



## Heart of Darkness

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To fight back against the rising savage tide, this article series gives you, the player, the tips, tricks, and tools you need to avoid being swept away. While the pages of *DUNGEON* magazine present DMs with every vile plot and cunning monster needed to run the Savage Tide Adventure Path, *DRAGON* offers details and options to help you stay on course. This month's installment offers information on the mysterious city at the center of the Isle of Dread's plateau as well as a new prestige class developed by the natives of this region to battle the heart of darkness that poisons their ancient land.

### ADVENTURE TIE

This installment of *Savage Tidings* links to the seventh episode of the Adventure Path, "City of Broken Idols," presented in *DUNGEON* #145.

### TOTEMIC DEMONSLAYER

When darkness infects the heart, it takes the tip of a spear to excise it.

—Olman Saying

The Olman natives of the Isle of Dread have suffered from the depredations of predators both natural and unnatural since the fall of their empire. For generations, the few remnants on the island have survived on the verge of extinction, facing the unknown dangers of the jungle night that creep from a lonely plateau at the heart of the island. They learned that high

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walls and organized defenses could fend off the dangers of the jungle, but another kind of weapon was needed to fend off the dangers that came from beyond. To this calling arose the totemic demonlayers, a small order of natives who, along with missionary members from the Church of the Whirling Fury, have developed powerful tools for defeating fiends.

## Becoming a Totemic Demonlayer

Developed to combat the threat posed by the unnatural incursions of fiends, totemic demonlayers are wilderness warriors skilled at facing these otherworldly foes. Using their affinity with the natural world and the strength of their belief in ancestral totems, these demonlayers gain special adaptations and powers useful in combating such horrors.

Becoming a totemic demonlayer is not limited to the Olman, but it is difficult for others to do so, as it requires the special blessings and rituals of both the Olman and the Church of

the Whirling Fury. Only when such rituals have been completed can the demonlayer begin collecting totemic tattoos and utilizing the abilities provided by the prestige class.

Rangers, barbarians, druids, and those characters with a strong connection to nature are most likely to take this class. Fighters and monks have been known to take this class for its martial qualities and role in defense of the people of the Olman settlements. Likewise, sorcerers sometimes gain a few levels, harnessing their own natural magical abilities and augmenting them with those provided by the totem spirits to fight the forces of darkness. Paladins would be well-suited for this class but are exceedingly rare in the Olman culture in and around the Isle of Dread.

## Entry Requirements

**Alignment:** Any nonevil.

**Skills:** Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 2 ranks, Survival 2 ranks.

**Base Attack:** +4.

**Special:** The recipient must undergo a ritual conducted by an Olman holy man and the Church of the Whirling Fury.

## Class Features

Totemic demonlayers are extremely versatile, having a great variety of options as they advance in level within the class. As they increase in power, they tailor their abilities to best suit their favored tactics in dealing with the unnatural menaces that threaten their island home.

**Favored Enemy (Ex):** At 1st level, a totemic demonlayer gains the favored enemy (evil outsider) ability just as if he was a ranger who had chosen evil outsiders as a favored enemy. The ability is identical to the ranger ability, giving the totemic demonlayer a +2 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against evil outsiders. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against such creatures. If he already has evil outsider as a favored



## TOTEMIC DEMONSLAYER

Level	Base				Special	— Spells per Day —			
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save		1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Favored enemy, lesser totem tattoo	0	—	—	—
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Detect demons	1	—	—	—
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Lesser totem tattoo	1	0	—	—
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Summon spell dampening	1	1	—	—
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Improved favored enemy, lesser totem tattoo	1	1	0	—
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	Resist treachery +2	1	1	1	—
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Greater totem tattoo	2	1	1	0
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	Augmented detect demons, resist treachery +4	2	1	1	1
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Greater favored enemy, greater totem tattoo	2	2	1	1
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	Resist treachery (immune), greater totem tattoo	2	2	2	1

HIT DIE: D10

**Class Skills (6 + Int modifier per level):** Climb, Concentration, Craft, Handle Animal, Hide, Jump, Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (the planes), Listen, Move Silently, Spot, Survival, Swim.



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enemy through another class, these bonuses stack with those.

**Lesser Totem Tattoo (Su):** At 1st level, a totemic demonslayer gains his first lesser totem tattoo. He gains another lesser totem tattoo upon reaching 3rd level and 5th level. Totem tattoos are described below.

**Spells:** A totemic demonslayer has the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, he must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a totemic demonslayer with a Wisdom of 10 cannot cast these spells. Totemic demonslayer bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the totemic demonslayer's Wisdom modifier. When he gets 0 spells per day of a given spell level, he gains only the bonus spells he would be entitled to based on his Wisdom score for that spell level. The totemic demonslayer's spell list appears below. He has access to any spell on the list and can freely choose which to prepare, just as a cleric. A totemic demonslayer prepares and casts spells just as a cleric does (although he cannot spontaneously cast *cure* or *inflict* spells).

**Detect Demons (Sp):** At 2nd level, a totemic demonslayer can detect outsiders with the evil subtype within 60 feet at will as the spell *detect evil*. This ability does not, however, detect outsiders that are ethereal, have mind shielding, or who are present only in the body of someone or something that is possessed by a demon, such as a fiend of possession (see *Fiend Folio*).

**Summon Spell Dampening (Su):** To deal with one of the most deadly tools of demons, the ability to instantly call in demonic reinforcements, at 4th level a totemic demonslayer can inhibit their power to do so. Once per day, a totemic demonslayer can create a dampening field in a 60-foot-radius emanation. Conjunction (summoning) and conjunction (calling) spells and spell-like abilities automatically fail within this radius, although creatures summoned

outside the dampening field can enter it normally. The dampening field lasts 10 rounds. Creatures summoned or called before the totemic demonslayer creates the dampening field are unaffected. At 7th level, a totemic demonslayer can use this ability one additional time per day.

**Improved Favored Enemy (Ex):** Upon reaching 5th level, a totemic demonslayer's training and techniques for battling evil outsiders are further honed, raising the associated favored enemy bonuses to +4. As before, these bonuses stack with any the totemic demonslayer has from other classes.

**Resist Treachery (Su):** As the totemic demonslayer increases in ability, he grows more inured to the wiles and craftiness of demons and their ilk. At 6th level, he gains a +2 bonus on saving throws against enchantment spells or effects. This bonus increases to +4 at 8th level. At 10th level, a totemic demonslayer becomes immune to such effects altogether.

**Greater Totem Tattoo (Su):** At 7th level, a totemic demonslayer gains his first greater totem tattoo. He gains additional greater totem tattoos at 9th level and 10th level. Totem tattoos are described below. If the totemic demonslayer chooses, he can elect to gain two lesser totem tattoos in the place of any greater totem tattoo.

**Augmented Detect Demons (Sp):** At 8th level, a totemic demonslayer's ability to detect demons is honed to the point that it functions even against evil outsiders that are ethereal, using mind shielding, or only present in the body of a host that has been possessed. It also detects any creature under the control of an evil outsider through charm or dominate effects, although it is not able to determine HD or the source of the controlling influence unless the demon itself is within range.

**Greater Favored Enemy (Ex):** Upon reaching 9th level, a totemic demonslayer's training and techniques for battling evil outsiders are so honed that the associated favored enemy

bonuses increase to +6. As before, these bonuses stack with any the totemic demonslayer has from other classes.

### Totemic Demonslayer Spell List

Totemic demonslayers choose their spells from the following list:

**1st Level:** *bless water, bless weapon, delay poison, detect evil, entangle, faerie fire, magic fang, magic weapon, obscuring mist, pass without trace, protection from evil, remove fear, resistance, speak with animals, summon nature's ally I.*

**2nd Level:** *align weapon, barkskin, bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace, eagle's splendor, fox's cunning, glitterdust, owl's wisdom, resist energy, silence, speak with plants, summon nature's ally II, zone of truth.*

**3rd Level:** *darkvision, daylight, dispel magic, good hope, greater magic fang, greater magic weapon, haste, heroism, magic circle against evil, protection from energy, quench, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, summon nature's ally III, tree shape.*

**4th Level:** *animal growth, break enchantment, commune with nature, dimensional anchor, dismissal, dispel evil, freedom of movement, neutralize poison, shout, spell immunity, summon nature's ally IV, tree stride.*

### Totem Tattoos

Totemic demonslayers gain their special abilities against their otherworldly foes through belief in the power of their ancestor spirits as represented by the creatures native to their lands. These powers can only be gained through the activation of totem tattoos that the totemic demonslayer acquires through advancement in his prestige class. The totemic demonslayer can never have more tattoos than allowed by his level. Additional tattoos invariably smudge and run during the tattooing process and leave permanent scarring where they are attempted. Once a totem tattoo has been selected by a totemic demonslayer, that choice can never be changed, nor the tattoo erased, since it represents the char-

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acter's acceptance of that ancestral spirit into his soul. If a tattoo is cut or burned off, or if the limb bearing the tattoo is lost, the tattoo reappears at some other location on the body within a few days. In either case, the totemic demonslayer never loses the use of the tattoo's powers.

Activating a totem tattoo is a swift action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. Each tattoo can only be used once per day, although the same tattoo may be taken multiple times as levels increase allowing for additional uses of an ability per day. Totem tattoos are supernatural abilities that can be dispelled (caster level equal to the totemic demonslayers level).

When a totem tattoo is activated, a DC 15 Spot check notices a faint aura resembling the shape of the totem animal surrounding the totemic demonslayer for 1 round. This animal shape can clearly be seen by anyone using *see invisibility*. More than one totem tattoo can be in use at the same time.

### Lesser Totem Tattoos

The following tattoos are just a sample of those that might be available. Your DM might approve unique tattoos suited to the style of your character.

**Allosaurus:** The bearer of this tattoo gains the improved grab ability, enabling him to start a grapple attempt without provoking an attack of opportunity if he hits with a natural attack. If he establishes a hold, he can rake like an allosaurus at his normal attack bonus as if using a secondary weapon dealing 1d8 points of damage + his Str modifier. This ability lasts for 3 rounds.

**Ape:** If the bearer of this tattoo hits a single opponent twice in the same round with melee attacks, he can rend the opponent's body. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d6 points of damage + double the demonslayer's Strength modifier. The totemic demonslayer does not have to activate this ability prior to making his attacks, but rather can activate the tattoo after

having made two successful melee hits.

Once activated, this tattoo's ability remains in effect for 3 rounds.

**Baboon:** Upon activation of this tattoo, the bearer gains a climb speed of 30 feet, a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks, and can take 10 on Climb checks even if rushed or threatened. This effect lasts for 10 rounds.

**Badger:** The bearer of this tattoo can enter a rage identical to that of a 1st-level barbarian, gaining a +4 bonus to Strength and Constitution and a -2 penalty to AC (see page 25 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**Boar:** This tattoo grants the ferocity of a boar. It allows the bearer to continue fighting without penalty even while disabled or dying. Once activated, this ability lasts for 10 rounds.

**Crocodile:** The bearer of this tattoo gains the crocodile's ability to hold its breath. He can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 × his Constitution score before he risks drowning. This ability lasts for 1 hour once it is activated.

**Deinonychus:** The bearer of this tattoo gains the ability to make a pounce attack as a deinonychus can. When activated, he can make a full attack when charging a foe. If he has also activated an allosaurus tattoo, he gains those rake attacks as well while using the pounce attack. This tattoo lasts for 3 rounds once it is activated.

**Dimetrodon:** The bearer of this tattoo can activate it to gain the dimetrodon's ability to move with sudden speed. He increases his land speed by 50 feet for 1 round, during which he gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC.

**Sea Turtle:** When the bearer of this tattoo activates it, his skin hardens like the shell of a sea turtle, and he gains damage reduction 2/— for 5 rounds. This does not stack with the

damage reduction provided by the ankylosaurus tattoo.

**Snake:** The bearer of this tattoo can activate it to gain both the improved grab ability and a constrict attack. He can attempt to start a grapple without provoking an attack of opportunity if he hits with a natural attack, and, if he establishes a hold, he can use his arms and legs to constrict his opponent for 1d8 points of damage + double his Strength modifier. This ability lasts for 3 rounds once activated.

### Greater Totem Tattoos

These greater tattoos cover large portions of the demonslayer's skin, making them nearly impossible to hide.

**Ankylosaurus:** The bearer of this tattoo, upon activation, causes his skin to toughen like the hard carapace of an ankylosaurus, giving him damage reduction 4/— for 5 rounds. This does not stack with the damage reduction provided by the sea turtle tattoo.

**Giant Wasp:** By activating this tattoo, the bearer coats all of his piercing and slashing weapons with a poison. The poison functions as a ravage (as described in the *Book of Exalted Deeds*), so it affects only evil creatures but is able to penetrate the poison immunity of demons. Injury, Fort DC 14, Dex 1d6/Dex 1d6. The coating lasts for up to 3 rounds or until the weapon successfully strikes an opponent.

**Phanaton:** The bearer of this tattoo can activate it to gain the ability to glide for 10 minutes. This negates falling damage and allows him 20 feet of forward travel for every 5 feet of descent, effectively giving him a fly speed of 20 feet while falling (average maneuverability). He cannot hover, even if his maneuverability rate

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increases. He can't glide while carrying a medium or heavy load, nor while unconscious or helpless. Unlike other tattoos, this one can be activated as an immediate action, so the bearer need not wait until his turn to do so.

**Rakasta:** The bearer of this tattoo temporarily emulates the "iron war claws" used by the catfolk. This tattoo makes any natural weapons of the bearer function as if they were composed of cold iron. This effect lasts for 5 rounds when activated.

**Triceratops:** This tattoo gives its bearer the powerful charge attack. On a successful charge attack when this tattoo is activated, the bearer deals an extra 4d6 points of damage + four times his Strength modifier as if from a natural weapon. Activating this tattoo only allows the bearer to make one powerful charge attack before the effects wear off.

**Tyrannosaurus:** This tattoo illustrates the true king of the Isle of Dread, the mighty tyrannosaurus. When the bearer activates this tattoo he gains a powerful bite attack at his normal attack bonus as if using a secondary weapon that deals 3d6 points of damage + three times his Str modifier. This effect lasts for 3 rounds once activated.

**Whirlwind:** An addition of the Church of the Whirling Fury, once activated, this tattoo allows its bearer to fly with a speed of 60 and perfect maneuverability. In addition, while this ability is in effect any critical threat made by the bearer of this tattoo against an evil outsider is automatically confirmed. This effect lasts for 1 minute once activated.

## Playing a Totemic Demonlayer

The totemic demonlayers represent the highest ideals of the ancient Olman culture blended with some aspects of modern religion. They serve as protectors against the nameless dread that threatens to eradicate human existence from the isle and serve as front-line fighters when those threats materialize as

something more than the standard beasts and dangers that occasionally emerge from the jungles. When a wall, fire, or warriors with spears are insufficient to deal with the threat, it enters the domain of the totemic demonlayers. This is a responsibility they take very seriously.

Demonlayers rely on a more naturalistic approach to dealing with these threats, maintaining the traditions and beliefs of the Olman and the watchfulness of their ancestor spirits. Combined with the gifts and teachings of the Church of the Whirling Fury, demonlayers finally find themselves with the tools to take action. While many fight the demons preying upon their people because such creatures are anathema, not to the ideology of some deity but rather to the natural order itself, some find a deeper divine drive to cleanse the land.

## Combat

Totemic demonlayers typically work alone, seeking to prevent evil outsiders from preying on their fellow tribesmen. They excel at using the wilderness and its natural features to their advantage when dealing with the outsiders who are often new to the Material Plane and unfamiliar with its terrain. They are cunning trapmakers and take advantage of the deadly local fauna, sometimes luring unsuspecting demons into the clutches of the island's powerful predators. When direct confrontation is necessary, however, they do not hesitate to call upon their ancestor spirits through their magical tattoos and take the fight to their foes. If necessary, they have also been known to organize whole villages to effectively combat incursions by large numbers of demonic marauders.

## Totemic Demonlayer Lore

Characters with the bardic knowledge ability or ranks in Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (religion) can research totemic demonlayers to learn more

about them. A check made while in an Olman village gains a +10 bonus on the roll. When a character makes a bardic knowledge check or a skill check, read or paraphrase the following, including the information from lower DCs.

**DC 20:** Among the Olman of the Isle of Dread, there are some heroes of renown who slay demons and protect the people from the unnatural terrors of the island.

**DC 25:** The Olman are able to harness both the powers of their deceased ancestors and the animal totems sacred to their clans to fight against evil outsiders that plague the island.

**DC 30:** Sacred tattoos on warriors known as demonlayers grant them the powers of the animals they depict whether it be speed, strength, or even stranger abilities. These demonlayers combine their ancestral beliefs with some aspects of modern faith to garner even greater powers in their fight.

## Sample Totemic Demonlayer

Jakara is a totemic demonlayer who has been captured by forces loyal to the kopru of the Isle of Dread. He is being held in the troglodyte village of Laogroat but can be rescued by the PCs in "The Lightless Depths" in *DUNGEON* #144. His captivity has left him a half-crazed, broken man, although if treated with a *heal* spell or its equivalent he can recover enough to share the secrets of his prestige class with the player characters. At your discretion, Jakara could recover enough from his ordeal to even join the party as an NPC. In that case, his equipment is stored with the hermit and can be gathered before continuing with the adventure.

### JAKARA OF THE TIGER CLAN CR 12

Male Olman human ranger 5/totemic demonlayer 7

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Listen +12, Spot +5

Languages Olman

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16; Dodge,