



BESTIARY

PREVIEW



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13TH AGE

BESTIARY



Pelgrane

Press

13th age is a fantasy role playing game by
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FIRE OPAL

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CAMBION ASSASSIN

Most demons want to destroy the world. Cambion assassins seem disturbingly at home here, acting as if they want nothing more than to play at games of assassination and murder. It's almost too civilized for comfort.



DEMONIC ASSASSINS FOR HIRE

Cambions hire their services out as assassins to the highest bidder. Cambion assassins are humanoid in shape and possess a mix of human and demon features, with the demonic characteristics usually very strong; for example, many have a sharp, pointed horn that comes out of their head, hard scaly crimson flesh, oversized jaws of sharp teeth, or sharp ridges and bone spurs growing out of their flesh. Each different type of cambion assassin claims its rank-name among its brethren and is identified by the type of bladed weapon it has grown from its own flesh and bone through exposure to the mortal souls it has killed. Cambions also make good assassins thanks to their natural affinity for cloaking themselves from victims. This ability fully develops after the cambion assassin kills and absorbs a soul for the first time.

To these offspring of mortals and demons, killing is a competition. Like all highly trained competitors, they expect to be paid well for their talents. The best of the best belong to an Abyssal hunting club known as the Hellblades. This moniker is often used to describe all cambion assassins, but they never use it themselves unless they are a member of the club. One of the Hellblades might take offense and clear up the mistake for free.

Cambion dirks have yet to fulfill a contract successfully. They are still dangerous, but not the expert assassins of lore. They find themselves attracted to killing and scenes of death, but have yet to create those scenes themselves.

Cambion sickles have started building their mountain of blood gold. They are eager to kill and take on plenty of contracts. They often overestimate their abilities and bite off more than they can chew. Cambion sickles are likely to run with an entourage of dirks, which they order around as "apprentices."

The more a cambion assassin kills, the more its blade grows. Once the sickle reaches full height, it grows forward and flattens out. These cambions are known as katar. They are veterans of multiple contracts. Cambion katars have more refined talents and are willing to say no to a contract, though they will usually refer such a job to a lesser cambion assassin happily.

Elite cambion assassins can afford to join the official organization of the Hellblades. The amount of gold required to join depends on who tells the tale. Some mention hoards built to make dragons envious. Others suggest the gold is merely a way to keep score, with entry into the club based on completing a job against an exotic target. When someone hires a cambion assassin Hellblade, they must truly hate the victim.

CAMBION DIRK

The cambion's grown blade is barely visible. It has yet to kill anyone and officially join the ranks of the Hellblades. Your death is its ticket to bigger and better contracts.

4th level mook [demon]

Initiative: +8

Damned dirk +10 vs. AC—7 damage

Natural even hit or miss: The cambion becomes cloaked until it's hit by an attack against MD or until it misses with a natural odd attack roll.

Dark step: While cloaked, the cambion dirk automatically succeeds on all disengage checks.

AC	20	
PD	18	HP 13 (mook)
MD	14	

Mook: Kill one cambion dirk mook for every 13 damage you deal to the mob.

CAMBION SICKLE

The cambion assassin looks confident with its deadly sharp curved blade at the ready. Every few moments, a ripple runs across its skin, making it harder to see.

5th level troop [demon]

Initiative: +11

Damned sickle +11 vs. AC—17 damage

Natural even hit or miss: The cambion becomes cloaked until it's hit by an attack against MD or until it misses with a natural odd attack roll.

R: Ray of darkness +11 vs. MD—10 negative energy damage

Natural even hit: The target is confused until the end of its next turn, or if the cambion was cloaked when it attacked, the confusion is save ends.

Improved dark step: While cloaked, the cambion sickle automatically succeeds on all disengage checks and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against ranged attacks.

AC	21	
PD	19	HP 70
MD	15	

CAMBION ASSASSIN RANDOM DEMON ABILITIES

Non-mook cambion assassins may have one random demon ability (see page 209 of the 13th Age core rules). Roll 1d10 for each cambion: if you roll less than or equal to its level, it has a random ability. Here's the reminder chart for easy reference.

RANDOM DEMON ABILITIES REMINDER (D8)

- 1: True seeing
- 2: Resist fire 18+
- 3: Invisibility when first staggered
- 4: Resist energy 12+
- 5: Fear aura
- 6: Teleport 1d3 times each battle
- 7: Demonic speed
- 8: Gate in allied demon

CAMBION KATAR

This creature's blade has developed into a long, thin blade like a shark's fin. Its cold eyes reflect its many remorseless kills. It stands with the tense stillness of a trained killer, with little flourishes of blade or movement.

6th level wrecker [demon]

Initiative: +13

Damned katar +12 vs. AC—20 damage

Natural even hit or miss: The cambion becomes cloaked until it's hit by an attack against MD or until it misses with a natural odd attack roll.

Spiky headbutt +12 vs. AC—8 damage, and 10 ongoing poison damage

R: Ray of darkness +12 vs. MD—10 negative energy damage

Natural even hit: The target is confused until the end of its next turn, or if the cambion was cloaked when it attacked, the confusion is save ends.

Corruption aura: When an enemy misses the cambion katar with a melee attack, it suffers one of the following effects:

Natural even miss: The attacker takes 5 poison damage.

Natural odd miss: The cambion katar can make a *spiky headbutt* attack against the attacker as a free action.

Superior dark step: While cloaked, the cambion katar automatically succeeds on all disengage checks and gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against close and ranged attacks.

AC	21	
PD	19	HP 80
MD	15	

CAMBION HELLBLADE

With their long, wickedly sharp blades, they're the best assassins in the hellholes or the Abyss. Or the worst, if you're their target.

8th level wrecker [demon]

Initiative: +17

Damned hellblade +14 vs. AC—40 damage

Natural even hit or miss: The cambion becomes cloaked until it's hit by an attack against MD or until it misses with a natural odd attack roll.

Miss: 20 damage.

Spiky headbutt +14 vs. AC—10 damage, and 15 ongoing poison damage

R: Ray of darkness +14 vs. MD—20 negative energy damage

Natural even hit: The target is confused until the end of its next turn, or if the cambion was cloaked when it attacked, the confusion is save ends.

Cloaked in evil: The cambion hellblade starts every battle cloaked. As a quick action, the hellblade can drop its cloaking to make a *spiky headbutt* attack as a free action.

Corruption aura: When an enemy misses the cambion hellblade with a melee attack, it suffers one of the following effects:

Natural even miss: The attacker takes 15 poison damage.

Natural odd miss: The cambion hellblade can make a *spiky headbutt* attack against the attacker as a free action.

Ultimate dark step: While cloaked, the cambion hellblade automatically succeeds on all disengage checks, gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against close and ranged attacks, and can drop its cloaking as a quick action to teleport to a nearby location it can see (instead of making an extra attack).

AC 24

PD 21

MD 21

HP 140

BUILDING BATTLES

Except for the dirks, most cambion assassins prefer not to work with other cambions. Occasionally they'll plan a hit that requires help, and there are always plenty of dirks willing to sign on for the chance to kill someone and to get in good with the "higher-ups." They will also work with demons, but prefer those who are more cunning such as imps over the ones that favor chaos and destruction first, and careful planning second. One favorite ploy, however, is to let loose a frenzy demon to draw attention—or a mark's bodyguards—while the cambion quietly kills the target.

Cambion assassins are also careful about disposing of the remains of those they kill. They don't want to leave any clues that can be tracked back to them, or worse, have their target get resurrected (the ultimate failed hit!). Therefore, many cambion assassins find ways to keep ooze (especially gelatinous cubes) around, giving them an easy means of disposal that takes care of any issues. They've been known to trap their lairs with the creatures as well.

KILLING in THE NAME OF GOLD

"250 gold pieces to start. Clerics double. Paladins triple. Women and children, another 100 each. No sorcerers. They start ripping off spells and the next thing you know half the city guard is moving in due to the chaos. It's another 100 gold a day to find the target and figure out the best way to kill him. If you have that information, give it to me now to save yourself time and money. Each of the coins must have touched your blood. Otherwise, don't waste my time."

—Choonnoo, Cambion Katar, 15 confirmed kills, 8 suspected

Most assassins' guilds will swear off further pursuit of a target that kills one of their own. They lack the manpower to restock assassins, who take years of training. Cambion assassins take the opposite track. A target that kills one of their own becomes more valuable in their eyes. The more cambions slain by someone, the more likely a more powerful Hellblade will take it on as a challenge. Cambion assassins rarely work for free, but targets tough enough to kill one of them usually have plenty of enemies interested in paying for such services. The cambion is also within its rights to offer a discount as it sees fit.

Cambion assassins can be bound to service through a ritual where the person hiring the demon soaks the gold they are paying the contract with in their own blood. Cambion assassins look for any advantage they can get against a target. They will sneak in while their victim is sleeping. They will also cloak themselves and track a target until it's alone and isolated in what it thinks is a safe place. The cambion will appear from out of nowhere to stab its target in the back or slit its throat (even in the middle of a battle). A cambion assassin attacking adventurers in the middle of an open field has either made a huge mistake, or is running interference for a Hellblade to hit the real target while the heroes are distracted.

CAMBION ASSASSINS AND THE ICONS

Crusader: Assassins have no place in the Crusader's army. Victory is to be won on the battlefield, not through backstabbing at a trade conference. The soldiers in service to the Crusader prize the blades of cambion assassins. They are primarily meant to be trophies, but some in the Crusader's army use the blades to send a message. Leaving a traitor to die with a cambion blade in their belly illustrates quite well what happens to those who lose their faith.

Diabolist: Cambion assassins who leave the Abyss or a hellhole take themselves far too seriously for the Diabolist's taste. When the cambions are spending their ill-gotten gains, they are perfectly acceptable. But once one swears the Hellblade Oath of Stained Gold, its focus on the mission at hand becomes tiresome. Enemies captured by the Diabolist may find themselves hunted for amusement. Multiple cambion assassins swear themselves to the Diabolist and hunt down her enemies while the icon or members of her retinue place wagers.

Great Gold Wurm: Cambion assassins are exactly the type of creatures the Wurm tries to stop from exiting the Abyss. The Wurm feels pain every time one of them strikes true. If the icon can send agents to protect a target, the target gets protection. This might even extend to individuals who neither want the Wurm's protection nor trust it in the first place. A master thief wouldn't want a bunch of do-gooder friends of the Wurm hanging around their operations for very long.

Priestess: Allies of the Priestess often end up as targets of cambion assassins. The cambions enjoy working against the Priestess even though they know they have little direct power to end her reign as an icon. But if there is anyone they would kill for free, those in the Priestess' service would qualify, especially those who meddle in Hellblade business, as the Priestess often does. She may be an icon, but she can't protect everyone all the time. Someone desperate enough to hire a cambion assassin might be willing to take out another contract, even with her previous intervention.

Prince of Shadows: The Prince understands loyalty bought by gold. The other elements of the Hellblade Oath seem excessive, but the Prince always needs someone to wield a silent blade. He never contracts cambion assassins directly, but offers bounties through proxies willing to bleed on their gold. The proxies are often promised much larger favors from the Prince for this service. Delivering on those promises, especially to people foolish enough to bleed on cambion gold, is another matter.

NAMES

Cambion assassins cobble their names together from those of people they enjoyed killing most. They pronounce their own carefully assembled name with relish, licking their lips at the memory of each contributing kill. This sort of vicious sadism is also common among demons. What truly separates cambions from full demons is their cambion-only ranking system. Each rank takes its name from the size of the cambion's blade, grown on the blood and souls of victims. The higher the rank, the more exotic the blade. This type of preening is exactly what gets on the Diabolist's nerves, but sometimes talent must be coddled.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A Fistful of Blood Gold—A series of apparently natural deaths rocks a city where the adventurers are currently spending time. After some investigation, the heroes discover the dead had connections to two rival thieves' guilds barred from quarreling in the streets by an icon. Each guild turned to a cambion katar that was more than happy to sell poisons to both sides for a tidy sum of gold without the complications of bleeding on it. If the adventurers don't eliminate the cambion subtly, the bloodshed in the city will incite the wrath of the icon.

Blood Gold Problems—Some of the loot the adventurers scooped up is blood gold. The enemy whose hoard the adventurers are looting had a cambion assassin on retainer. The cambion sickle attached to the gold starts killing in the name of the adventurers. Spending the gold only turns control of the cambion over to whoever holds the coins. Will the adventurers find an obscure ritual to purify the gold, find a way to kill the demon, or have to cash in a big favor from an icon?

My First Kill—A down on its luck cambion dirk follows the adventurers looking to score a first kill. Its fee is paltry, but it's mostly useless. During a battle, perhaps thanks to a critical failure roll on an enemy's part, the cambion stumbles into its first kill. Do the adventurers still overlook the demon now that it has useful abilities, or do they put it down and become a target of the Hellblades?

The Lesser Evil—A cambion hellblade approaches the adventurers. The creature has an ambitious plan: No cambion assassin has ever killed an icon before. Doing so would put someone at the top of the Hellblades for sure. It needs their help with the target, possibly an icon that the entire group hates. Will they work with a demon to ensure the fall of an enemy icon? What will they do if the target icon outbids them and turns the ambitious hellblade against an icon they serve?

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