

Warduke

With Thunder Rift existing outside the dominion of the major kingdoms of the Known World, and not beholden to any one land's laws, it was only a matter of time before someone exploited this to their advantage. The most brazen of these criminals is the warlord known as Warduke. Mercenary, assassin, pirate, and bandit king, Warduke has claimed the ancient dwarf keep in the South Swamp of Thunder Rift as his own.

From his throne within his Black Keep, he rules over a personal army of orcs and lizardfolk. Valum, the Silvercrest elves, and the dwarves of Hearth-Home are all aware of Warduke's presence, but none have chosen to openly confront the warlord. Additionally, it is assumed that Khadan Khan knows of Warduke's presence, but his Horde and Warduke's army have never encountered each other.

Despite everyone's apprehension at Warduke's presence, the warlord has never actually interfered in the politics, trade, or goings on of Thunder Rift. The man is a known mercenary and the sight of his monstrous army riding out from the Rift along the Caravan Route is not all that

uncommon. It would appear that most of his business is dealt without outside the valley, and he uses Thunder Rift only as his stronghold.

While no official action has been taken against Warduke, rangers have patrolled the lands he claims as his own and

have reported back their findings. It has been reported that Warduke's forces routinely patrol the lands surrounding Black Keep, up to a mile out from the edge of the swamp where his obedient lizardfolk live. The numbers of Warduke's forces fluctuate depending on



who you talk to, but the general agreement is that his army numbers 300 - 400 strong, a larger force than the Horde! The lizardfolk live in the marshes around his fortress, and the orcs live in the caves carved into the box canyon surrounding his land — old mines left behind by the dwarfs. Within the keep itself it is estimated he keeps a retainer of at least 100 loyal warriors. This does not include various war beasts it is rumored he has at his command, such as manticore, worgs, and — supposedly — wyverns.

To get to Warduke's keep one must first push through the lizardfolk village. Next, if that is accomplished, they must fight his retainer force of 100 strong, while the remaining orcs move in from behind the

keep, adding reinforcements to his forces and putting more pressure on a already battered attacking army.

WARDUKE (male barbarian 7/

blackguard 6); SZ Medium: HD 7d12 + 6d10 + 24; hp 96; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 feet (base 30 feet); AC 25 (+3 *Scale Mail of Invulnerability* DR 5/+1, +3 large steel shield, +2 *Helm of Night Terrors*, +1 Dex); BAB +20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+1d6+6, 17-20/x2 +1d10, +3 *Icy Burst longsword*), or +17/+12/+7 melee (1d6+4, 19-20/x2, adamantine short sword); SA Rage 2/day, *smite good*, sneak attack +1d6; SQ DR 5/+1, illiteracy, fast movement, uncanny dodge (Dex to AC, can't be flanked), *detect good*, poison use, dark blessing, command undead, *aura of despair*, fiendish servant (black horse); SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 11; AL NE; CR 14

Equipment: +3 *scale mail of invulnerability* (DR 5/+1), +3 large steel shield, +2 *helm of night terrors* (+2 deflection bonus to AC, darkvision 60', blacks out the wear's face and makes eyes glow red, +4 to Perception checks), +3 *icy burst bastard sword*, +1 adamantine short sword

Skills: Climb +11, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +10, Hide +6, Intimidate +16, Jump +9, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +7, Profession (mercenary) +7, Profession (sailor) +5, Read/Write (common), Read/Write (draconic), Read/Write (orc), Ride +17, Speak (draconic), Speak (orc), Wilderness Lore +7

Feats: Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Mounted Combat, Power

Attack, Ride-By Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Blackguard Spells: 1st-level: 3; 2nd-level: 3; 3rd-level: 3

FIENDISH SERVANT: BRIMSTONE, Fiendish Horse (Large Magical Beast);

HD 7d8+14; hp 48; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 40ft (base 50ft); AC 24 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 full-plate barding, +6 natural); Attack +3 melee (1d6+2, x2, hoof) and +3 melee (1d6+2, x2, hoof); Face/Reach 5ft by 10ft/5ft; SA Smite good 1/day; SQ Scent, darkvision 60', cold & fire resistance 10, DR 5/+1, SR14, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, share saving throws, speak with Warduke; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 6; AL NE; CR 2

Skills: Perception +6, Wilderness Lore +6

Feats: —

