UNIQUE FLORA & FAUNA

The Great Airy Plain is home to some unique biology that you can introduce at any point:

Greedhogs. These beasts are entirely unlike their shy, retiring cousin, the common groundhog. Greedhogs are notorious for their impetuosity, toughness, and overwhelming appetite. With a mottled fur of red and brown, and concealed spines that have punctured the tongue of more than one predator, greedhogs will quite happily burrow underneath a sleeping adventurer's pack and liberate it of food.

Each night that the party camps in the wild, roll a **d4**. On a 3-4, make a **Dexterity (Stealth) check** for a greedhog as it tries to steal their food (+4 modifier). If it isn't stopped, one of the party members loses all their rations.

Cryptobiotic Crust. In patches across the flat expanse of the plain are crusts of purple and blue that stand out against the red earth below. These mats—each an intricate symbiotic ecosystem of plant and fungus—take thousands of years to form, a fact Archdruid Xyxl is keen to hammer home if he ever observes the party straying from a defined trail. A successful **DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals that these can be harvested to make *potions of healing*. Over the course of an hour, a creature can harvest *cryptobiotic crust* (component DC 15), which can be used as an alternative ingredient to make *potions of healing*, of any rarity, with the right *essence*.



TARCHAEOLOGIST

BRYAN SYME

KNOW THY ENEMY

At Quark's research station, the party can learn the following information to prepare for the battle ahead:

- The enemies are made of tar; they can be set aflame, have **resistance** to acid and piercing damage, and are **immune** to poison damage and the poisoned condition.
- The elementals can be enhanced by purple arcane power crystals, which can be targeted and destroyed. While augmented by a crystal, they deal and are **immune** to necrotic damage.
- The enemy the party will face will be the animated bones of a tarrasque.

When the party arrives at the outpost, you can read the following:

A large canvas tent sits in a copse of stunted, wind-swept acacia. Rusted, mechanical paraphernalia and barrels of all shapes and sizes are messily scattered around its perimeter. Two sides of the tent are covered in desks, while on a third is arranged a stained, unmade cot. One desk seems almost exclusively covered in paper, notes, and illustrations, while the second holds cages that house all manner of creatures, from rats to bats, and a curious black ooze that shimmers with a rainbow iridescence.

CLUE 1: TAR-BASED LIFEFORM

The ooze is a Tiny **mini tar elemental** (see page 24). If it takes fire damage, it is set aflame and takes damage at the start of each of its turns, but also deals fire damage with its melee weapon at attacks. It has **resistance** to acid and piercing damage, **immunity** to poison damage, and can be made **immune** to necrotic damage.

EXPLORATION

In a clearing within the mess of notes and paper is a single piece of paper pinned to the wood of the desk, with an ornate ebony lockbox sitting to its side. This research paper summarises the effects of firing the different types of ammunition at a black blob (the mini tar elemental; see Experimentation). The lockbox can be unlocked with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity (thieves' tools)** check and contains one magitech pistol with six pieces of prototype ammunition (see Treasure: Ammo, below), and a bag of twenty normal pieces of ammunition.

Treasure: Weapon and Ammo. The party can find a magitech pistol (reload 6) and prototypes of special ammunition in Quark's research outpost, whose rules are presented in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*. You may replace also the pistol with a hand tommybow from the same book. There are six bullets, each of a different damage type (acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, and poison). When a target is hit with this ammunition, it takes an additional **1d4** damage of the associated damage type.

If you don't use magitech firearms, switch the ammunition to bolts or arrows.



HANDOUT 1. ELEMENTAL AMMUNITION

CLUE 2: ARCANIC POWER SOURCE

The elementals can (and will) possess creatures that hold or are connected to arcane power sources; this is the case for the tarchaeologists and possessed mining suits (see Appendix C). However, the arcane power source itself (typically a purple crystal) can be targeted and destroyed. If the power source is destroyed, the elemental will release the possessed creature, sparing it, and allowing the elemental to be fought separately. If a creature possessed in this way is killed, the necrotic power of the elemental-crystal combo reanimates the corpse. This is the case for the rat in the experiment below.

EXPLORATION

On the table with the cages and animals is an experiment ready to be conducted, consisting of two glass boxes. The larger, left box has the corpse of a rat with a glowing, thumb-sized purple crystal (an arcane power source) lodged in it. Several beetles and maggots eat at the corpse. In the right-hand glass box is a shifting, amorphous pile of iridescent black ooze (the previously mentioned mini tar elemental) that is trying to enter the box on the left. A glass panel between the two cages can be lifted to allow access. A large, red button on top of the left-hand box is connected to the purple crystal.

Experimentation. Firing the ammunition at the black ooze yields the following results:

- Bullets seem to travel through with little hindrance. Even magical bullets don't seem to leave much of a piercing wound in the elemental. The elemental has **resistance** to piercing damage, both magical and nonmagical.
- The acid bullet also seems ineffective; the elemental has **resistance** to acid damage.
- The poison released by the poison ammunition sloughs off the elemental; it is **immune** to poison damage.
- The cold and lightning damage perform as expected.
- The fire ammunition sets the elemental aflame. It tries to fight back, hitting at the cage with its flaming body and causing the cage to become burnished, as if exposed to a high heat. The ooze's weapon attacks deal fire damage when it is aflame.
- The necrotic ammunition's effect differs depending on whether the elemental is in contact with an intact arcane power source (see below). If the elemental is in contact with such a power source, it is **immune** to necrotic damage. If not, it affects it as normal.



HANDOUT 2. SLUDGE EXPERIMENT

BO,

Head to the ASSES' dig site in the Great Ainy Plain. Find the Tarrasque skeleton.

Implant the provided arcane power source inside the skull; it's delicate and tarrasques are notoriously hard-headed.

Find the correct frequency using your latest Tar-tech™ discoveries.

To collect the insurance, the mining camp must be destroyed. Once this has occurred, set the whole thing aflame.

Yours,

Murdob'narob



HANDOUT 3. MURDOB'S NOTE

Experiment. Lifting the panel allows the ooze to immediately move from the right box to the crystal-filled corpse in the left box. It wraps itself around the corpse, forming a shifting exoskeleton of black, iridescent veins. The rat corpse then animates and begins attacking the detritivores. The exoskeleton grants the rat a pseudopod attack which, thanks to the power of the crystal, deals additional necrotic damage. A successful **DC 11 Wisdom (Medicine)** check of the dead detritivores finds them desiccated and drained—indicators of necrotic damage.

Red Button. Pressing the large red button causes the crystal to pulse with arcane energy and cast a contained version of the *shatter* spell, limited to the interior of the box. This destroys the purple crystal in the rat, which cracks, stops glowing, and causes the mini tar elemental to detach from the corpse, which becomes inanimate again.

CLUE 3: TAR-RIFYING

Murdob'narob's scheme, detailed in a letter, can be discovered by those who search through Quark's papers:

- There is a tarrasque skeleton underground at a dig site not far from here.
- With the correct necromantic frequency, a large enough arcane power source could empower enough elemental tar to animate the bones and form a tar-rasque.
- The arcane power source needs to be protected at all costs. Putting it inside the tar-rasque should make it largely inaccessible.
- Once the miners and archaeologists are destroyed, a well-placed *fireball* should cause the tar to burn to cinders.
- Then insurance can be claimed for the entire operation.
- The letter is signed "Murdob'narob".

THE BATTLE AHEAD

As the party approaches the tar flats, they encounter a stand off between the miners and the archaeologists. Before the party can intervene, Branton Quark (sequestered somewhere out of sight) activates his arcane power source, triggering wave 1. Waves 2

and 3 start on rounds 5 and 8 of combat, respectively. This gives the party time to approach the possessed individuals in wave 1 and pursue the non-lethal option of targeting the arcane power crystals.

When the player characters first arrive at the tar flats, you can read the following:

Two groups of humanoids face each other on either side of the rough road leading to the sulphurous expanse of tar flats beyond. Behind each group is a camp. The camp on the left contains wagons loaded with crates, machinery, and huge pyramids of stacked barrels. A tall watchtower with a ballista looks to have been hastily constructed at its centre. The camp on the right is a much neater affair; small canvas tents surround a larger, yurt-like structure. Through the open door of the yurt several display cases containing various fossilised specimens can be seen.

Roiling clouds of mauve and grey rumble overhead, the threat of a coming storm in perfect

symmetry to the palpable tension between the two groups. As a small rakin surrounded by swarming insects steps forward and raises an accusatory hand towards the unkempt men across the road, the ground begins to shake beneath your feet. Immediately, the two groups disperse as the tar in the flats begins to animate. The miners man the tower ballista and the archaeologists snatch up their magitech firearms. Unfortunately, some are not quick enough and tendrils of black tar wrap around them in a nauseating display of physical possession. With their comrades distracted, these tar-veined individuals turn their attention towards you.





1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

CARTOGRAPHER:
CZE & PEKU

MAP 1.
TAR FLATS

TAR FLATS

The tar-rasque's lair is the entirety of the tar flats. The tar-rasque's presence lingers on in the tar, pervading every rock, pore, and tar pool.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

The area within 6 miles of the tar-rasque's lair (i.e. the tar flats) has the following properties:

- **Earthquakes.** The ground shakes at irregular intervals, occasionally bringing with it hostile tar elementals.
- **Fossils.** The rocks in the area abound with the fossils of extinct species, dinosaur bones, and even fossilised eggs.
- **Rotten Eggs.** Millennia of slow decomposition is released to the surface in wafts of sulphurous gas.
- **Hazard: Tar Pits.** 20-foot-deep pits of tar have claimed the life of more than one errant adventurer. Tar pits are difficult terrain; see the Tar Pit lair action for rules on sinking into the tar. The **save DC** is always **14** for tar pits outside of the tar-rasque's lair.

Helping Hand. At any time during the battle, Archdruid Xyxl can appear in a bird form, cast the *mass cure wounds* spell at 5th, 7th, or 9th level, and then transform back into a bird and fly away.

LAIR ACTIONS

While the arcane power crystal within the tar-rasque is intact, the ambient magic of its preserved skeleton and its eternal rage causes lair actions to occur. The saving throw DC and damage of the lair actions depend on the level at which you run the hunt.

VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

Hunt Level	VDC	Vdam
9th	15	10 (3d6)
14th	16	14 (4d6)
20th	18	28 (8d6)

GM TIP

Write down the information in this table for your hunt level so you don't have to keep flicking back and forth!

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the tar-rasque's arcane-power-source-enhanced presence takes one of the following lair actions; the tar-rasque can't take the same lair action two rounds in a row. See the Variable Lair Action Statistics table for the damage and save DC.

- **Tar Geyser.** A number of patches of ground fracture and torrents of necrotic tar shoot upwards in **5-foot-radius, 40-foot-high cylinders**. The number of geysers depends on the hunt level: two at 9th level, three at 14th level, or four at 20th level. Each creature in one or more of the geysers must make a **VDC Dexterity saving throw**. On a failure, a creature takes **Vdam** necrotic damage and is fired **40 feet** into the air. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is pushed horizontally to the nearest unoccupied space.
- **Tar Pit.** A **10-foot-radius circle** of ground permanently turns into a viscous pit of tar and is difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in the area or enters the area for the first time on its turn must make a **VDC Strength saving throw** or become **restrained** in the tar. A creature sinks **2 feet** into the tar each time it fails this saving throw. If it sinks further than its height, it can no longer breathe, is **blinded**, and has **disadvantage** on Strength checks to free itself. A creature within **5 feet** of a creature restrained in this way, or the creature itself, can use its action to make a **VDC Strength**, freeing the stuck creature on a success.
- **Quake.** The ground shakes in a **100-foot-radius sphere** centred on a point the tar-rasque chooses. Each creature in the area that isn't an elemental containing tar must succeed on a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

In the battle ahead, use the Quake lair action on rounds 5 and 8 to illustrate the impending emergence of the next wave of monsters.

WAVE 1: TARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG

Both the arcane power source in the tarchaeologists' magitech pistols and the power source in the mining suits attracts the elemental tar, causing it to possess those humanoids and constructs. In doing so, the tar becomes enhanced with necromantic magic; it deals necrotic damage and can even re-animate the tarchaeologists if they're killed.

ARCANE POWER SOURCES

Be sure to mention the glowing purple crystals (which can be identified as magical with a *detect magic* spell). You can even narrate that one tarchaeologist trips and smashes the crystal in his pistol, causing the elemental to ignore him and grab a different target. If you want your adventurers to have the option of pursuing a non-lethal course of action, they need to know how!

ENEMIES

The enemies in wave 1 are the **tarchaeologists** and **possessed mining suits**. If the crystals are destroyed (**vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to acid, cold, fire, necrotic, poison, and psychic damage, AC and hit points detailed in creature statistics), the elementals cease possessing those creatures and fight the party as **mini tar elementals** and **tar elementals**, respectively.

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 1 **possessed mining suit*** (CR 8)
- 2 **tarchaeologists*** (CR 3)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 3 **possessed mining suits*** (CR 8)
- 3 **tarchaeologists*** (CR 3)

Level 20. At 20th level, the wave 1 combatants are:

- 6 **possessed mining suits*** (CR 8)
- 6 **tarchaeologists*** (CR 3)

*See Appendix C

TACTICS

Despite the tarchaeologists being relatively intelligent, they aren't in control of their own bodies. Accordingly, both the tarchaeologist and mining suit fight without any sense of self-preservation. For added drama, a tarchaeologist can scream "I'm not in control!" before the tar elemental clamps its mouth shut. Tar elementals not in possession of a host fight to kill and do not flee; there are no other suitable hosts nearby.

Tarchaeologist. A powerful way of using these creatures is to have them make a pistol attack while not in melee range, then move toward an enemy and use their pseudopod and wrench, in that order.



POSSESSED
MINING SUIT

WAVE 2: TARRASSIC PARK

A second rumble sends the earth shuddering (use the Quake lair action), and t-rex skeletons rise from the pools of tar beyond, animated by elemental tar. These creatures roll for initiative at the end of round 4 and join the combat on their initiative count of round 5. You can read the following:

With another quake, huge creatures of bone and tar rise from the quivering ground. Long whip-like tails of jagged vertebrae careen in wild circles, felling bushes and spraying tents with iridescent tar. Glowing purple crystals shimmer in the chest of each monstrosity as the eye-less heads turn in your direction.

ENEMIES

In wave 2, the enemies are tarannosaurus rex and tar elementals.

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 1 **tarannosaurus rex*** (CR 10)
- 1 **tar elemental*** (CR 5)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 2 **tarannosaurus rex*** (CR 10)
- 3 **tar elementals*** (CR 5)

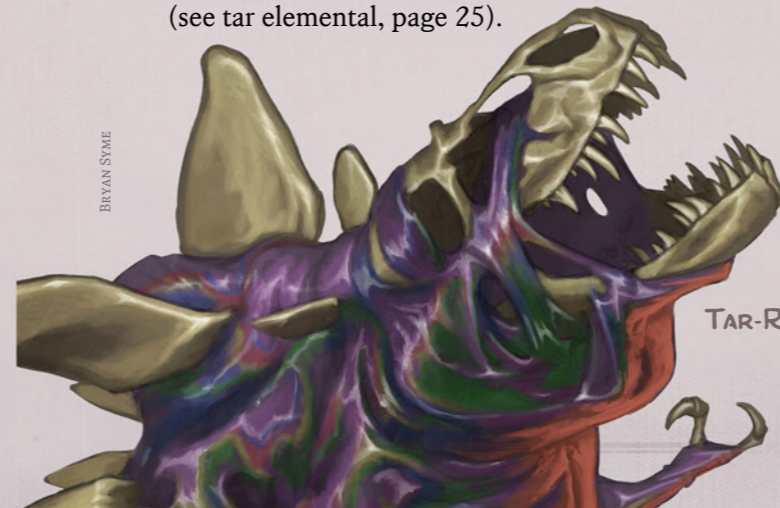
Level 20. At 20th level, the wave 2 combatants are:

- 5 **tarannosaurus rex*** (CR 10)
- 5 **tar elementals*** (CR 5)

*See Appendix C

TACTICS

As in the previous wave, the tar elementals fight with a mindless rage and lack any sense of self-preservation. Tar elementals gang up on a single target with the aim of reducing its speed to 0 feet with their slam attack, causing it to become **restrained** (see tar elemental, page 25).



TAR-REX

WAVE 3: TAR-RASQUE

At the end of round 7, the tar-rasque rolls for initiative and joins the combat the following round. On initiative count 20 of round 8, use the Quake lair action.

Once again, the ground betrays your trust, shuddering and shaking as barrels of oil collapse from their stacks and tents are uprooted, falling on the creatures sheltering within. A wave of black tar and red earth crashes down around the enormous bulk of a gargantuan horned skeleton. Ribbons of tar, striated like living muscle and sinew, join the bones together and refract the wan sunlight in rainbow sheens and iridescence.

ENEMIES

In wave 3, the enemy is the tar-rasque.

Level 9. At 9th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- 1 **tar-rasque hatchling*** (CR 14)

Level 14. At 14th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- 1 **tar-rasque brittlebone*** (CR 20)

Level 20. At 20th level, the wave 3 combatant is:

- 1 **tar-rasque*** (CR 26)

*See Appendix C

TACTICS

The tar-rasque is neither intelligent nor particularly wise, and fights without self-preservation. Its weakness is the crystal inside its head, which is revealed when it enters its mythic state.

Tar-rasque. The tar-rasque first uses its Necrotaruption to restrain as many creatures as possible before attacking them in melee. As its last legendary action before its turn, it uses Tremor in order to knock creatures **prone**, giving them **disadvantage** on saving throws against its Necrotaruption and **advantage** on its melee attacks.

Mythic Stage. The player characters can deal a devastating blow to the tar-rasque by destroying the crystal in its skull. However, the crystal is concealed; it can be attacked only by a creature grappled by the tar-rasque's Necrotar Tongue or by a readied action (see stat block). Be sure to narrate that the party sees the huge, glowing, purple crystal whenever it makes this attack, and reward creativity in trying to target it!

OPTIONAL ENDING: STORMFIRE

If you're running a one-shot, there might not be much point in continuing the game after the epic boss battle. Instead, you can use this optional ending to give an even-more-climactic conclusion to the hunt.

When the tar-rasque's mythic form is slain, the burgeoning storm overhead breaks, and lightning strikes the ground, starting a bushfire and setting the tar flats alight. You can read the following:

Ripping through the air, an enormous lightning bolt strikes the spot where the tar-rasque stood. The sharp scent of ozone hits your senses as the tar flats themselves ignite in a blossom-like eruption of fire and black smoke.

A **20-foot-radius sphere** centred on where the tar-rasque stood erupts in a slowly expanding ball of fire, and each creature within **60 feet** of the tar-rasque must succeed on a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**. On initiative count 20 of each round, the wall of fire spreads **30 feet** outwards. Each creature that is in the area when the fire ignites or that enters the area for the first time on its turn takes **Vdam** fire damage. On initiative count 20 of the turn after the fire has spread **90 feet**, the clouds open and a deluge of rain stops the spread, putting the fire out after three more turns.

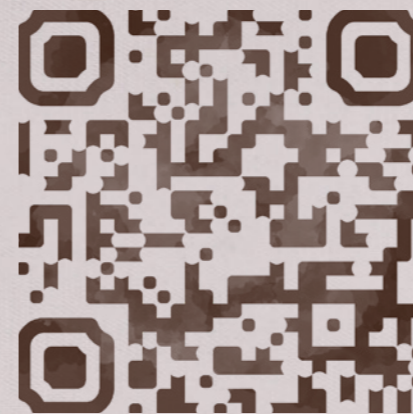
AFTERMATH

Here are some possible developments after the hunt concludes:

- **Tar-rasque defeated:** the miners complain of unsafe working conditions and leave, allowing the archaeologists to continue their work.
- **Tar-rasque lives:** there are few survivors of either the mining or archaeological works. Branton Quark flees in fear and the tar-rasque becomes the menace of the Great Airy Plain.
- Tar reanimation technology gets refined to the point where the re-animated creatures are, for the most part, docile. The risk of the creatures becoming enraged is offset by the fact they don't get exhausted.
- If the connection with Murdob'narob is never made, the ASSES blame the miners, and the miners blame the ASSES, fuelling ongoing tension elsewhere in your world.
- If the letter from the research outpost is brought to Archdruid Xyxl, he hasn't heard the name Murdob'narob, but promises to investigate further. Some time later, he reports work of a recently constructed lair by the Frockit Clan (see Polyhedrooze, Chapter 9), paid for by Murdob'narob.
- If Branton Quark is accused of being involved, he immediately tries to flee. If caught, he tells everything he knows of Murdob'narob, which isn't much: "*He is a very wealthy investor that is seeking new and innovative technologies that more prudish patrons refuse to pursue.*" This is a quest hook you can expand on for the villain of your choice.

CACOPHONICS

When the party returns to the Loot Tavern, Cacophonics, the resident bard, interrogates them for details of their battle with the titan. Regardless of the actual details divulged, Cacophonics decocts the tale into the following song, calling any differences 'poetic license'. Cacophonics uses some newly developed bard magic to harmonise with himself.



YOU CAN PLAY THE SONG BY
SCANNING OR CLICKING ON THE QR
CODE, OR BY TYPING IN THE URL
BELOW.

[HELIANA.LT/TARRASQUE](https://heliana.lt/tarrasque)

Baron Bodrum businesses
Involved in sketchy practices
Drilling oil and digging up some dino bones

Sensing all the injustice
Some people tried to stop the dig
Enchanting tar to keep the miners out the hole

Adventurers would come to find
The tar had taken over minds
And melded elements; from the ground it came

Dinosaurs reanimate
To keep the titan true and safe
Our friends would need to find a way to slay them all

So they fight all day
And they fight all night
But the enchantment doesn't fail

So they fight some more
Using all their force
Must be a way to end this tale

They think back to the story's start
And have to think less strong but smart
What's controlling all the power of this titan's reign

Then suddenly with wisdom's touch
A crystal held within its clutch
Might be the answer to the titan's end today

So the fight they take
When that crystal breaks
The titan's magic is dispelled

Yes they've conquered the tar
And the story's travelled far
Oh yes the titan he is felled

And there so ends this noble tale
Our friends were never ones to fail
And they'll move on to find another quest or two



JESSE JACKDAW BURNS

TREASURE

As the tar melts away from the tar-rasque's skeleton, it reveals a hoard of treasure that the former tarrasque presumably ate millennia ago (see Treasure table below).

TREASURE WITHIN TAR-RASQUE

Hunt Level	Coins	Treasure Object	Gems	Total Averaged Value
9th	3d6 x 50 gp	2d6 x 50 gp	1d4 x 100 gp	1,125 gp
14th	4d6 x 100 gp	3d6 x 100 gp	1d4 x 300 gp	3,200 gp
20th	6d6 x 200 gp	4d6 x 200 gp	1d4 x 500 gp	8,250 gp



TINYTAR

CRAFTING

The following unique items can be crafted from the tar-rasque's components. You can use the optional Crafting rules available in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*.

TAR-RASQUE CRAFTABLE ITEMS

Item	Item Type	Rarity	Attunement	Components	Essence	Value*
Jaw Breakers	Weapon (any two melee)	Rare	Optional	Pouch of elemental (tar-rasque) teeth	Robust	3,200 gp
		Very rare			Potent	10,500 gp
Tarrobe	Wondrous item	Rare	Required	Elemental volatile mote of (tar-rasque) tar	Robust	2,500 gp
		Legendary			Mythic	42,000 gp
Terrorasque	Weapon (any two-handed melee)	Rare	Required	Pouch of elemental (tar-rasque) claws (2)	Robust	2,600 gp
		Very rare			Potent	9,900 gp
Viscous Symbiote	Wondrous item	Rare	Required	Elemental core of (tar-rasque) tar	Robust	2,100 gp
		Very rare			Potent	9,400 gp
		Legendary			Mythic	41,600 gp

*This is the 'off the shelf' purchase cost and can vary significantly from the crafting cost.

HARVESTING

You can use the optional Harvesting rules available in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* to harvest the tar-rasque. The tar-rasque has the following components—a combination of uniquely preserved tarrasque and tar elemental components—in addition to the normal components from an elemental. A small piece of the tar has sequestered itself within a jar lodged in the skeleton, a *tinytar*. It can be harvested with a DC of 0 and socketed on any held item to prevent you from dropping it. The food component for the unique recipe is *elemental (tar-rasque) marrow* (bone).

TAR-RASQUE HARVEST TABLE

Component DC	Components
5	Tinytar (∞)
10	Pouch of claws (4), marrow ^E (1)
15	Volatile mote of tar (5) ^V , pouch of teeth (2)
25	Core of tar ^W (5)

^E Indicates component is edible.

^V Indicates component is volatile.



The Elemental Planes are a delight to explore. However, the really inspiring places are where those planes meet. Where water meets fire, living steam abounds; earth and air forms dunes of swirling dust; and where earth meets water, you get mud. Throw in some hydrocarbons, several atmospheres of pressure, and let it bake for 100 to 500 million years. Voilà: you have tar.

Necromantic energy abounds in tar and, if properly activated, can result in some unique reanimative properties. Merge that with the bones of a perpetually angry tarrasque and you get a destructive pile of primordial rage.

Now then, where are my designs for that steam-mephit-powered dishwasher...

— L'Arsène, Hates Chores



MOHAMMED "AGGI" BELLAFOUHI

MOHAMMED "AGGI" BELLAFOUHI

APPENDIX A — MAGIC ITEMS

JAW BREAKERS

Weapon (any two melee), rare (optional attunement)

Forged as a pair, these magic weapons are crafted from the matching upper and lower jaw bones of a tar-rasque. Their innate magic—and one of the reasons the tar-rasque's bite is so powerful—creates an arcanomagnetic pull between the two jawbones, dealing devastating damage to whatever lies between them.

You gain a **+1 bonus** to attack and damage rolls you make with each of these magic weapons. These weapons deal piercing damage instead of their usual damage type.

Chomp. When you engage in two-weapon fighting using these two weapons and hit the same target with both weapons, the attack you make with your second weapon deals an additional **1d8** damage.

Optional Attunement. You can choose to attune to a pair of *jaw breakers*. They count as a single magic item with regard to the number of magic items you can attune to. When you do so, the weapons gain the Swirling Dervish property while you are attuned to them.

OA: Swirling Dervish. Harnessing the power of the blades, you leap over a target, becoming a tornado of lacerating blades. As an action while you wield both *jaw breakers*, you can perform a magically-enhanced jump, attacking creatures you pass over. This jump has a maximum distance of **20 feet**, is a straight line, must end in an unoccupied space, does not provoke opportunity attacks, and each foot you clear on the jump costs one foot of movement. You can make one attack against a creature under you in each 5-foot space over which you jump. These attacks always alternate main-hand, then off-hand.

For example, if you jumped over one Huge creature, you could make three attacks against it (the second one dealing Chomp's extra damage on a hit).

If you jumped over three Medium creatures, you could make one attack against each (with no extra damage from Chomp).

Very rare variant: Increase the attack and damage bonus to **+2**, and Swirling Dervish's jump distance to **25 feet**.



JAW BREAKERS



TARROBE

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

Fossilised bones and oilcloth, a lipid-rich mesh of viscous crude oil and lipophilic fibres, forms the basis of this magical robe. In the same way the oil refracts light in rainbow hues, the cloth has a natural resistance to magic, occasionally sending spells ricocheting back at the caster.

Oily Barrage. While you wear this robe, you can cast a variety of oil-based spells. This robe has **7 charges** and regains **1d6 + 1** charges daily at dawn. You can expend charges to cast the following spells (**save DC 15**, **+7** to hit). Some spells are changed to be oil-based.

- *Grease* (1 charge)
- *Create or destroy oil* (2 charges; as *create or destroy water*, but oil instead of water)
- *Mireball** (3 charges; instead of mud, thick, rancid fat and oil are conjured)

Spell Reflection. While you wear this robe, any time you are targeted by a *magic missile* spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, roll a **d8**. On a **1-7**, you are affected as normal. On an **8**, you are unaffected, and the effect is reflected back at the caster as though it originated from you, turning the caster into the target.

Legendary variant: While you wear the robe you can speak and understand Terran. Increase the number of charges to **12** and the recharge to **1d8 + 4**. Add the *bone cage** and *conjure elemental* (tar elemental only, see page 25) spells to the Oily Barrage property (**5 charges** each). The Spell Reflection property reflects a spell back on a roll of **7** or **8** (you are affected as normal on a **1-6**).

*See Appendix B

TERRORASQUE

Weapon (any two-handed melee), rare (requires attunement)

From the fossilised teeth of a tar-rasque is extracted the magic of rage and ferocity. Upon attuning to this weapon, you gain the ability to unleash terrifyingly monstrous roars and swing the enormous, bone-handled blade with astounding aggression.

You gain a **+1 bonus** to attack and damage rolls you make with this magic weapon. This weapon has **5 charges** and regains **1d4 + 1** charges daily at dawn.



TARROBE

MOHAMMED "AGGI" BELLAHQI

CHAOUKI "CIAO" TTOUHI & MOHAMMED "AGGI" BELLAHQI

Ferocious Blow. As an action, you can expend **1 charge** to call upon the spirit of the tar-rasque and make a mighty swing with this weapon. If the attack hits, roll **four** times as many damage dice for the weapon as normal for this attack. This dice multiplication does not affect additional damage from abilities such as smite or sneak attack, and is unaffected by critical hits. If the attack misses, you fall **prone** and your speed is reduced to **0 feet** until the start of your next turn.

Terrorise. As a bonus action, or as part of the bonus action you use to activate the Rage class feature, you can brandish the *terrorasque*, amplifying your yell with that of a tar-rasque's. Each hostile creature within **60 feet** of you that can hear you must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw** or be **frightened** of you for **1 minute**. An affected creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect for itself on a success. After you use this property, you can't do so again for **1 hour**.

Very rare variant: Increase the attack and damage bonus to +2, the number of charges to 7, the recharge to **1d6 + 1**, and Terrorise's **DC** to **16**.

Increase Ferocious Blow's damage multiplier to **five** times the weapon's damage dice. The weapon gains the Tar Strike property.

Tar Strike. As an action, you can mentally command this weapon to ooze tar, expending **1 charge** as you make one attack against a creature with it. On a hit, the target suffers the weapon attack's normal effects and is **restrained** for **1 minute**. The creature can use its action to make a **DC 16 Strength** check, ending the restrained condition on a success.

TINYTAR

Wondrous item, common (socketable)

With the sentient tar of a tar elemental and a dose of enchantment magic, one can craft this friendly and amenable little helper. When applied to anything you can hold, the *tinytar* ensures you don't accidentally drop it.

Grippy. This small, magical phial contains an animate and excitable tar. When applied to the handle of a weapon, shield or other held item, the first creature to hold that item can't be disarmed of the item against its will. The creature can still sheathe or drop the item if it desires; the *tinytar* is very intuitive. As an action, you can hold the magical phial to the *tinytar* causing it to shlink back inside.

VISCOUS SYMBIOTE

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

While unworn, this item appears as a puddle of viscous tar and bone shards. When you attune to this amorphous ooze, it slides up your arms, enhancing them with an extra-cutaneous layer of malleable, oily muscle.

Armhancements. While attuned to this item, whenever you make an ability check that uses Strength, you can treat a d20 roll of 7 or lower as an 8.

Reactive Tentacles. Your symbiote protects you from incoming blows. Whenever you are the target of a melee attack by an attacker you can see within **10 feet** of you, you can use your reaction to make a melee attack (+9 to hit) against that attacker immediately after its attack concludes. This attack deals **2d8** piercing damage on a hit.

MAGICAL MEALS

A monster's components can be cooked into magical food. After spending 1 hour cooking the required components, you can succeed on a **Constitution (cook's utensils)** check against the meal's **DC** to craft the meal. *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting* presents more detailed rules on cooking.

When you consume a magic meal, which takes **10 minutes**, you gain its effects, which last for **8 hours** or until dispelled by the *dispel magic* spell or similar magic.

TAR-RASQUE MARROW BROTH

Elemental (tar-rasque) marrow, plus heart, liver, and spice; DC 24

If you take damage from a spell or other magical effect, you become empowered. The next attack you make within the next **minute** that hits a target deals additional necrotic damage. This damage increases with rarity, which is determined by the party's level.

Level	Rarity	Additional Damage
1-4	Uncommon	1d4
5-10	Rare	2d4
11-16	Very rare	3d4
17-20	Legendary	4d4

TAR-RASQUE MARROW BROTH



Malleable Skin. When you make a melee attack on your turn, your reach for it is **5 feet** greater than normal.

Very rare variant: You gain **3** temporary hit points at the start of each of your turns. Add the Claws property.

Claws. Protruding from your tar-coated hands are long claws; natural weapons which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal slashing damage equal to **2d4** + your Strength modifier instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Legendary variant: You gain **5** temporary hit points at the start of each of your turns. Add the Claws, Mask, and Reactive Tentacles properties.

Mask. This oily symbiote can react to danger, enhancing your senses. As a reaction when initiative is rolled, you can command the oil to cover your face for the next **minute**. For the duration, you have **advantage** on initiative checks and Dexterity saving throws, and gain blindsight out to **30 feet**. After you activate this ability, you can't do so again until the following dawn.



VISCOUS SYMBIOTE



TINYTAR



TERRORASQUE

APPENDIX B — SPELLS

This appendix lists the spells that can be found throughout this hunt, arranged alphabetically.

Biomancy. Biomantic spells revolve around living matter and its manipulation. If you'd rather not use the school of biomancy in your world, you can elect to use the alternative school of magic supplied with each biomancy spell.

BONE CAGE

5th-level biomancy* (*can be replaced with necromancy)

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (20-foot-radius sphere)

Components: V, S, M (the bones of at least one non-animated corpse, which the spell consumes)

Duration: 1 minute

Class: Cleric, Druid, Paladin, Warlock, Wizard

You draw the bones from all corpses within range, forming a carapace of ribcages and femurs. You gain temporary hit points for each Small or larger corpse wholly or partly within range, according to its size, that last for the duration:

Size	Temporary Hit Points Gained
Small	1d6+1
Medium	1d8+2
Large	1d10+5
Huge	1d12+12
Gargantuan	1d20+25

As an action on a subsequent turn, you can cause your armour of bones to erupt, expending all remaining temporary hit points. Each other creature within range must make a **Dexterity saving throw**, taking piercing damage equal to your expended temporary

hit points on a failure, or half as much damage on a success. Whatever the manner in which the temporary hit points are lost, the bones shatter and can't be used in this way again.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the radius of this spell increases by **10 feet** for each slot level above 5th.

MIREBALL

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 150 feet (15-foot-radius sphere)

Components: V, S, M (a tiny ball of guano and mud)

Duration: 1 minute

Class: Bard, Druid, Sorcerer, Warlock

A blob of gloopy mud splunks from your pointed finger to a point you choose within range, where it splooges with a wet burp into an explosion of sludge. Each creature in a **15-foot-radius sphere** centred on that point must make a **Strength saving throw**. On a failed save, a target takes **3d10** bludgeoning damage and is knocked **prone**. On a successful one, it takes half as much damage and is not knocked prone.

In addition, all surfaces within the area become covered in unpredictably slick and sticky patches of mud for the duration. The first time a creature moves through the muddy area on its turn it must succeed on a **Dexterity saving throw** against your **spell save DC** or fall **prone**. A creature moving through the area at half speed doesn't need to make the saving throw.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by **1d10** for each slot level above 3rd.

APPENDIX C — CREATURES

POSSESSED MINING SUIT

Huge elemental, neutral

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 161 (14d12 + 70)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Athletics +8

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Arcane Power Source. An arcane power source—a crystal on the mining suit's rear—can be targeted separately from the mining suit (AC 19, 64 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all damage except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). If the mining suit fails a saving throw against an area of effect, the crystal also fails the saving throw.

If the power source is destroyed, the tar elemental possessing the mining suit moves into the nearest unoccupied space without provoking opportunity attacks and the mining suit becomes an inanimate object.

Flammable. If the mining suit takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 10 (**3d6**) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks deal an additional 10 (**3d6**) fire damage. If the mining suit is subject to heavy rain or takes **10** or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The mining suit makes three attacks: one with its Claw, one with its Demolition Drill, and one with its Pseudopod.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.

Hit: 18 (**3d8 + 5**) slashing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is **grappled** (**escape DC 16**). Until this grapple ends, the mining suit has **advantage** on attack rolls using its Claw against the target and the mining suit can't use its Claw on another target.

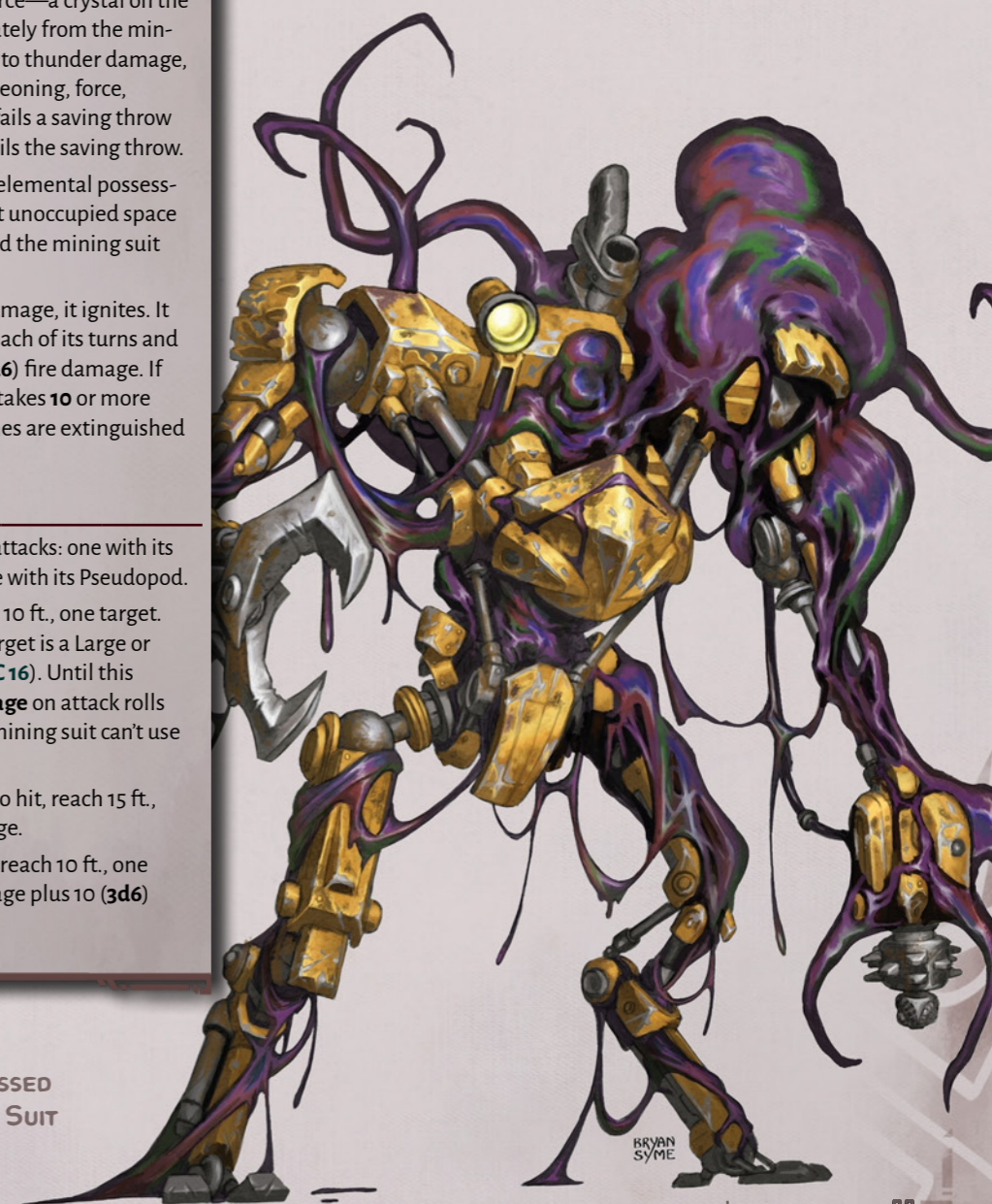
Demolition Drill. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (**3d6 + 5**) piercing damage.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (**2d8 + 5**) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (**3d6**) necrotic damage.

TAR ELEMENTALS

These viscous, shapeless elementals are natives of the muddy borderlands between the Planes of Water and Earth. Their minds comprise the echoing memories of the thousands of organisms whose decomposition has created their shapeless bodies.

Arcane Activation. When an arcane power source is tuned to the correct frequency, a tar elemental's primordial spark can be drawn into the Material Plane, reforming around a suitable substrate, such as tar or other lipids, like the fat deposits from a long-dead giant space hamster. Such a summoning is often against the elemental's will, leading to violent and aggressive outbursts.



POSSESSED MINING SUIT

BRYAN SYME

Possession & Reanimation. Should a tar elemental find itself in contact with such an arcane power source, its powers of decomposition are augmented; it is no longer subject to decay and its touch can enervate living tissue. An augmented tar elemental is also capable of puppeteering a creature, dead or alive, manipulating its body through an external, oily musculature.

ARCANE POSSESSION

A creature possessed by a tar elemental is controlled by that elemental and gains the following traits:

- **Arcane Power Source.** An arcane power source—a crystal found on the creature—can be targeted separately from the creature (AC 19, 20 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all damage except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). If the creature fails a saving throw against an area of effect, the crystal also fails the saving throw. If the power source is destroyed, the tar elemental possessing the creature moves into the nearest unoccupied space without provoking opportunity attacks and the creature is released from its control. [The crystal's hit points increase to **42**, **64**, and **86** for Large, Huge, and Gargantuan creatures, respectively].
- **Flammable.** If the creature takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks deal an additional 3 (1d6) fire damage. If the creature is subject to heavy rain or takes 5 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end. [This damage increases to 7 (2d6), 10 (3d6), and 14 (4d6) damage for Large, Huge, and Gargantuan creatures, respectively].

MINI TAR ELEMENTAL

Small elemental, neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 55 (10d6 + 20)

Speed 25 ft., burrow 25 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances acid, piercing; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Flammable. If the elemental takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its weapon attacks deal an additional 3 (1d6) fire damage. If the elemental is subject to heavy rain or takes 5 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Oil Form. When the elemental moves through water, it uses its swimming speed to skim along the water's surface; it can't submerge below the surface of water without a powerful detergent.

Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and the target's speed is reduced by **10 feet** until it or another creature within reach of the target uses its action to clean the target. This speed reduction can stack; if the target's walking speed is reduced to 0 feet by this effect, it is **restrained**.

Arcane Activation. The elemental attempts to possess one Medium or smaller corporeal creature in close proximity to an arcane power source, such as a magitech firearm. The creature must succeed on a **DC 13 Strength saving throw** or be under the elemental's control until the elemental releases it as a bonus action, or the arcane power source is destroyed or is more than **5 feet** from the possessed creature. While the elemental controls a creature in this way, the possessed creature gains the features in the Arcane Possession sidebar.

TAR ELEMENTAL

Large elemental, neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 126 (12d10 + 60)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances acid, piercing; bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +3

Flammable. If the elemental takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 7 (2d6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its weapon attacks deal an additional 7 (2d6) fire damage. If the elemental is subject to heavy rain or takes 5 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Oil Form. When the elemental moves through water, it uses its swimming speed to skim along the water's surface; it can't submerge below the surface of water without a powerful detergent.

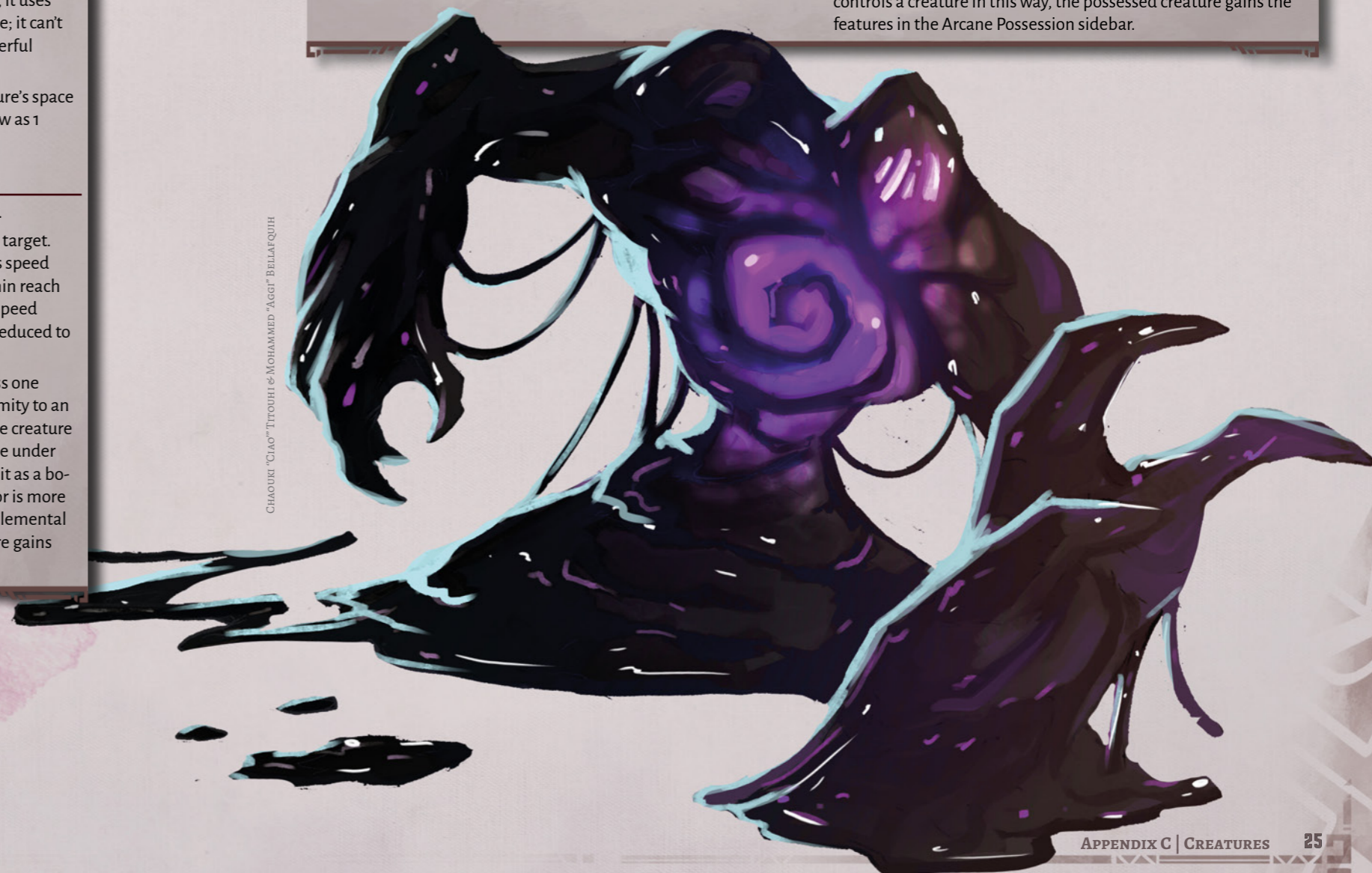
Water Form. The elemental can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The elemental makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage and the target's speed is reduced by **10 feet** until it or another creature within reach of the target uses its action to clean the target. This speed reduction can stack; if the target's walking speed is reduced to 0 feet by this effect, it is **restrained**.

Arcane Activation. The elemental attempts to possess one Huge or smaller corporeal creature in close proximity to an arcane power source, such as a magitech firearm. The creature must succeed on a **DC 15 Strength saving throw** or be under the elemental's control until the elemental releases it as a bonus action, or the arcane power source is destroyed or is more than **5 feet** from the possessed creature. While the elemental controls a creature in this way, the possessed creature gains the features in the Arcane Possession sidebar.



TARCHAEOLOGIST

Medium elemental, neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Investigation +3, Sleight of Hand +5

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralysed, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Arcane Power Source. The crystal in the tarchaeologist's magitech pistol can be targeted separately from the tarchaeologist (AC 19, 20 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all other damage types except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). If the tarchaeologist fails a saving throw against an area of effect, the crystal also fails the saving throw.

If the crystal is destroyed, or if the tarchaeologist is disarmed of its pistol (it has a +7 modifier on ability checks and saving throws to avoid being disarmed), the mini tar elemental possessing the tarchaeologist moves into the nearest unoccupied space without provoking opportunity attacks and the tarchaeologist falls unconscious and stable.

Flammable. If the tarchaeologist takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 3 (1d6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks deal an additional 3 (1d6) fire damage. If the tarchaeologist is subject to heavy rain or takes 5 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Necromantic Reinvigoration (1/Ever). If the tarchaeologist is reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to 52 hit points, its creature type changes to undead, and it gains **immunity** to poison damage and the poisoned condition.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tarchaeologist makes three attacks: one with its Pseudopod, one with its Wrench, and one with its Magitech Pistol.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Wrench. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Magitech Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target, loud (500 ft.), reload (2). *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

TARCHAEOLOGIST

Excavating ancient remains is no easy task; brushing off all of that fine dirt with the softest pegasus-tail paintbrushes can lead to some serious carpal tunnel syndrome. Co-opting magitech technology—which has been so crudely used for firearms—into archaeological apparatus has saved many a tarchaeologist from debilitating wrist pain. Unfortunately, having such devices on one's person leaves said person open to possession by creatures who thrive on these gadgets' arcane power sources. For this reason, the ASSES (Archaeological Society's Systematic Excavative Study) requires all members to undergo arcane de-possession training; destroying the arcane power source deprives the controlling creature of its powers and has reduced archaeologist mortality by over thirteen percent!



BRYAN SYME

TARANNOSAURUS REX

Huge elemental, neutral

Armour Class 16 (natural armour)

Hit Points 230 (20d12 + 100)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Resistances acid, necrotic, piercing, bludgeoning and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralysed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Aquan, Terran

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +4

Arcane Power Source. The crystal in the tarannosaurus' ribcage can be targeted separately from the tarannosaurus (AC 19, 64 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all other damage types except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). If the tarannosaurus fails a saving throw against an area of effect, the crystal also fails the saving throw.

If the crystal is destroyed the tar elemental possessing the tarannosaurus moves into the nearest unoccupied space without provoking opportunity attacks and the tarannosaurus crumbles into a pile of inanimate bones.

Flammable. If the tarannosaurus takes fire damage, it ignites. It takes 10 (3d6) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks and Taruption deal an additional 10 (3d6) fire damage. If the tarannosaurus is subject to heavy rain or takes 10 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tarannosaurus makes two attacks: one with its Bite and one with its Tail. It can't make both attacks against the same target. It can use Taruption in place of the Bite attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 34 (4d12 + 8) piercing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is **grappled (escape DC 20)**. Until this grapple ends, the target is **restrained** and the tarannosaurus can't bite another target.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d8 + 8) bludgeoning damage.

Taruption (Recharge 5-6). The tarannosaurus launches a torrent of tar in a **30-foot cone**. Each creature in the cone that isn't tar- or water-based must succeed on a **DC 17 Strength saving throw** or become **restrained** for **1 minute**. A creature can use its action to make a **DC 17 Strength** check, ending the effect on itself on a success. This area is difficult terrain for **1 minute**, or until it is cleaned.



BRYAN SYME

TAR-RASQUE HATCHLING

Gargantuan elemental (titan), unaligned

Armour Class 14 (natural armour)

Hit Points 155 (10d20 + 50)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +2, Wis +5, Cha +5

Damage Resistances acid, piercing

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralysed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 14 (11,500 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +5

Concealed Arcane Power Source. After the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait activates, the crystal in the tar-rasque's head can be targeted separately from the tar-rasque (AC 19, 80 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all other damage types except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). It can only be targeted by a creature grappled by the tar-rasque's Necrotar Tongue, or by creatures that Ready an action for when the tar-rasque makes a Necrotar Tongue attack.

If the crystal is destroyed, the tar-rasque's current hit points are reduced to 0.

Flammable. If the tar-rasque takes fire damage, it ignites. It and any creature it is grappling takes 13 (2d12) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks and Necrotaruption deal an additional 13 (2d12) fire damage. If the tar-rasque is subject to heavy rain or takes 15 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the tar-rasque fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The tar-rasque has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Primordial Awakening (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the tar-rasque would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to 155 hit points, it recharges its Necrotaruption, and it regains 1 expended use of Legendary Resistance. Additionally, the tar-rasque can use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section for 1 hour. Award a party an additional 11,500 XP (23,000 XP total) for defeating the tar-rasque after its Primordial Awakening activates.

Refractive Exterior. Any time the tar-rasque is targeted by a *magic missile* spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, some of the energy is refracted into a random elemental type and a bolt of energy fires back at the caster as a ranged spell attack using the caster's spell attack modifier, and dealing 4 (1d8) damage on a hit. Roll a d4 to determine the damage type: 1-acid, 2-cold, 3-fire, 4-lightning.



ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tar-rasque makes three attacks: one with its Necrotar Tongue, one with its Claws, and one with its Tail. It can use its Necrotaruption instead of its Necrotar Tongue.

Necrotar Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (4d4 + 5) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 18 Strength saving throw** or be **grappled (escape DC 18)** and pulled into the tar-rasque's maw. Until this grapple ends, the target is **restrained**, takes 15 (4d4 + 5) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns, and the tar-rasque can't use its tongue on another target.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (4d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 18 Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

Necrotaruption (Recharge 5-6). The tar-rasque exhales a torrent of thick tar-phlegm in a **40-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes 21 (6d6) necrotic damage and is **restrained** until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. In addition, until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn, the area is difficult terrain for other creatures and a creature that starts its turn in the area or enters it for the first time on its turn takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The tar-rasque can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The tar-rasque regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The tar-rasque makes one melee weapon attack.

Move. The tar-rasque moves up to half its speed.

Tremor. The tar-rasque pounds the ground; each creature standing on the ground within **30 feet** of it must succeed on a **DC 18 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

Reflux (Costs 2 Actions). The tar-rasque recharges and uses its Necrotaruption.

TAR-RASQUE BRITTLEBONE

Gargantuan elemental (titan), unaligned

Armour Class 16 (natural armour)

Hit Points 264 (16d20 + 96)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	15 (+2)	23 (+6)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +3, Wis +6, Cha +6

Damage Resistances acid, piercing

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralysed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 20 (25,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +6

Concealed Arcane Power Source. After the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait activates, the crystal in the tar-rasque's head can be targeted separately from the tar-rasque (AC 19, 120 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all other damage types except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). It can only be targeted by a creature grappled by the tar-rasque's Necrotar Tongue, or by creatures that Ready an action for when the tar-rasque makes a Necrotar Tongue attack.

If the crystal is destroyed, the tar-rasque's current hit points are reduced to 0.

Flammable. If the tar-rasque takes fire damage, it ignites. It and any creature it is grappling takes 19 (3d12) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks and Necrotaruption deal an additional 19 (3d12) fire damage. If the tar-rasque is subject to heavy rain or takes 15 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the tar-rasque fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The tar-rasque has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Primordial Awakening (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the tar-rasque would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to 262 hit points, it recharges its Necrotaruption, and it regains 2 expended uses of Legendary Resistance. Additionally, the tar-rasque can use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section for 1 hour. Award a party an additional 25,000 XP (50,000 XP total) for defeating the tar-rasque after its Primordial Awakening activates.

Refractive Exterior. Any time the tar-rasque is targeted by a *magic missile* spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, some of the energy is refracted into a random elemental type and a bolt of energy fires back at the caster as a ranged spell attack using the caster's spell attack modifier, and dealing 9 (2d8) damage on a hit. Roll a d4 to determine the damage type: 1-acid, 2-cold, 3-fire, 4-lightning.



ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tar-rasque makes three attacks: one with its Necrotar Tongue, one with its Claws, and one with its Tail. It can use its Necrotaruption instead of its Necrotar Tongue.

Necrotar Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (4d4 + 6) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 20 Strength saving throw** or be **grappled (escape DC 20)** and pulled into the tar-rasque's maw. Until this grapple ends, the target is **restrained**, takes 16 (4d4 + 6) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns, and the tar-rasque can't use its tongue on another target.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 20 Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

Necrotaruption (Recharge 5-6). The tar-rasque exhales a torrent of thick tar-phlegm in a **60-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 20 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, the creature takes 28 (8d6) necrotic damage and is **restrained** until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. In addition, until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn, the area is difficult terrain for other creatures and a creature that starts its turn in the area or enters it for the first time on its turn takes 14 (4d6) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The tar-rasque can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The tar-rasque regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The tar-rasque makes one melee weapon attack.

Move. The tar-rasque moves up to half its speed.

Tremor. The tar-rasque pounds the ground; each creature standing on the ground within **30 feet** of it must succeed on a **DC 20 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

Reflux (Costs 2 Actions). The tar-rasque recharges and uses its Necrotaruption.

TAR-RASQUE

Gargantuan elemental (titan), unaligned

Armour Class 18 (natural armour)

Hit Points 390 (20d20 + 180)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
27 (+8)	15 (+2)	28 (+9)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +8, Cha +8

Damage Resistances acid, piercing

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralysed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 26 (90,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus +8

Concealed Arcane Power Source. After the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait activates, the crystal in the tar-rasque's head can be targeted separately from the tar-rasque (AC 19, 180 hit points, **vulnerability** to thunder damage, and **immunity** to all other damage types except bludgeoning, force, piercing, and slashing). It can only be targeted by a creature grappled by the tar-rasque's Necrotar Tongue, or by creatures that Ready an action for when the tar-rasque makes a Necrotar Tongue attack.

If the crystal is destroyed, the tar-rasque's current hit points are reduced to 0.

Flammable. If the tar-rasque takes fire damage, it ignites. It and any creature it is grappling takes 26 (4d12) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its melee attacks and Necrotaruption deal an additional 26 (4d12) fire damage. If the tar-rasque is subject to heavy rain or takes 20 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished and the effects end.

Legendary Resistance (5/Day). If the tar-rasque fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. The tar-rasque has **advantage** on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Primordial Awakening (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the tar-rasque would be reduced to 0 hit points, its current hit point total instead resets to 390 hit points and it recharges its Necrotaruption. Additionally, the tar-rasque can use the options in the "Mythic Actions" section for 1 hour. Award a party an additional 90,000 XP (180,000 XP total) for defeating the tar-rasque after its Primordial Awakening activates.

Refractive Exterior. Any time the tar-rasque is targeted by a *magic missile* spell, a line spell, or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, some of the energy is refracted into a random elemental type and a bolt of energy fires back at the caster as a ranged spell attack using the caster's spell attack modifier, and dealing 13 (3d8) damage on a hit. Roll a d4 to determine the damage type: 1-acid, 2-cold, 3-fire, 4-lightning.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The tar-rasque makes five attacks: one with its Necrotar Tongue, two with its Claws, one with its Horns, and one with its Tail. It can use its Necrotaruption instead of its Necrotar Tongue.

Necrotar Tongue. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (4d4 + 9) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 24 Strength saving throw** or be **grappled (escape DC 24)** and pulled into the tar-rasque's maw. Until this grapple ends, the target is **restrained**, takes 19 (4d4 + 9) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns, and the tar-rasque can't use its tongue on another target.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (4d8 + 8) slashing damage.

Horns. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d10 + 8) piercing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d6 + 8) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 24 Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

Necrotaruption (Recharge 5-6). The tar-rasque exhales a torrent of thick tar-phlegm in a **90-foot cone**. Each creature in that area must make a **DC 24 Dexterity saving throw**. On a failed save, a creature takes 42 (12d6) necrotic damage and is **restrained** until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't restrained. In addition, until the end of the tar-rasque's next turn, the area is difficult terrain for other creatures and a creature that starts its turn in the area or enters it for the first time on its turn takes 21 (6d6) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The tar-rasque can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The tar-rasque regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The tar-rasque makes one melee weapon attack.

Move. The tar-rasque moves up to half its speed.

Tremor. The tar-rasque pounds the ground; each creature standing on the ground within **30 feet** of it must succeed on a **DC 24 Dexterity saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.

MYTHIC ACTIONS

If the tar-rasque's Primordial Awakening trait has activated in the last hour, it can use the option below as a legendary action.

Reflux (Costs 2 Actions). The tar-rasque recharges and uses its Necrotaruption.

A TAR-RASQUE'S LAIR

A tar-rasque's lair is the area in which its bones became fossilised. Its presence lingers on, pervading every rock, pore, and tar pool.

LAIR ACTIONS

While the arcane power crystal within the tar-rasque is intact, the ambient magic of its preserved skeleton and its eternal rage causes lair actions to occur.

VARIABLE LAIR ACTION STATISTICS

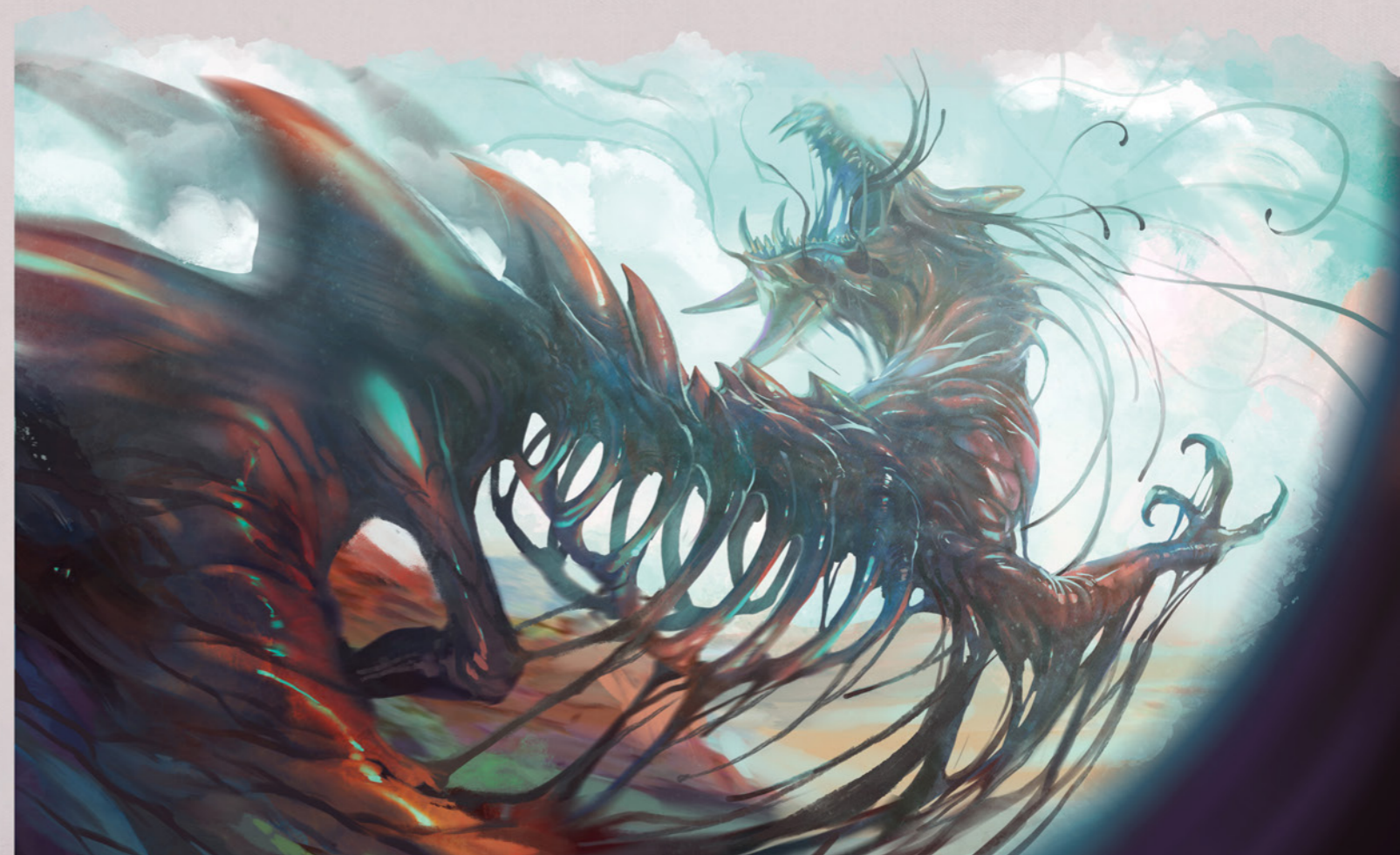
Hunt Level	VDC	Vdam
9th	15	10 (3d6)
14th	16	14 (4d6)
20th	18	28 (8d6)

Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the tar-rasque's arcane-power-source-enhanced presence takes one of the following lair actions; the tar-rasque can't take the same lair action two rounds in a row.

- **Tar Geyser.** A number of patches of ground fracture and torrents of necrotic tar shoot upwards in **5-foot-radius, 40-foot-high cylinders**. The number of geysers depends on the

hunt level: two at 9th level, three at 14th level, or four at 20th level. Each creature in one or more of the geysers must make a **VDC Dexterity saving throw**. On a failure, a creature takes **Vdam** necrotic damage and is fired **40 feet** into the air. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and is pushed horizontally to the nearest unoccupied space.

- **Tar Pit.** A **10-foot-radius circle** of ground permanently turns into a viscous pit of tar and is difficult terrain. Each creature that starts its turn in the area or enters the area for the first time on its turn must make a **VDC Strength saving throw** or become **restrained** in the tar. A creature sinks **2 feet** into the tar each time it fails this saving throw. If it sinks further than its height, it can no longer breathe, is **blinded**, and has **disadvantage** on Strength checks to free itself. The restrained creature, or a creature within 5 feet of it, can use its action to make a **VDC Strength check**, freeing the stuck creature on a success.
- **Quake.** The ground shakes in a **100-foot-radius sphere** centred on a point the tar-rasque chooses. Each other creature in the area must succeed on a **VDC Strength saving throw** or be knocked **prone**.



NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

BRANTON QUARK

Branton Quark is a non-player character who first appears in the *Mecha Koboldzilla* hunt in which he plays a major role. During the events of that hunt, Branton (a slightly mad and embittered CN male human artificer) is Baron Bodrum Businesses Inc.'s former chief engineer and the unfortunate loser in the wage war for low-priced automaton engineers. His firing was due, in no small part, to his incompetence and propensity for cutting corners. He is quick to blame his employer for all the accidents that happened, and is proud to show off his collection of almost-working mechatmagical devices in his shop.

When his position was replaced by a team of kobolds, Branton constructed a campaign of misinformation about an incoming 'giant space hamster' to trick the kobolds into abandoning their work. Without Branton's expert guidance, the kobolds then built a 'terrible automatic construct' that threatened the safety of Bodrum. Branton would later use this event as leverage to reclaim his position.

BRANTON QUARK

Human, artificer, he/him

Personality. Embittered, eccentric, angry.

Physical. Short, plump, unkempt, scowls.

Desire. Prove himself to his employer, which he believes will ensure the future safety of his position.

Fear. Visits from his parents, who're especially kind and doting. They indulge his 'entrepreneurship'.

"Don't worry about the exposed arcanothermic core, I have a cardiac rejiggler around here, somewhere."



APPENDIX D — FAMILIARS

If you are using the optional Tamer class in *Heliana's Guide to Monster Hunting*, this familiar can be crafted from the remains of unique monsters. The GM may also allow a character that is not a tamer to take this familiar as a companion.

TARLING

Type: Elemental

Creature Component: Tar-rasque

Bonus Tamer Improvement: Growth I and +2 Hit Dice

Tarlings can draw upon the arcane power source around which they're crafted in order to enhance the decompositive powers innate to tar elementals. They can even manipulate the corpses of the deceased, puppeteering them as flesh suits that can absorb incoming blows. Biomancers posit that such companions can even assume the immense size of tarraques for a short time.

If any of the tarling's traits or actions require a saving throw, it is always against the tarling's **save DC**, as calculated below.

Save DC = 8 + the tamer's proficiency bonus + the tarling's Constitution modifier

TAMER LEVEL

1

GROWTH I

PREREQUISITE: BECOME COMPANION

"It's getting bigger..."

3

GROWTH II

PREREQUISITE: GROWTH I

"...and quickly, too!..."

ARCANE ACTIVATION

PREREQUISITE: —

"Keep away from house plants..."

5

REFRACTIVE EXTERIOR

PREREQUISITE: —

"Don't punish with magic missile."

NECROTAR TONGUE I

PREREQUISITE: —

"Don't let him get away!..."

MULTIATTACK

PREREQUISITE: —

"It's dangerous at both ends now."

9

GROWTH III

PREREQUISITE: GROWTH II

"...For real, how big will it get?..."

ARCANE ANIMATION

PREREQUISITE: ARCANE ACTIVATION

"...and beloved, deceased pets."

13

GROWTH IV

PREREQUISITE: GROWTH III

"...it won't fit in my house anymore..."

NECROTAR TONGUE II

PREREQUISITE: NECROTAR TONGUE I

"...But also... don't kill him."

17

SIEGE MONSTER

PREREQUISITE: GROWTH IV

"...well this is just silly."

TITANSPAWN

PREREQUISITE: —

"It's become very unruly lately."



JESSE JACKDAW BURNS, OPPOSITE; JESSE JACKDAW BURNS

MONSTER TRAINER

If you are a tamer, you can grant the tarling the following improvements using your Monster Trainer feature in addition to those normally available for your companions.

GROWTH I

Prerequisite: become a tamer's companion

Type: Passive (companion)

The tarling's size increases to Small, its Hit Die size increases to a **d6** (its hit point maximum consequently increases by **1** for each of its Hit Dice), and the damage die of its bite attack increases to a **d6**. The tarling gains this improvement when it becomes a companion; it doesn't cost an improvement.

ARCANE ACTIVATION

Prerequisite: 3rd-level tamer

Type: Active (bonus action)

As a bonus action, the tarling can activate its arcane power source for **1 minute**. For the duration, the tarling has **resistance** to necrotic damage and deals an additional **3 (1d6)** necrotic damage when it hits a target with a melee attack.

After the tarling uses this action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a long rest.

GROWTH II

Prerequisite: 3rd-level tamer, Growth I

Type: Passive (companion)

The tarling's size increases to Medium, its Hit Die size increases to a **d8** (its hit point maximum consequently increases by **1** for each of its Hit Dice), and the damage dice of its bite and tail attacks (see below), as well as its Arcane Activation, increase from a **d6** to a **d8**. This growth improvement ignores the normal maximum companion size for a tamer.

MULTIATTACK

Prerequisite: 5th-level tamer

Type: Active (action)

The tarling gains two new action options: Tail and Multiattack. The damage die of the tail attack increases with the specified die size in the tarling's Growth improvements.

Tail. Melee Weapon Attack: **Str** modifier + **PB** to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. **Hit:** **1d6** + **Str** modifier bludgeoning damage.

Multiattack. As an action, the tarling makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

NECROTAR TONGUE I

Prerequisite: 5th-level tamer

Type: Active (action)

As an action, the tarling can spew a whip-like tongue of elastic tar at a creature no larger than itself that it can see within **20 feet** of it. The target must succeed on a **Strength saving throw** or become **grappled** (**escape DC** equals **save DC**) by the tarling and be pulled up to **15 feet** closer to the tarling. Until this grapple ends, the target is **restrained**, takes **9 (2d8)** necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns, and the tarling can't use its bite attack against a different target. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't grappled, pulled, or restrained.

After the tarling uses this action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a short or long rest.

When the tarling's tamer reaches 9th level in the tamer class, the recurring damage of this action increases to **13 (3d8)**.

TARLING						
<i>Tiny elemental, unaligned</i>						
Armour Class 13 (natural armour)						
Hit Points 4 (1d4 + 2)						
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.						
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA	
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	
Damage Resistances acid, piercing, poison						
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10						
Languages —						
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)			Proficiency Bonus +2			
Flammable. If the tarling takes fire damage, it ignites. It and any creature it is grappling take 2 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each of its turns and its weapon attacks deal an additional 2 (1d4) fire damage on a hit. If the tarling is subject to heavy rainfall or it takes 5 or more cold damage in a single instance, the flames are extinguished.						
Oil Form. When the tarling tries to move through water, it instead uses its swimming speed to skim along the water's surface; it can't submerge below the surface of water without a powerful detergent.						
ACTIONS						
Bite. <i>Melee Weapon Attack:</i> +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.						

REFRACTIVE EXTERIOR

Prerequisite: 5th-level tamer

Type: Passive (companion)

When the tarling is targeted by a *magic missile* spell or a spell that requires a ranged attack roll, roll a **d4**. On a **4**, the tarling is unaffected and the energy is refracted into a random elemental type and a bolt of energy fires back at the caster as a ranged spell attack, using the caster's spell attack modifier and dealing damage equal to the tarling's current Hit Die size (see Growth improvements) on a hit. Roll another **d4** to determine the damage type: 1-acid, 2-cold, 3-fire, 4-lightning.

ARCANE ANIMATION

Prerequisite: 9th-level tamer, Arcane Activation

Type: Active (action)

As an action, the tarling can reanimate one corpse within **5 feet** of it, merging its body with the corpse for the next **hour**. The corpse must have been a creature with a challenge rating equal to or lower than the tamer's proficiency bonus and been of a size equal to or smaller than the tarling.

For the duration, the tarling gains the non-flying speeds of the corpse's original creature and has two pools of hit points: its own and those from the corpse it inhabits. The corpse's pool of hit points equals half the original creature's hit point maximum. Whenever the tarling takes damage, half of the damage is transferred to the corpse and subtracted from that pool of hit points instead of the tarling's. If the corpse's pool of hit points is reduced to 0, the reanimation ends and the corpse is destroyed.

After the tarling uses this action, it can't do so again until its tamer finishes a long rest.

GROWTH III

Prerequisite: 9th-level tamer, Growth II

Type: Passive (companion)

The tarling's size increases to Large, its Hit Die size increases to a **d10** (its hit point maximum consequently increases by **1** for each of its Hit Dice), and the damage dice of its bite and tail attacks (see below), as well as its Arcane Activation, increase from a **d8** to a **d10**. This growth improvement ignores the normal maximum companion size for a tamer.

GROWTH IV

Prerequisite: 13th-level tamer, Growth III

Type: Passive (companion)

The tarling's size increases to Huge, its Hit Die size increases to a **d12** (its hit point maximum consequently increases by **1** for each of its Hit Dice), and the damage dice of its bite and tail attacks (see below), as well as its Arcane Activation, increase from a **d10** to a **d12**. This growth improvement ignores the normal maximum companion size for a tamer.

NECROTAR TONGUE II

Prerequisite: 13th-level tamer, Necrotar Tongue I

Type: Passive (companion)

The range of the tarling's Necrotar Tongue action increases to **40 feet**, it can pull the target up to **35 feet** closer to it on a failed save, and the damage dealt to the grappled target increases to **18 (4d8)** necrotic damage.

When the tarling's tamer reaches 17th level in the tamer class, the recurring damage of this action increases to **22 (5d8)**.

SIEGE MONSTER

Prerequisite: 17th-level tamer, Growth IV

Type: Active (bonus action)

As a bonus action, the tarling can grow to Gargantuan size for **1 minute**. It gains a number of temporary hit points equal to its maximum number of Hit Dice, and the damage dice of its bite and tail attacks increase to **4d4**. For the duration, the tarling deals double damage to structures and objects.

TITANSPAWN

Prerequisite: 17th-level tamer

Type: Passive (companion)

The tarling is **immune** to the charmed and frightened conditions.



APPENDIX E — SOUNDS

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