

## Guashdan

Large Aberration (aquatic)

**Hit Dice:** 5d8+10 (33 hp)

**Initiative:** +0

**Speed:** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

**AC:** 14 (-1 size, +5 natural),

Touch 9, Flat-footed 14

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +3/+12

**Attack:** Bite +7 melee

**Full Attack:** Bite +7 melee,

2 Claws +2 melee

**Damage:** Bite 2d4+5,

2 Claws 1d6+5

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

**Special Attack:** Feeding Frenzy

**Special Qualities:** Scent,

Cannibalistic Contagion

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 10, Con 14,

Int 4, Wis 6, Cha 4

**Skills:** Hide +9, Listen +9,

Spot +10

**Feats:** Alertness, Power Attack

**Climate/Terrain:** Any coastal

**Organization:** Solitary

or Gang (2-12)

**CR:** 3

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Treasure:** None

**Advancement:** None

### COMBAT

**Feeding Frenzy:** Guashdan attack in a voracious flurry, their hungering maws snapping and tearing with frightful speed. If at least one claw and bite hits, the target must make a Reflex save (DC 13) or the guashdan may make another bite attack immediately. The biting attack frenzy can continue as long as the target fails his saves and the guashdan keeps hitting with the bite, up to a maximum of 4 successive hits.

**Cannibalistic Contagion:** Guashdanism is spread through the consumption of contaminated humanoid bodies. Any humanoid that consumes flesh or blood from a carcass that has soaked in the ocean must make a Fort save (DC 13) or be transformed into a guashdan in 1d4 minutes. Those who consume the flesh or imbibe the blood of a guashdan or a recovered guashdan must make a Fort save (DC 17) or be transformed in 1d4 rounds. If a guashdan goes for 30+1d10 days without eating any humanoid flesh, it will recover to its former state over the course of 3d8 agonizing minutes. Even after recovery, however, the individual will



## Guashdan

### The Feasting Fratricide

*"That our reunion should come to such an end is more than a clan should have to bear. Four years we were deprived of her presence. Four years of waiting and pining. Four years of praying and her return brings a rapture that is most cruelly betrayed. The kinsmen that are of age will gather at the pyre tonight. Athgal will lead the hunt, though it must be destroying him to take arms against the monstrosity that was his beloved niece, my darling cousin."*

- From the final journal entry of Hilin Adlus

*From heaven or hell, can there be a more perverse curse than that of the guashdan? Even those plagues that corrode the flesh and torment the soul might be considered less horrid, for ultimately they ruin only the afflicted. The terror of the guashdan extends beyond the immediate victim to all beings in their presence, although none may suffer more than the malformed wretches themselves. For their transgression against taboo, they are condemned to repeat their sins again and again, rampaging and destroying countless innocents until obstruction or their own death occurs. Even if salvation should extend its uplifting hand, they will never truly be able to escape the debt of their iniquity.*

*Countless corpses float in the seas. Most are there by accident or chance, unfortunates claimed by storm or sickness, while others fall forever into the chilling depths by intent, whether their own or by the hands of others. Untold men, women, and children are slowly decaying or being picked apart by the lowly creatures that subside on unpalatable carcasses. But eating carrion is the practice of scavengers; it is their undesirable yet necessary role. The consumption of a drifting body is a dangerous business that is best left to nature's custodians, for all manner of ailments can be contracted from the dead. Above fear of disease and parasites, beyond aversion to deceased bodies except cleaned game, we are repulsed by the deceased of our own kind. The handling of a cadaver or the bearing of the perished to the grave would sorely test the resolve of most people, but there are some who morbid dread does not deter. Whether out of contemptuous spite for moral convention or a reluctant acceptance imposed by dictating circumstances, there are heinous, macabre acts that should never be performed but on occasion are. Among these is the atrocity of cannibalism. Civilized beings born with enough sense to know better but who still ingest the flesh of their expired brethren risk social ridicule, excommunication, or execution, but those who dare to consume a corpse that has been steeped in the ocean's heaving froth wager a higher stake. Those who eat the briny meat may find ultimate damnation as guashdan.*

Guashdan is the name for one who has been twisted by unknown forces as a result of cannibalism under certain conditions. It is not clear why, but the consumption of a body that has been exposed to seawater can evoke a transformation in humanoids. After partaking of the flesh, there is a delay of some minutes during which abdominal discomfort spreads to an agony that wracks the entire body. The actual alteration spans only scant moments - a few seconds of agonizing disfigurement. The result is a grotesque being with great physical strength and appetite for humanoids, particularly the species it belonged to before its metamorphosis.

Regardless of prior build and stature, the transfiguration changes all humanoids into guashdan of similar size and appearance, leaving little to identify the individual. The new physique resembles something of a freakish amphibian horror with gray-green skin, bulging chameleon eyes, and a crown of tatty black hair. The broad mouth is rimmed with thick, dark lips and sparsely lined with yellowed teeth. Towering eight to nine feet tall, they easily outsize their favored quarry, which they catch and tear with fiendish claws before rapturous consumption.

Guashdan favor coastal seawaters, but they readily relocate elsewhere if it improves their opportunities to hunt people. With webbed feet and a fin-ridge down their hunched back, they are quick swimmers and can snatch unfortunates from low boats and spirit them off swiftly to their demise. Mothers often use the name of the guashdan to frighten children away from solitary trips to the water's edge. But a guashdan is seldom so lackadaisical as to remain beneath the surface, waiting patiently for an unsuspecting morsel to stray into the lapping waves or idle upon a riverbank. They are not always so subtle and are known to come ashore or even board ships in search of prey, particularly in nighttime raids when their vision excels. Some guashdan never even see the oceans, having suffered their alteration inland. These monsters favor hiding in caves or abandoned buildings from which they can slip out to hunt.

As horrid the state of being a guashdan is, it is not without hope. While it is the flesh of man that they crave, they do not require it to survive; they will kill and devour animals if they cannot find humanoids to fill their bellies. If a guashdan survives long enough without tasting its favored dish, the transformation will some day reverse, and the creature will return to its former self.



The conversion is not without its dangers though, for within the person has been awakened a dire hunger that will plague them for the rest of their days. The blighted individual is fettered with a lifelong appetite for kindred flesh. Should that desire be fulfilled, they shall again revert into a voracious

*What brings about this unholy metamorphosis of the mind and body that induces even ghoulish fratricide? Is it a punishment from the gods, a fitting retribution for performance of such a depraved act, converting them into a cannibal of truest form? Are the bodies that drift in the tide lained in some way because men were intended for burial within the land we were born upon? Or could there perhaps be a more chilling, underlying reason that some are affected and other offenders are spared the heinous alteration? Is it possible that vulnerability to guashdanism is a characteristic that lies in dormancy, flowing within our blood until it is awakened? Could the accursed beast already be slumbering in us, passed from parents to offspring through our lines? The thought is enough to chill even this intrepid explorer.*

ravager. Further, just as a sea-borne carcass can elicit the monstrous form, so too can ingesting the flesh or blood of a guashdan or one that has recovered from the loathsome state, so the propagation of the beasts can begin outside the usual conditions.

always crave humanoid flesh. Whenever they are in the presence of a dead humanoid, they must make a Will save (DC 13) to resist eating it, which will immediately prompt a transformation back into a guashdan.

**\*Skills:** Racial +4 Bonus to Spot, Listen, and Hide.

## Encounters

**Low(1-5):** A wealthy family hires the party to guard over and transport their only son to a sanitarium. The son is a robust man in his late thirties but his mind is only that of a feeble child. In addition to his mental infirmity, the parents warn that he is prone to dangerous fits of violence and must adhere to a strict vegetarian diet. He is also, unfortunately, a recovered guashdan.

**Mid(6-10):** Captured by a primitive tribe, the party has been thrust into a sturdy bamboo prison to starve until they die or are sacrificed. Those around them are already wasting away and, what's worse, one is a recovered guashdan. If he reverts, the carnage within the cages will be appalling, or could they perhaps turn his curse to their advantage?

**High(11+):** A saboteur from the city state of Deldea has accomplished a masterful stroke to shatter the defenses of the neighboring city of Hovolis. By slipping guashdan blood into the evening stew of the militia, he has caused a great many of the soldiers to transform into cannibalistic monsters. Those men-at-arms who were not altered are fighting for their lives within their own barracks and desperately need any help they can get. They have sounded the alarm, but who will come to their aid? Who will help them defend their walls when Deldea's forces besiege them in two days?

