

The Kvol

The kvols tell of a pocket dimension only a few miles wide. This tiny demiplane was a prison for terrible self-consuming evil for millennia. As the evil began to decay into oblivion, the kvols grew in number, feasting on the rot like maggots on carrion. As the kvols multiplied, they could see the veil between the worlds become thinner. Some kvols even took up arms against the remaining evil to speed up the process. When the dimension collapsed, the only creatures small enough to escape through the minute rifts between the two worlds were the tiny squid-like beings from disembodied kvols. Stranger still, the kvol race is not foreign to the world of men; they have been appearing through similar rifts for ages.

Sages speculate that kvols are a product of the fabric of reality itself. These scholars believe that the universe has a built-in safety mechanism for when the balance of good and evil becomes violently tipped towards evil. The world itself quickly expels the evil, excising it and the surrounding area as one might remove a cancerous tumor. The offending land then resides in a self-contained demiplane where it festers for untold ages and collapses. The kvols are part of that process, acting as agents of entropy to the evil that resides within. When the malevolence is mostly consumed, the energies that maintain this microcosm collapse and deposit the kvols into the world, sometimes in great hordes. When unleashed from their

extradimensional prisons, most kvols continue to fight the forces of evil in the darkest corners of the world.



PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: While kvols differ greatly in both size (from Small to Large-sized) and form, they all share one unmistakable feature; they are all essentially transparent slime shells filled with a colony of live, luminescent squid-like creatures. That they are both sapient and sensible and not some unearthly being hell-bent on eating one's face off is not entirely remarkable, as they claim various dark and secluded areas as their home (and they fit right in with the weirdness of these realms). In fact, from a distance they look almost heroic, appearing as radiant silhouettes of stately humanoids. However, up close their alien nature becomes a lot more apparent.

The skin of a kvol is actually a shell made of mucus, which is a slimy, semi-solid, transparent material that the squid-like creatures create for a variety of uses, including both procreation (often to safeguard eggs) and for defense. The mucus shell is constantly maintained by hundreds of Fine, Diminutive, or Tiny squid-like beings that dwell inside it, who individually are somewhat ordinary. These creatures create mucus from the tips of their tentacles, and possess both the ability to luminesce (with a cool-blue light) and to eject that luminescent material in the form of a mist cloud.

In Small-sized kvols, their translucent shells reveal that they are made up mostly of Fine-sized squid-like creatures, with a dozen or so Diminutive ones, and rarely any Tiny ones. Medium-size kvols have a more heterogenic mixture, with roughly equal parts of Fine, Diminutive, and Tiny creatures. Large-size kvols are a veritable living terrarium filled with mostly Tiny-sized creatures with a smattering of Diminutive-sized ones, and rarely any Fine-sized specimens. Despite their size, all kvols contain roughly the same number of squid-like beings.

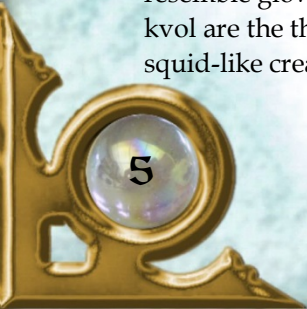
Perhaps the most peculiar trait of the kvol is that it almost perfectly resembles the form of a humanoid, and even moves in a similar fashion. Through a perfectly coordinated effort, the minuscule squid-like creatures serve as muscle and bone to the flimsy shell they have created. Together, they also make up the kvol's mind and motivation. Kvols can even wear armor and wield weapons just as their form might suggest. To finish this peculiar adventurer, two bubbles of concentrated bioluminescent jelly are placed and maintained in the "head" of the kvol that resemble glowing eyes (though the actual eyes of the kvol are the thousands of beady-little eyes of the squid-like creatures within its shell).

A kvol's form is surprisingly static. While each individual can be patterned off everything from a Large-size giant to a Small-sized gnome, the shape and size of one individual kvol will never sway during its entire existence. There is some evidence that each kvol's shadow-like form is patterned after a particular hero that failed to avert the disaster that led to that kvol's existence. It is as if some small part of that fallen hero's essence lives on to form the kvols that will eventually make things right again. This, of course, means that most kvols have dozens, sometimes hundreds, of "twins" that look exactly like themselves, each harking from the same specific disaster that spawned them.

Kvols can learn languages and speak in a chorus of tiny voices that make up one impressive voice with a surprisingly melodic and pleasant tone. While this does much to give them a less alien visage, their appearances are near-entirely undone when one watches a kvol eat. While taking in nourishment, a kvol slowly engulfs its prey like an over-sized amoeba, and then the colony of squid-like creatures within tears the food apart mercilessly like hungry piranha. To make matters worse, their favorite delicacies are fallen foes.

ECOLOGY & SOCIETY: Kvols have no sexual organs or suggestion of gender as their bodies are only vague silhouettes of humanoid forms. Even the squid-like creatures contained inside them are asexual, reproducing only when another is destroyed by simply splitting in half to make two creatures out of one. Extracting one particular squid-like being from a kvol can be very difficult, and it is often fatal to the tiny specimen (who is quickly replaced by the kvol collective). The rare creatures that somehow survive this separation grow very quickly, eventually becoming a kvraken (Huge-sized, magical squid-like creature) in about one year's time.

Kvols spontaneously generate in naturally occurring demiplanes in which great evil is contained. As the evil wanes, the population of kvols increases. The frequency is exponential, so that by the time the demi-realm collapses, most of the kvol colonies entering the mortal world are brand-new or only a few days old. While very naïve at this young age, they are fully grown and functional adults. Kvols are immortal creatures that never show signs of age. Unfortunately, their unquenchable thirst to destroy evil often brings about their demise in less than a century after entering this realm.



Kvols live to fight evil, and this can be a harsh and short life for a creature that resides in the dark corners of the world where wickedness often permeates the ruling classes. While they will occasionally team up with others of their own kind to fight a sinister villain, kvols lack any coherent society of their own. Instead, they tend to adopt the culture of whatever band of adventurers or heroes that share their causes.

RELATIONS TO CORE RACES: Kvols initially have trouble fitting in with other races. They can be ripe with bad habits and rash behavior. Kvols are also prone to a dark sense of humor that others may find tactless and crude. Another difference is that kvols care little for notions of love or romance, as they simply cannot relate. However, a kvol can also be passionate, witty, caring, and inspiring. Once one gets to know a kvol, it is much easier to overlook its disturbing qualities and admire its fierce spirit. Many who manage to befriend a kvol also find a life-long companion.

ALIGNMENT & RELIGION: Kvols are almost always chaotic, having neither the mind nor the patience to recognize the virtues of law and order. Only the most self-hating of kvols would become evil, as they are naturally inclined against the darker path. An evil kvol would be the self-destructive sort, desperately trying to end its existence through outrageous challenge.

Kvols are most often non-religious, though have, on occasion, taken up the flag of any god whose goal includes eradicating evil at any cost. Kvols will also not hesitate to make alliances with powerful outsiders who share the same goal.

ADVENTURERS: Kvols are often quick-tempered and ill-mannered, though lack the selfishness and greed that would categorize them as truly deplorable. In fact, most view the kvols as a force of good, as many kvols relentlessly stalk and destroy evil at every opportunity. This tendency is instinctual; when asked about their motivation they often convey confused responses such as "Evil is my natural prey."

Kvols tend to become excellent fighters and rangers, viewing those classes as the best avenue to hunt and kill evil. They will occasionally take up a religion that is congruent with their cause. Kvol paladins are typically better mannered than others of their ilk, as their training

teaches them the patience and humility that the common kvol typically lacks. Kvols also tend to be drawn to arcane classes, especially the wizard. Kvols can be any other class, but such individuals are somewhat rare.

NAMES: Kvols refer to themselves in the plural form, fully cognizant that they are actually made up of hundreds of tiny creatures. Thus, their names resemble how people refer to a family unit, by pluralizing the surnames and proceeding it with "the."

Example Names: the... Baccuses, Cordos, Felors, Grels, Jarts, Kelkors, Quorts, Rargs, Terises, Ukkobs, Veluses, Wulps, Zors, Zuls.



Kvol Racial Traits

+2 Dexterity, +2 Wisdom, -2 Charisma: Kvols are preternaturally nimble and very clever. Unfortunately they are somewhat crude and exceedingly alien. Large kvols gain a bonus to Strength instead of Dexterity.

Size: Although the majority of kvols are Medium-sized, they can also be Small or Large sized. At character creation, Small, Medium, or Large size can be chosen, with applicable bonuses and penalties (ability scores are already adjusted above). Their size does not change afterwards.

Type: Kvols are Aberrations.

Base Speed: 30 feet.

Detect Evil: Once per day, a kvol can cast detect evil as a spell-like ability. The caster level is equal to the kvol's character level.

Boneless: Kvols can move in ways that other creatures cannot. A kvol gains a +2 racial bonus on Acrobatics and Escape Artist skill checks. In addition, the kvol gains a +1 bonus on its Combat Maneuver Bonus and Combat Maneuver Defense.

Bioluminescent: The kvol can (at-will) cause its body to shed light as bright as a torch.

Luminescent Mist: A kvol may choose to exude a cloud of luminescent mist once per hour. The iridescent blue patch spreads out in a 10-foot-radius cloud that provides total concealment and persists for 3d4 rounds. Once used, the kvol loses its "bioluminescent" quality for the duration of 1 hour.

Swarm-like Qualities: Kvols are made up of a colony of Fine, Diminutive, and/or Tiny squid-like creatures living under a thin membrane comprised of mucus. As such, they share much in common with a swarm. Though, due to their slime "skin" and dense nature, they cannot be fully classified as a genuine swarm. Regardless, kvols are not subject to critical hits or flanking. In addition, kvols are never staggered or reduced to a dying state by damage. Lastly, a kvol takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and many evocation spells.

Immortal Swarm: A kvol reduced to 0 hit points or below instantly transforms into a colony of squid-like creatures that immediately releases a luminescent mist cloud. The colony is non-sentient (and thus should be under control of the Game Master) and has hit points equal to the kvol's Constitution score. Though the swarm has a vague memory of friend versus foe, it will take every opportunity to flee rather than fight. After eight, uninterrupted hours of rest and feeding, the colony will

re-knit its mucus hide and the kvol is reborn with 1 hit point per character level. The kvol will have only the vaguest recollection of its time as a colony and, in particularly hostile environs, may be missing days of memories. If the colony is slain, however, the kvol is annihilated as well.

Due to their nature, kvols cannot be raised or resurrected from the dead, nor do they leave a singular corpse. An individual squid-like creature raised from the dead will not incorporate back into a kvol, but may eventually grow into a kvraken (a titanic, squid-like creature).

A kvol rendered unconscious by means of nonlethal damage also activates this ability, though continues to heal subdual damage normally (1 hit point per hour per character level). The kvol reforms when the subdual damage is sufficiently healed to less than the kvol's current hit point total.

Languages: Kvols begin play speaking Common and either Abyssal or Infernal (chosen at character creation). Kvols with high Intelligence scores can choose from the following: Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblin, Infernal, Orc, Sylvan, and Undercommon.



Kvol Vital Statistics

RANDOM STARTING AGE

Adulthood	Barbarian, Rogue, Sorcerer	Bard, Fighter, Paladin,	Cleric, Druid, Monk, Wizard
1 year	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6

RANDOM HEIGHT

Size	Base Height	Modifier
Small	2.ft. 4 in	+2d6 inches
Medium	5 ft.	+4d4 inches
Large	8 ft.	+2d12 inches

AGING EFFECTS

Middle Age	Old	Venerable	Maximum Age
Kvols do not die of old age, nor have any effects from aging.			

Racial Feats

The following feats are available to a kvol character who meets the prerequisites.

DELIQUESCE

Once per day per level, you can slip out of bonds and grapples.

Prerequisites: Kvol

Benefit: Once per day per character level, as a swift action, you can automatically escape a grapple or free yourself from all bonds or shackles.

PRESENCE OF MIND

You have learned how to retain your mind even after your body has dissipated.

Prerequisite: Kvol, Unleash the Swarm feat.

Benefit: You retain control over the school of squid when your Immortal Swarm racial ability is active, effectively allowing the swarm to benefit from your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, as well as retaining all skills that rely on those ability scores. All other statistics of the school of squid remain the same, however, and you do not have access to any of your class abilities.

RE-KNIT

You can reform from your school of squid much faster.

Prerequisite: Kvol, Presence of Mind feat

Benefit: Once per hour, you can force the school of squid to reform into your kvol form as a full-round action. Doing so, however, leaves you at only 1 hit point when you revert to kvol form.

Normal: Even with the Presence of Mind feat, the kvol cannot force the school to re-knit its body before 8 hours of uninterrupted rest.

SEE MORE EVIL

You can detect evil more often.

Prerequisite: Kvol, Wis 15.

Benefit: Your detect evil racial trait can be activated a number of times per day equal to your Wisdom modifier.

SLIPPERY

You are particularly hard to hold onto.

Prerequisite: Kvol

Benefit: You gain a +4 racial bonus on all Escape Artist checks to slip free of bonds and squeeze into tight spaces, and you can squeeze through spaces as though you were one size category smaller than your your actual size.

UNLEASH THE SWARM

You can release the colony of squid-like creatures from your body to escape a desperate situation.

Prerequisite: Kvol, 3rd level

Benefit: You can activate your Immortal Swarm racial ability before being reduced to zero hit points. A colony released in this way has 3d8+3 hit points or hit points equal to your Constitution score (whichever is higher). The colony of squid-like creatures still behaves as if you were reduced to zero hit points; it will attempt to flee, is no longer under your control, and will not reincorporate back into a kvol until after 8 hours of uninterrupted rest.

VILE VENDETTA

Your attacks are fuelled with icy vengeance.

Prerequisites: Kvol.

Benefit: Once per hour, You may choose one creature that successfully attacked you within the last 6 rounds as a free action. You gain a +2 enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls against that specific creature for up to one hour.