

ESSENCE THIEF

An essence thief is an undead spirit that has been summoned to inhabit and animate a corpse. Essence thieves are, however, more than simply reanimated corpses, but are the spirits of thieves that have been twisted by necromantic energy to steal the essence and abilities of those they kill. Each kill making them more and more deadly.

Hoarders of Essence. An essence thief can absorb the essence of any creature it has killed and in so doing, absorb traits, abilities and power from these creatures. An essence thief can steal one trait, ability or special action from a corpse. To steal a creature's essence requires 1 hour and a fresh corpse killed by the essence thief themselves.

Summoned Servants. Essence thieves are often summoned by spellcasters to act as bodyguards, or as guardians for their lairs. An essence thief can be summoned in their simplest form with a *create undead* spell and can reanimate a creature with a CR of 4 or lower. If cast using a 7th level spell slot or higher the CR increases by 1 for each level. In this basic form the essence thief take the traits of the corpse they were summoned to inhabit but become undead. As they absorb the essences of other creatures they become more powerful.

Risk and Reward. As the servants of spellcasters an essence thief can become a truly powerful ally, but these same spellcasters must be careful what essences they allow their servants to absorb, for should the essence thief absorb the power of particularly potent beings they may well turn on their masters to steal their essence and continue growing.

These creatures are incredibly dangerous as the famous adventurer and wizard, Norquerk the Blind learned to his own demise when he ordered his creation to absorb the essence of a djinn.



SAMPLE ESSENCE THIEF

Here the essence thief template has been applied to a human veteran who wears plate armor. This veteran has been given two traits from the Essence Trait table, increasing its CR by 1 each for each trait.

ESSENCE THIEF VETERAN

Medium undead (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common,
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the veteran hits with it (included in the attack).

Ethereal Jaunt. As a bonus action, the veteran can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 14 (2d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

ESSENCE THIEF TEMPLATE

A beast, humanoid, giant, or monstrosity can become an essence thief. It becomes undead and keeps its Statistics, except as follow.

Challenge. To avoid recalculating the creature's Challenge rating, each trait from the Essence Trait table increases the CR by 1. Otherwise, recalculate the rating after you apply any additional traits.

Senses. The essence thief gains Darkvision with a radius of 60 feet.

Resistances. The essence thief gains Resistance to a type of damage based on any traits it has stolen. Increase the CR of the creature by 1 for every three resistances given.

Languages. The essence thief speaks any language spoken by a creature it has stolen essence from.

New Actions. The essence thief gains the special actions or abilities of any creature it has stolen essence from.

ESSENCE TRAIT

Source	Trait
Bugbear	Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the essence thief hits with it.
Red Dragon Wyrmling	Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The essence thief exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
Lamia	Innate Spellcasting. The essence thief's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components: At will: <i>disguise self</i> (any humanoid form), <i>major image</i> 3/day each: <i>charm person</i> , <i>mirror image</i> , <i>scrying</i> , <i>suggestion</i> 1/day: <i>geas</i>
Manticore	Tail Spike Regrowth. The essence thief has twenty-four tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the essence thief finishes a long rest. Tail Spike. <i>Ranged Weapon Attack:</i> +5 to hit, range 100/200 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.
Phase Spider	Ethereal Jaunt. As a bonus action, the essence thief can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa.
Troll	Regeneration. The essence thief regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the essence thief takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the essence thief's next turn. The essence thief dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

CREDITS

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