

Acolyte Velaro

Illithid; 6 hours old; host body in early twenties. Recently created acolyte of the Reformed Temple of the Awakened Brain; currently seconded to the police team investigating the attack on the temple.

You have the tattooed torso of a muscular young man in his prime and a newly grown octopus head that is soft and pink. You wear a white acolyte's robe—plain but well-made. Although much about your existence is new to you, you carry the inherited knowledge of many of your illithid predecessors.

Traits

- High **strength** (d8)
- Average **agility** (d12)
- High **health** (d8)
- Below-average **knowledge of the world** (d20)
- Average **perception** (d12)
- Dark vision

Skills

- Oddly **alluring and intimidating** (d12)
- A theoretical knowledge of **stabbing** people (d12)
- Familiar with **illithid culture** (d12)
- An occasionally absent **sense of danger** (d20)

Psionic talents

*You haven't been an illithid for very long, so your psionic powers are quite weak. They don't require physical contact, but you have to be quite close to your subject. It is more difficult if they resist. You can use both abilities in both directions—to send **or** receive emotions and images.*

- Let me paint you a **mental picture** (d12)
- Tell me how you **really feel** (d20)

It's unlikely, but possible, that something will trigger a memory of your host body.

- I'm sure I've **been here before** (d30)

You can also automatically sense the presence of nearby minds.

You have been issued a temporary licence which authorises you to use your abilities in your duties as a police consultant.

Important equipment

- A finely crafted **ceremonial dagger**

The world is a strange and new place, filled with delicious minds.

Until late last night you were a tadpole swimming happily in cerebral fluid, guided and taught by the patient and loving Elder Brain. You learned of the glorious cycle of devoured knowledge, and of your own path within that cycle. You knew that you were destined to evolve from tadpole to illithid and eventually to join with the great brain, and pass your wisdom on to new tadpoles in turn. Then suddenly, there was pain, confusion and fire—and the shared agony of the Elder Brain's dying.

After the pain and confusion you remember burrowing, hunger, the bliss of frenzied feeding on living brain and a

euphoric awakening to full consciousness. High priest Sovoro washed you and dressed you, removing the grime and clothing of your host and replacing them with the pure white robes of the temple. From Sovoro you learned of the attack on the temple.

Shortly before midnight, the illithids awoke to the sounds of fighting and found the dormitory door magically locked. Only elderly Drenelo had been left outside—the eccentric janitor habitually slept in the ceiling above the Elder Brain. Your siblings frantically attempted to break out of the dormitory as precious minutes passed and the fighting raged outside. The psionic screams of the Elder Brain caused them to redouble their efforts, and finally they broke free—only to find the Brain dead, and the temple in flames.

They discovered Drenelo's thoroughly perforated frail goblinoid body near the prone figures of four human thugs—maimed, punctured and caught in various cunningly sprung traps. Your siblings recalled that Drenelo's goblin host had been a special forces commando in the Snakesford army—clearly Drenelo had retained their flair for asymmetric warfare. Only one tadpole—you—had survived the blaze. Sovoro hastily carried you to the least injured of the thugs, gently placing you in his slack mouth. A few hours later you arose transformed into a full illithid.

By the time you emerged, the temple was merely smouldering. The fire service and police had arrived. Curious neighbours were offering their assistance and support. A reporter from the Snakesford Gazette was taking statements and being politely kept out of the temple building by the constables present.

Sovoro introduced you to Lord Foxfire—a member of the Council and wealthy supporter of the temple who had come to the scene as soon as he heard what had happened. Gravely they told you that shortly before its death the Brain screamed out a warning that its memories were being stolen. The perpetrators thus came not only to commit arson and murder, but to seize the sacred knowledge of the temple for some nefarious purpose. Sovoro and Lord Foxfire believe that the thugs were followers of the Order of the Sun—you shudder to imagine how those zealots could use these memories against your people! Sovoro has asked you to join the police investigation team to assist with the recovery of these precious mental relics.

The attackers must have obtained another brain to steal and store the memories—perhaps they have captured another Elder Brain and coerced it into assisting them. The memories can return to your people if they are devoured by your new Elder Brain—Sovoro is preparing itself to assume this solemn duty. Perhaps you will be able to bring the other brain back to the temple—but if this is difficult or dangerous you may be called upon to devour it yourself, and then return here to be devoured by Sovoro in turn. You feel honoured to have the opportunity to perform a service great enough to warrant such an accelerated cycle. If you are unable to recover the memories you are charged with destroying them—they are too great a threat in the hands of your people's enemies.

The police have been informed that you will be representing the temple's interests in the investigation, but not of the details of your role in the recovery—illithids have learned that these are details that non-illithids can find upsetting.

There is also a hope that your involvement in the case will jog some useful memories from your host. The chance is very small, but anything is worth a try. Your body's appearance may also prove useful—perhaps it will unsettle those involved in the attack. You have some interesting tattoos which may

help to identify him.

You are currently waiting at the temple with Lord Foxfire for the investigative team to arrive. Lord Foxfire has told you a little about your new colleagues, and asked you to share with them what you know about the case so far. Except maybe for that part about eating brains.

Your fellow investigators

Special Detective Lisstree Serthalen: You have been told that Detective Serthalen is a competent and thorough drow woman who consults for the police on important cases. Lord Foxfire believes that you and she will get on well.

Sergeant Ambrose Cartwright: You understand Sergeant Cartwright is good with people and may be useful in smoothing over any misunderstandings about illithids or the temple.

Warrant Officer Zhushessash “Zed” Xashtli: Lord Foxfire does not completely trust Officer Xashtli and suggests that you would be wise to do the same.