

The Damned

A new template by Mike Mearls

Mallock, the prince of lies, the bearer of poison-kissed oaths, bids his followers to seek far and wide for those who can be bent to the cause of evil. The path of damnation forms one step at a time. A paladin may accept a vial of poison that can slay a rampaging demon. A sorcerer agrees to cast a few simple spells to help one of Mallock's clerics in return for a mighty staff. Bit by bit, these heroes come to rely on the underhanded shortcuts that Mallock offers, until they are well within his grasp. Like many of the most successful tyrants, Mallock enslaves his victims with their own hopes, dreams, and secret desires.

In most cases, Mallock's victims undergo a slow alignment change, straying to evil one heedless act at a time. A few poor wretches undergo a far more serious transformation, one that warps their bodies to mirror the corruption that infests their souls. These unfortunate victims of Mallock's ambition are suspended between their true hearts and the relentless siren's call of evil. While Mallock and his clerics prefer to ensnare a victim in his own desires, sometimes the corrupted attempt to pull back from the abyss. In some cases, Mallock becomes so enraged at his priests' failure that he takes a personal, brutal role in the process. The corrupting essence of his divine nature warps and changes the unfortunate victim, overwhelming his true nature with venomous hatred, consuming greed, and mindless evil. Mallock detests such heavy-handed tactics, but some warriors of good are too important to let slip away.

"The damned" is a template you can apply to any victim of Mallock's personal intervention in the corrupting process initiated by his followers. The Father of Serpents loathes using such inelegant methods, but some spirits prove too difficult to crack through mere words.

The damned is a new template designed to be used with *Book of Hallowed Might II: Portents and Visions* by Monte Cook and Mike Mearls. Find out more about the book at its home page: <www.montecook.com/mpress_BOHM2.html>. However, this free web enhancement gives you all the information you need to insert it in any d20 System fantasy campaign. If you're not using the Pantheon of the Celestial River from *Book of Hallowed Might II: Portents and Visions*, you may substitute another god of deceit for Mallock.

CREATING THE DAMNED

You can apply this template to any creature with an Intelligence score of at least 8. Most of its recipients are paladins, good clerics, and other heroes, but Mallock's faithful sometimes target the clergy of rival, evil faiths for their infernal ministrations.

The damned creature uses all of its base stats except as noted below.

Size and Type: The creature's size and type remain the same. If it has any alignment-based subtypes, such as good or lawful, it loses them. It gains the evil subtype.

Speed: The creature's speed and movement modes remain the same.

Armor Class: The damned gains thick, scaly skin studded with small spikes. This infernal transformation reflects the damned creature's internal corruption. It gains a +2 natural bonus to Armor Class. If the creature already has a natural Armor Class bonus, increase it by 2.

Attack: The damned gains fangs and sharp, black claws. It may use these natural attacks in place of a weapon. Its claws count as its primary attack and its bite as its secondary one. Its damage is based on its size. When using an attack as a standard action, it strikes with one claw or whatever weapon it carries.

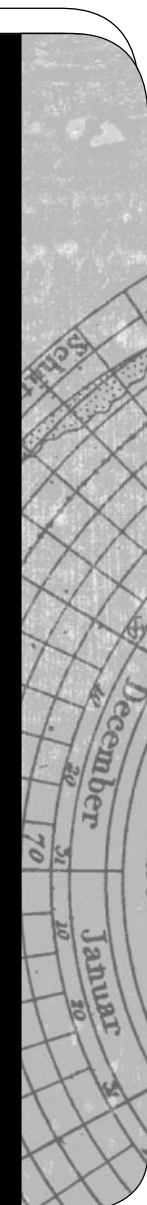
Full Attack: When armed with a sword or other weapon, the damned mixes its natural weapon with its armed attacks. It uses its claws, if one or both of its hands are free, and its bite. Remember that secondary natural attacks—in this case the bite—suffer a –5 attack roll penalty.

Damage: The damned creature's terrible claws and vicious fangs inflict damage based on its size.

Size	Bite Damage	Claw Damage
Fine	1	—
Diminutive	1d2	1
Tiny	1d3	1d2
Small	1d4	1d3
Medium	1d6	1d4
Large	1d8	1d6
Huge	2d6	1d8
Gargantuan	3d6	2d6
Colossal	4d6	3d6

Special Attacks: The damned's special attacks remain unchanged unless they affect only a specific alignment type. In the case of these powers, a good or evil alignment becomes its opposite type; swap good for evil, and vice versa, throughout its rules description. For example, a paladin's *smite evil* becomes *smite good*. It otherwise functions as normal. Any alignment abilities based on law or chaos remain unchanged.

Corrupting Venom (Ex): The damned's claws drip with a black, viscous poison. The poison inflicts 1d4 points of



Constitution as its initial and secondary damage. The Fortitude save DC is 13 + the damned's Charisma modifier.

Howl of the Damned (Su): This horrid, tortured screech reflects the damned's internal agony, transforming its misery and pain into concussive waves of sonic energy. Once per day, the damned can create a 30-foot cone of sonic energy that deals 1d6 points of damage per Hit Die. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + half the damned's HD + its Charisma modifier) halves this damage. On a failed save, the damned's targets are deafened for 1d10 rounds and are knocked prone.

Special Qualities: As with its special attacks, the damned's good- or evil-based abilities now function on the opposite alignment. This includes feats, supernatural abilities, spell-like powers, extraordinary abilities, and all class features. For example, a paladin's *detect evil* becomes *detect good*. Abilities that affect lawful or chaotic targets remain unchanged.

Spells: A damned spellcaster loses the ability to prepare or cast any spells that have the good descriptor. In addition, reverse the alignments in the descriptions of any spells that lack alignment descriptors. For example, a spell that would harm evil creatures now harms good ones. Spells with alignment descriptors remain unchanged.

A divine spellcaster loses his current domains along with their associated powers and spells. He now counts as a cleric of Mallock, regardless of his alignments, and selects new domains from Mallock's list (see *Book of Hallowed Might II*, Chapter Three).

If the base creature has the ability to turn undead, he now rebukes them instead.

The damned gain the following abilities:

- Spell resistance equal to 10 + its HD
- DR 5/good (or 5/+1)
- Fire, cold, and sonic immunity
- Acid and electricity resistance 5

Aura of Damnation (Su): The damned soul is a physical well of evil energy. Wherever it walks, it leaves behind a trail of browned grass, dead flies, and other signs of its blasphemous presence. Any non-evil creature that comes within 30 feet of the damned must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + half the damned's HD + its Charisma modifier) or suffer a -2 profane penalty to Strength and Constitution. This penalty persists as long as the creature remains within this area. The results of a creature's save against a particular damned soul's aura counts for 24 hours, whether it succeeded or failed. After this time, it must attempt the save again.

Proof Against Aging: Damned souls do not age or die of natural causes while they possess this template.

Spell-Like Abilities: One of the damned can cast *dimension door* and *teleport* once per day as a sorcerer with a level equal to its Hit Dice or 10, whichever is greater.

Abilities: Apply the following modifiers to the base creature's ability scores: Str +2, Dex +0, Con +2, Int +2, Wis +2, Cha +4.

Skills and Feats: As base creature's

Challenge Rating: As base creature's + 2

Alignment: The good/evil aspect of the base creature's alignment becomes evil.

Level Adjustment: +4

USING THE DAMNED

The damned template provides an obvious means for introducing a potentially sympathetic villain. Driven by hatred and rage, the damned lash out at all that is good and just. Many of them lurk at society's edges, preying on the weak and defenseless. They bear no particular grudge toward Mallock and his followers. In some cases, they ally with them to help spread pain and misery. Only the blackest of evil acts can soothe the damned soul's endless torment, driving the creature to pursue them with an addict's relentless obsession.

That is not to say that the damned are mindless killing machines. Many of them draw on the dim memories of their pasts to help concoct elaborate plans of foul conquest and destruction. Effectively immortal unless they meet a violent end, the damned are content to create strategies that may take centuries to bring to fruition.

The damned usually have long, dark careers in evil. No one controls them, unless they willingly accede to service, which makes them powerful allies and dreaded opponents among Mallock's followers and other evil folk. Many of the damned build up terrifying reputations for slaughter and other evil acts. They can become folk legends made all the more horrid by the truth of their existence.

If you want to use a damned paladin, cleric, or similar hero as a villain who can be redeemed, the player characters need to find clues that they can rescue their foe from his torment. Perhaps someone tried to save him in the past, allowing you to scatter clues in the form of ancient journals and records. In addition, the damned may already have a few redemption points, making it somewhat easier for the characters to bring him back to the light. The characters might need to quest to recover the damned's ancient weapon, convince an elf or outsider ally he once fought with to aid them in their efforts, or slay the priest or devil who first corrupted him. If they succeed, they not only destroy a champion of evil but possible rekindle a force for good.

Mortals are far from Mallock's sole target for corruption. Angels and other good-aligned outsiders may suffer this template, especially if they have grown haughty and overconfident in their abilities to resist temptation. (In such cases, consider using this template as an alternative to the falling rules offered in *Anger of Angels*.) The characters might need an angel's assistance to complete a quest, only to discover that he long ago fell into the dark. This plot twist gives the

PCs an enemy that they must overcome with means other than raw power. You can create an even more vexing problem by making the damned angel a terrible, destructive fiend whose death would solve many of the PCs' problems. When they are forced to allow the creature to escape, important NPC allies may demand that the characters hunt down the fiend or face exile or some other punishment. An angry mob of commoners, ignorant of the damned's true nature and important purpose, might surround the party and demand justice. *Fireballs* and *vorpal swords* mean little to a grieving widow who wants to know why the characters let her husband's killer escape.

REDEEMING THE DAMNED

All creatures that receive this template proved intractable to Mallock's preferred methods of corruption. While their bodies, souls, and minds have been warped by his unholy magic, some core of their original personality always remains. If you see or meet a damned soul you knew before its fall, you may make a Sense Motive or Spot check (DC 25) to determine the creature's true identity. Should you succeed, you may attempt the long, arduous process of removing this template. While a damned creature gave in partially to Mallock's temptation, in the end it resisted the call of evil and had to be forced to its path. This fact gives the creature a chance for redemption.

Rescuing a damned soul requires patience and dedication. The target of these efforts invariably resists them, as it takes several attempts to strip away the hatred and anger that burns within a damned soul. Every victim of Mallock's evil influence requires a unique method of rescue, but those methods share several key traits.

First, a damned creature can be swayed only by an old love, a close friend, or duty to a beloved cause. An ancient knight may respond to the crown and scepter of the long dead royal line he once served, while a paladin could be redeemed by his wife or child.

Second, and more importantly, this process takes time. The damned never leap back to their former ways at the merest reminder of their old lives. Instead, the evil they drown in must drain away week by week.

Each time you expose a damned soul to the person or object that can rouse its ties to its buried past, it must make a Will save opposed by the Diplomacy check of whoever tries to sway it. If it fails, it gains a redemption point. A damned soul takes no actions on the round in which it fails this save, as fond memories of its past life surge over it. At the end of the action it spends lost in its memories, it must make another Will save with a DC equal to 10 + its redemption points, if it has accumulated more than five of them.

If the damned soul fails this save, it is redeemed. It loses this template and collapses to the ground. The saved creature has an effective Constitution score of 1 due to the trauma of this change. It can heal this damage as if it were temporary ability score damage. In some cases, the saved creature may die in short order. It immediately ages, as the years that passed since its transformation catch up with it. However, if the creature would ordinarily be dead of old age (see age tables on page 109 of the *Player's Handbook*), it enjoys 5 minutes of mortal life before it finally passes on. Any measures that could reduce its age or prolong its life function as normal, though the creature may be so ancient that it must somehow overcome centuries of age in order to survive.

A redeemed damned soul invariably joins its original deity in the afterlife, as its actions while suffering from this template were beyond its control.

Credits and Legal

Design by Mike Mearls

Cover illustration by rk post

Editing and Production by Sue Weinlein Cook

Graphic Design by Peter Whitley

For more free game material, check out "The Stuff" at Monte Cook's Website: www.montecook.com



©2004 Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved. "The Damned" is produced under version 1.0a, 4.0, and draft versions of the Open Game License and the System Reference Document by permission of Wizards of the Coast. Subsequent versions will incorporate final versions of the license, guide, and document.

Malhavoc is a registered trademark owned by Monte J. Cook.



The following items are hereby designated as Product Identity in accordance with Section 1(e) of the Open Game License, version 1.0a: Any and all Malhavoc Press logos and identifying marks and trade dress, such as all Malhavoc Press product and product line names including but not limited to Legacy of the Dragons and Monte Cook's Arcana Unearthed; organizations; names of places, gods, characters, and magic items; and any and all stories, storylines, histories, plots, thematic elements, and dialogue; and all artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, illustrations, maps, and cartography, likenesses, poses, logos, or graphic designs. The above Product Identity is not Open Game Content.

Subject to the Product Identity designation above, the entirety of "The Damned" is designated as Open Game Content, including anything contained herein which is already Open Game Content by virtue of appearing in the System Reference Document or some other Open Game Content source.

Some portions of this article which are Open Game Content originate from the System Reference Document and are ©1999, 2000, and 2001 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The remainder of these Open Game Content portions of this book are hereby added to Open Game Content and if so used, should bear the COPYRIGHT NOTICE "The Damned" ©2004 Monte J. Cook."

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction, retransmission, or unauthorized use of the artwork or non-Open Game Content herein is prohibited without express written permission from Monte Cook, except for purposes of review or use of Open Game Content consistent with the Open Game License.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. This material is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity; (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts, creatures, characters, stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes, and graphic, photographic, and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses, and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical, or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor; (g) "Use," "Used," or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate, and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content; (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title, and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify, and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000–2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

d20 System Reference Document Copyright 2000–2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, and Bruce R. Cordell, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

"The Damned" by Mike Mearls, copyright 2004 Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.

Book of Hallowed Might II: Portents and Visions copyright 2004 Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.