



CULT OF THE SLEEPLESS

The followers of the Sleepless invite the wretched of Selovast to turn their wishes into reality. They gather in secret to share stories of their benevolent patron and encourage would-be dreamers to prove their worth. Those who show interest are tested, and the few who pass are taken to the dark depths of the Gullet to meet their new aboleth patron.

Upon entering the lightless waters of the Sleepless's underground cove, the acolytes experience their greatest desires fulfilled in an impossibly vivid dream. The aboleth that creates the illusion uses it to subjugate them, promising to make their dreams real if they do as it demands. This is when the recruits become dreamers. They go back into the waking world seemingly the same, with one significant exception: they would now do anything for more time within the dream. They know that eventually, if they truly prove their worth, the Sleepless will make their dream eternal.

AGENDA

Even the dreamers find it difficult to determine the true intentions of the Sleepless. Some tasks have obvious agendas, like obtaining magic items or locating potential recruits. Other jobs make less sense, like finding the name of a state official's great-grandfather, or pilfering an old document from the Resplendent Archives. Whatever the tasks entail, the Sleepless assures its followers they are of utmost importance, and the cultists treat them as such without hesitation.

As an organization, the cult remains neutral in most conflicts and prefers to operate in the underbelly of Selovast, hidden from the government's prying eyes. Like any other organization in the Crater, the cult has to pay "protection taxes" to the Dust Barons, the region's de facto rulers.

LEADERSHIP

The Sleepless swims in the deep trenches of the Gullet, contemplating lost eras of this world. Its memory stretches back through all of the ages of Elanor—it remembers a time long before Selovast was built, a time even before the wars of gods and primordials. Back then, the Sleepless still swam in these waters, although they had a different name under the rule of the aboleth empire. The great city of Zarlantaxu was destroyed by the gods millennia ago, but the Sleepless remembers it vividly. And the Sleepless does not forgive.

Three centuries ago, the landwalkers, spawn of the wretched gods, dammed the river that feeds the Sleepless's basin. The waterline dropped and the Sleepless was washed into the depths while the landwalkers built a city of their own upon the exposed ruins of Zarlantaxu. It tried to fight back, but its servants were eradicated, and even the Sleepless was nearly killed. When direct confrontation failed, it decided to practice patience—to let its presence be forgotten, and to claim its domain when the time was right.

The aboleth sees itself as the rightful sovereign of the region, but it respects the strength of the mortal city. It uses its enslave ability to collect agents, promising to fulfill their greatest desires in



exchange for obedience. The cult are the eyes and ears of the Sleepless, but are also its long reaching tendrils, carrying out its plans. The cult's recent growth is pleasing the Sleepless, as it prepares the final stage of its decade-old plan.

STORY SEEDS

The cult rarely asks outsiders for aid. They prefer to recruit members with specialized skills to meet the needs of the Sleepless. Those living just outside of the cult, on the other hand, are likely to reach out: worried families whose sons and daughters grew distant and strange, and then left home; state officials or crime bosses who wish to learn more about this mysterious order that spreads like a plague. Such individuals may seek out unaffiliated adventurers to investigate.

THE RUNAWAY

Five days ago, thirteen-year-old **Yaromir** disappeared. His mother, **Zoya**, who lives in a small apartment in the Damwater district, claims he was not there when she woke up that morning. Prior to that, he was acting strange, distant, as if

SLEEPLESS CULT DREAMER

Medium humanoid (any)

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Marked By The Sleepless. The dreamer has advantage on all Wisdom saving throws. The dreamer automatically fails Wisdom saving throws to resist spells and other magical effects from its aboleth master.

Spellcasting. The cult dreamer is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *friends*
1st-2nd level (2 2nd-level slots): *detect thoughts*, *dissonant whispers*, *invisibility*, *sleep*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The cult dreamer makes 2 shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.



something bothered him, though he never spoke of it. Zoya believes he was in trouble with some Crater gang, and that they have kidnapped him. But his room shows no sign of struggle and his little sister slept soundly through the night in the bed next to his. Zoya will pay 50 gp if the party can bring back her boy. She planned to use those savings to pay for her son's tuition at Moon Grove Preparatory School, but it will be of little worth if he never enrolls.

His friends have not seen Yaromir either, but they all can tell that he recently became quiet and contemplative, which is unusual for him. They think that perhaps his girlfriend, **Chesna**, broke up with him. If the characters find Chesna and convince her to speak, she will tell them that Yaromir tried to convince her to follow him into the caves of the Gullet to experience the "best time of her life." She refused, thinking his invitation meant something she wasn't ready for. Surprisingly, he then replied that he would just go on his own. That was six days ago, and she hasn't seen him since.

Exploring the caves of the Gullet can take weeks, but if the characters ask around and pay some coin to the destitute locals, they will gladly inform them that they have seen the boy. The locals pay attention to the comings and goings of the cultists and can point the characters to their cavern hideout.

Naturally, the cultists won't take kindly to uninvited guests. But they might be swayed to let the characters speak with Yaromir for five minutes if they promise to leave afterwards. Yaromir is indeed inside, and will tell them that he chose to leave and wants to stay here. Convincing him to come back is possible, but difficult due to the aboleth's influence. Should they succeed in doing so, or otherwise take the boy against his will, the aboleth will surely take interest in them.

ELDRITHC RECKONING

In recent months, the Sleepless has led the cult to act in ways that seed chaos within the Crater—planting fake evidence, pitting gangs against one another, and causing accidents in factories that leave hundreds without jobs. The situation in the Crater is dire, and the Fist has to send more troops than ever to maintain order. **Hand Rekka**, a veteran officer in the Fist of Selovast, is convinced that something is amiss. Several of her investigations have found cult activity to be at the root of the chaos, but then when she reported clues pointing to a cult hideout in Liptown, she was dropped off the case and was assigned to prison duty the next day. Rekka suspected cult influence in the Fist, and convinced her new superiors to allow her a brief vacation before entering the new role. She is willing to go vigilante

and hire a crew to investigate, offering 200 gp if they help her figure out the truth and collect enough evidence to pin down the cult agents she believes work for the Fist. Additionally, she will remember the characters fondly once she is promoted to captain, and will owe them a favor.

The search will lead the characters to an abandoned storage facility in Liptown. Inside is an underground room protected by two cultists and filled with schematics of the dam, accounts by the dam guards of the best points of entry, and notes that include today's date. If the two cultists are interrogated, they might divulge that the characters are too late, and that the rest of the cult is already there.

The cult is already in the midst of an operation to destroy the facility. This is all part of the aboleth's plan, and it has prepared for decades for this day, arming its cult with eldritch powers to pierce through the wards and personnel that guard the dam. With the Fist occupied by the chaos in the Crater below, there is no one to stop them except for the characters. They must prevent the cult from destroying the dam (and all its failsafe mechanisms) before hundreds of thousands die in the flood.

THE TRANSFORMATION

After meeting the Sleepless, dreamers begin a slow process of transformation. Their friends and families rarely notice anything out of the ordinary at first, perhaps only that they are slightly more distant than usual. As time goes on, however, they become more obsessed with the dream and less attached to their normal lives. They begin pursuing the tasks of the Sleepless fervently, hungering for the euphoria of the promised dream.

After a while, their friends and families begin to question their sanity and some try to intervene. Few attempts are successful, however, as the aboleth's influence is buried deep in their psyche. Long-time dreamers often detach from their normal lives and move into cult hideouts, choosing to spend their time with other cultists who understand them.

When a dreamer proves themselves to the Sleepless, a highly personalized process which can take months or even years, they are called to join the eternal dream. The cult celebrates their achievement, praying to meet them again in eternity. Upon reaching the cove, the dreamer plunges in and falls asleep, but this time they do not wake up. They spend days in a euphoric comatose state, breathing water as if it were air. Their body slowly transforms into that of a **somniex** – an aquatic horror, eternally bound to its aboleth master and destined to never see the surface world again.

Before the transformation finalizes, a lesser restoration spell cast on a dreamer will sever their link to the aboleth and restore them to sanity. After the transformation, only a wish spell or similarly powerful magic can change them back.



SOMNIEX

Medium aberration

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 10 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius) passive Perception 11

Languages Telepathy 30 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Water Breathing. The somniex can breathe only underwater.

Eyes Of The Sleepless. The somniex is bound to an aboleth master. While the somniex is alive, its master can see everything it sees and knows its exact location.

Indoctrinated. The somniex is always considered charmed by its aboleth master and is immune to being charmed by any other creature or effect.

ACTIONS

Tentacle. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage.

Enslave (1/Day). The somniex targets one creature within 5 feet of it and attempts to bring it under the control of its aboleth master. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed by the aboleth until the aboleth dies or until it is on a different plane of existence from the target. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to any somniex's Enslave for the next 24 hours.

The charmed target is under the aboleth's control and can't take reactions, and the aboleth and the target can communicate telepathically with each other over any distance.

Whenever the charmed target takes damage, the target can repeat the saving throw. On a success, the effect ends. No more than once every 24 hours, the target can also repeat the saving throw when it is at least 1 mile away from the aboleth.

REACTIONS

Psychic Feedback. When the somniex takes damage from a creature it can see, it can spend its reaction to channel the pain back at it. The creature must succeed on a DC 11 Intelligence saving throw. It takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

