



You Say Dragonborn, I Say Draconian

By Daniel Helmick

Illustration by Wayne England

Draconians are unique among the races of Krynn. Most races were created by the gods in ages long past, but draconians were shaped by servants of the Dark Queen for one purpose: the conquest of the world. Thousands of dragon eggs were transmuted (some say cursed), resulting in the hatching of powerful, disciplined, and seemingly endless shock troops.

Several varieties of draconian exist, and each is determined by the type of dragon egg used in its creation. Auraks are rare and powerful users of mind magic. The natural shapeshifting talent of the massive sivaks allows them to act as brutal but effective spies. Kapaks lick their arrowheads and blades to coat them in poisonous saliva, ensuring an imminent (if agonizing) death to those hit by the weapons. The bozaks, much like the auraks, are natural users of magic. Even the lowliest of the draconians, the baaz, are deadly foot soldiers in their own right. (See the *Draconomicon*[™]: *Metallic Dragons* sourcebook for more details.)

Most draconians are inured to a harsh and wicked lifestyle. Intended to be the willing

strong arms of the Dark Queen's ground army, during wartime their vicious instincts were encouraged rather than suppressed, so that most displayed little better temperament than the ogres and goblins they commanded. Draconians are expected to be cruel, and they enjoy reinforcing that belief.

Even in the midst of waging the war for which they were created, though, some draconians found a purpose other than blind servitude. Some, such as the sivak Slith, obeyed their orders loosely, more concerned with turning a healthy profit than conquest. Others, such as the renowned bozak engineer Kang, struggled with a foreign concept learned on the field of battle: honor.

These exceptional draconians and others like them were pioneers. Their individuality inspired others, until the draconian race eventually learned to not only survive without the direction of their Dark Queen but to also thrive without it. With time, they learned to coexist with the other races of Krynn.

Two types of draconians are presented in this article for use as player characters: the bozaks, magic-using subcommanders of the dragonarmies, and the kapaks, naturally gifted in the art of assassination.

HOW TO SHAPE YOUR DRACONIAN FROM A DRAGONBORN

Other than the obvious physical similarities, it's fair to ask whether dragonborn really have enough in common with draconians to stand in for them. Using dragonborn for draconian player characters might seem like a bit of a stretch.

Most of the differences between the races represent cultural and historical idiosyncrasies rather than physical differences. Physically, the races are quite similar. Both are covered in scales and resemble their draconic forebears. Both tend to be strong, proud, and remarkably tough. Both races have innate, dragon-themed racial powers and abilities.

Two specific factors offer unusual perspectives for roleplaying a draconian character.

First, a draconian player character is assumed to be a cut above rank-and-file soldiers in terms of training, perspective, and power.

Second, the draconian race is a young one. Most of the remnants of the Dark Queen's draconian army are uniform in ability and personality, but exceptions naturally occur. The years following the War of the Lance see the draconian race coming into its own. Your character might have special gifts, abilities, and attitudes outside the norm. The draconian race doesn't really have a common culture to speak of, so your character can forge a unique path.

If you are seeking inspiration for the creation of a draconian player character, you might want to read the *Kang's Regiment* novels by Margaret Weis and Don Perrin. These books deal with a group of draconian veterans of the War of the Lance learning to coexist in a world never meant for their kind.

ROLEPLAYING A DRACONIAN

When creating a draconian character, consider the following points.

You are the boogeyman. Draconians have a well-deserved reputation as killers, conquerors, slavers, and bringers of war. To say that most people don't care for you is an understatement; you are likely reviled by all who behold you. It might take some impressive deeds to persuade members of other races to accept you as the individual you are, rather than just another typically brutal draconian.

You are proud. Draconians verge on arrogance, certain of their superiority. In spite of their cruelty and vice, most draconians are as fearless and bold as their opponents. Even the staid and proper Knights of Solamnia bear a grudging respect for the courage and guile of their draconian foes.

You must change. During the war, it was easy to follow the orders of your superiors and to give in to your baser instincts. You were at the top of the food chain, and the creatures you subjugated had to submit to you and your comrades in arms or risk being crushed and discarded. Now, the changing landscape has forced you to find a new path for which you are ill-prepared. You have been forced to acknowledge the shocking reality that your greatest changes are yet to come—if you truly wish to adapt and survive in this world.

RACIAL VARIANT: BOZAK DRACONIAN

Bozak draconians are widely regarded as some of the most dangerous soldiers that served under the Dark Queen. Their magical power is exceeded by the auraks and their physical strength is dwarfed by the sivaks, but the bozaks exist in far greater numbers.

RACIAL VARIANTS

When you create a character belonging to a subrace, you have the option to select from several benefits unique to that subrace. Each benefit replaces a standard racial trait, as noted in the benefit's description. Unless indicated otherwise, you can select as many of a subrace's benefits as you want. See the *Neverwinter™ Campaign Setting* for more information on racial variants.

Their natural cleverness and magnetism make them trusted, effective, and intelligent leaders. Bozaks prefer the more destructive flavors of magic, such as elemental evocations, over the subtle spells employed by their aurak cousins.

Bozaks are dangerous even in death, thanks to their tendency to explode and damage creatures around them at the moment of their demise. A slayer of a bozak draconian might find his or her own death with the sword's final stroke.

On average, bozak draconians stand just over 6 feet tall and are covered in bronze scales. They have the most highly developed wings among the draconian subraces. Bozaks generally prefer light or no armor, because anything heavier interferes with their arcane gestures and flight.

Bozak player characters are usually sorcerers, representing those who prefer to delve fully into their natural magical talents, or hexblade warlocks, for those who wish to blend their natural strength and magical power. Bozak sorcerers make adept dragon or cosmic sorcerers, playing to their natural gifts. Bozak hexblades tend to opt for the elemental or infernal pacts. Bozaks can also make effective blackguards or assault swordmages.

When creating a bozak draconian character, you can pick from the following benefits.

Arcane Blood: The essence of your draconic forebears surges through your veins. Born to a legacy of arcane might, you have learned to augment your spells with this gift.

Benefit: You gain a +1 racial bonus to the damage rolls of your arcane attack powers. This bonus increases to +2 at 11th level and +3 at 21st level. This benefit replaces Dragonborn Fury.

Instinctive Flight: Although your wings are neither large enough nor strong

enough to sustain flight for long, your battleground mobility is still quite extraordinary.

Benefit: You gain a flight speed of 6 squares (altitude limit 1). You cannot use this fly speed if you are carrying more than a normal load. You must land at the end of your turn. This benefit replaces Draconic Heritage.

Concussive Vengeance: You have learned to trigger your death throes prematurely as a last resort, through a mixture of self-discipline and arcane experimentation. Be wary, though—mimicking your death throes might well result in the genuine article.

Benefit: You gain the *concussive vengeance* power. This benefit replaces Dragon Breath.



DRACONIAN BACKGROUNDS

If you choose a racial background, you either gain a +2 bonus to checks with one of its associated skills, or you add one associated skill to your class's skills list before you choose your trained skills.

Bozak Draconian: From the moment of your birth, you were a match for virtually any human soldier. Your natural aptitude for both magic and combat and your gift for command make you a force to be reckoned with.

Associated Skill: Arcana, Diplomacy, or Intimidate

Kapak Draconian: You are as slippery as a kender and as deadly as a minotaur. When you set your sights on a foe, it is as good as dead.

Associated Skill: Intimidate, Stealth, or Thievery

Concussive Vengeance Bozak Racial Power

Searing pain courses through you as percussive force from your body strikes out at those nearby.

Daily ♦ Thunder

Standard Action Close burst 1

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity vs. Reflex.

You gain a +2 bonus to the attack roll.

Level 11: The bonus increases to +4.

Level 21: The bonus increases to +6.

Hit: The target takes thunder damage equal to your bloodied value and falls prone.

Miss: Half damage.

Effect: You take damage equal to your bloodied value, and you fall prone. This damage cannot be reduced by any means.

Special: If it has not been used for the day, this power automatically triggers when you die.

RACIAL VARIANT: KAPAK DRACONIAN

Like their bozak cousins, kapak draconians also stand just over 6 feet tall, though their scales are coppery rather than bronze. Bozaks have the overall shape of burly humans, whereas the sinewy kapaks have serpentine features with long limbs and torsos.

Kapaks have a reputation for being vicious in their dealings with other races and are well known for bullying creatures smaller and weaker than themselves. The wisest among them have learned the value of avoiding attention, and those kapaks are more dangerous for their slyness.

The kapaks are widely regarded as the fastest and most agile of the draconians. Their impressive speed is far from their most dangerous attribute. Glands underneath their tongues secrete a paralyzing toxin with which they can poison their weapons.

Like all draconians, they are capable of killing even as they meet their own fate. When kapak draconians die, they immediately dissolve into a pool of highly caustic acid, inflicting horrible burns upon the unwary.

Kapaks make fine assassins, particularly executioners, as well as effective rogues and thieves. Some kapaks learned to adapt to life in the wilderness as rangers, and a few studied the bardic arts, supporting troops while in the service of the dragonarmies.

When creating a kapak draconian character, you can pick from the following benefits.

Instinctive Flight: Although your wings are not large enough or strong enough to sustain flight for long, your mobility is still quite extraordinary.

Benefit: You gain a fly speed of 6 squares (altitude limit 1). You cannot use this speed if you are carrying more than a normal load. You must land at the end of your turn. This benefit replaces Draconic Heritage.

Murderous Eye: You instinctively exploit your foes' weakness.

Benefit: You have combat advantage against enemies that are slowed, immobilized, or weakened. This benefit replaces Dragonborn Fury.

Sinuous Agility: Your movements are quick and precise, your lean muscles a study in economy.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to your Dexterity and Charisma ability scores. This benefit replaces the normal racial ability score bonuses for dragonborn.

Caustic Heritage: You have poison in your mouth and acidic blood.

Benefit: You gain the *toxic saliva* and *acidic revenge* powers. This benefit replaces Dragon Breath.

Toxic Saliva

Kapak Racial Power

You lick your weapon, coating it in venom.

Encounter ♦ Poison

Minor Action Personal

Target: An axe, heavy blade, light blade, pick, or spear, or an arrow or crossbow bolt.

Effect: Your next successful weapon attack with the target also deals 1d6 poison damage and the target is slowed (save ends).

First Failed Saving Throw: The target is instead immobilized (save ends).

Level 11: 2d6 poison damage.

Level 21: 3d6 poison damage.

Acidic Revenge

Kapak Racial Power

When you die, acid explodes from your corpse.

Daily ♦ Acid

Immediate Reaction Close burst 2

Trigger: You die.

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity vs. Reflex.

You gain a +2 bonus to the attack roll.

Level 11: The bonus increases to +4.

Level 21: The bonus increases to +6.

Hit: 1d8 + Constitution modifier acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Level 11: 2d8 + Constitution modifier acid damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends).

Level 21: 3d8 + Constitution modifier acid damage, and ongoing 15 acid damage (save ends).

DRACONIAN FEATS

The feats in this section enhance the capabilities of draconian characters.

Bozak Evoker

Drawing upon your inner resources, you charge your spells with explosive power.

Prerequisite: Bozak draconian, Arcane Blood racial feature, Concussive Vengeance racial feature

Benefit: If you score a critical hit with an arcane attack power, the target falls prone. In addition, while you are bloodied, you double your racial bonus to damage rolls with arcane attack powers.

Draconian Wings

Through a rigorous regimen of toughening exercises, you have improved your strength for the purpose of movement.

Prerequisite: Bozak or kapak draconian, Instinctive Flight racial feature

Benefit: You ignore the speed penalty for wearing heavy armor, and your altitude limit for Instinctive Flight increases to 2.

Kapak Resistance

Your origin provides you with a degree of protection against the vile and venomous.

Prerequisite: Kapak draconian, Caustic Heritage racial feature

Benefit: You gain resist 5 acid and resist 5 poison. This benefit increases to resist 10 acid and resist 10 poison at 11th level, and resist 15 acid and resist 15 poison at 21st level.