

Mere Troll

(Wayne Imlach)

Mere-trolls are malevolent, humanoid creatures typically found in Mercania (where they are known as "fyrd-trulls"), Krarth, and the Gnawing Wastes.

Tall and gaunt, they are easily mistaken for a man if glimpsed from afar. On closer inspection, the illusion is broken - dark, reptilian skin glistens over sinewy muscles, while a cruel, fang-filled maw dominates a bestial face. Yellow bloodshot eyes with slit-like pupils complete the monstrous visage.

Mere-trolls hunt near water and typically dig their lairs into the soft wet earth along the banks of a river or lake. They can remain submerged in the water for hours, with the only evidence of their presence being the top of their heads and their slitted yellow eyes peering unblinking from between slimy tangled roots. They are most active during the hours of darkness or within the dim confines of a lair, as sunlight dries and cracks their miry skin and burns their sensitive eyes, all but blinding them.

The blood of the mere-troll compels all who are unfortunate enough to imbibe it to become subservient to the creature (MAGICAL ATTACK 24). Fortunately, most are too savage to make use of this power, preferring to slay and consume those that fall under their thrall. This enchantment can be removed with a 'Dispel Magic' cast with at least 9 Magic Points.

All mere-trolls are ostensibly male - the female equivalent is a much rarer and altogether more dangerous creature known as a 'mere-hag' (roughly translated from the Mercanian 'fyrd-voor'). Mere-hags are larger and more dangerous, covered as they are with an even tougher hide and possessing a wicked cunning.

MERE-TROLL (Mere-hag values after the oblique)			RE 8/9
ATTACK	20/22	Talons (d6 +2, 5) ¹⁾	
DEFENCE	12	Hide (AF 3/4)	
MAGICAL ATTACK	N/A	Magic Points	None
MAGICAL DEFENCE	18/20	Health Points	1d6 +16/1d6 +20
EVASION	4	Movement	10m (20m)
STEALTH	14	PERCEPTION	9 (Darksight)

In sunlight, the creature is weakened considerably and suffers a -4 penalty to ATTACK and DEFENCE, as well as inflicting only (d6, 3) damage.

Instead of attacking with her claws, a mere-hag can spew a gout of blood on a target, losing 2 Health Points in the process. Victims must roll equal to or under their Reflexes on D20 to avoid swallowing the noxious liquid. Those that fail must resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 24 or fall under the hag's thrall.

Mere-hags spend a great deal of time in the water, and their lairs are often found among submerged caves at the bottom of lakes or deep rivers. Large treasure hoards can accumulate over the years, scavenged from the bodies of their victims. They are somewhat more intelligent than mere-trolls, and will not hesitate to use weapons in place of their claws.

Unlike the oft dim-witted males, a mere-hag will likely have several other large aquatic creatures as guardians, both natural and magical in origin - water leapers, mere-gaunts, and even wyverns might be found guarding her territory.

1)

Great strength imparts a +2 modifier to the armour bypass and damage of the mere-troll (included here).

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