

(GM ARTICLE)



HOOK FOR A HACK
"The Great and Powerful EKAF"

By Big E

HOOK FOR A HACK is our monthly article that gives a GM all the elements they need to throw a Hacktastic Adventure together with minimal effort. It gives you a setting, plot, hook, background, threats and reward. You just add a little creativity and you have INSTANT ADVENTURE!

This Month's **HOOK FOR A HACK: "The Great and Powerful EKAF"**

Setting: *Urban / Wilderness (Small Hamlet & an ancient shrine)*

Plot: *The People of a small Hamlet are being duped into believing an old shrine has become the conduit of power for a god-like being known as EKAF who is demanding tribute and sacrifice.*

Hooks: *The PCs are on the trail of or just finishing an adventure when they happen upon a procession of peasants, dressed in robes, flower necklaces and wreaths chanting, singing as they march towards the ruins of a small stone shrine just off the roadside. The Peasants are leading an old woman dressed all in white.*

Background: *A nasty shape-shifting creature known as a Xerocx has taken on the shape of the altar in front of a worn statue in a small roadside shrine. The Xerocx has, through the use of his Bluff and several magic wands, simple spells and a Money hungry Minstrel named Popell set itself up as a*

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“God” to the people of Little Oak. Popell entered the village several months ago telling the simple folk that he had a vision while sleeping near the old Shrine. When a few peasants went to investigate they found the old stone alter in the shrine was now replaced with an ornate golden one, when approached a deep male voice claiming to be EKAF The God Child rang out proclaiming “ Healing and Protection to his faithful and death to the unrepentant, those who would serve should kneel” The few peasants that did not kneel in fear were struck down by bolts of blue fire (Arcane Bolts). Those who were injured, but not killed by this magical display, the great EKAF claimed were worthy and that he would heal them if they would become his faithful. The Wounded were placed on the alter and cured (Cure minor ability and Instant Recovery Spell), this along with the Ranting of the Charismatic Minstrel sealed EKAF’s state as being a “GOD”. Now for the past four months EKAF’s Flock has grown to over 20 strong, all who leave offerings of food and valuables at the alter, that the Xerocx eats or keeps inside itself until the time this little con becomes too dangerous and it and Popell move on to the next bunch of simpletons. Lately though the EKAF has demanded Human Sacrifice to keep his healing and protection (A XEROCCX can only eat fruit and bread for so long), so the Villagers bring one or their own or a traveler they drug to the alter for their “God” to eat. It is during one of these sessions that the PCs happen upon the villagers taking an old woman named Farga to feed to the alter.

Adventure Layout / Tips: When approached or questioned the Peasants will praise the Great EKAF (A God Lore +10 recognizes the name as not being of any known god or power).

Tactics: Popell will try and stay out of combat and just sing, The brutes will attack until slain, the Peasants will attack until EKAF is destroyed. Popell will escape if things are going badly or EKAF is killed. EKAF will use the wands to supplement his natural attacks and will fight to the death, unless given the option of surrender. Use (the Child Stats for Farga should you need them to simulate her drugged state)

Threats: “EKAF” The Xerocx, (2) Devote Brutes, (1) Devote Minstrel and (20) Misguided Peasants.

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Reward: Inside the Xerocx are the following items: 420 EP, (4) Earth Stones, (2) Wands of ARCAN E BOLT (10 Charges Each), Wand of Cure Ability Damage (Minor) (8 Charges), Wand of Instant Recovery (5 Charges), Wand of Blinding Light (10 Charges).

Stat Blocks

"The Great and Powerful EKAF (XERO CX) (Monstrosity)
(240 Points) / Size: Large/ Move: 4" land /Vigor Bonus: +35
B 35, A 10, E 25, M 10, S 25, C 5, L 5
PRSB + 7
MRSB + 4

Skills: Bluff +34, Creature Lore +14, Listen +14, Observe +24, Survival +17

Talents: **Shape Shift Mimic Disguise Talent (object only)** (Creature may use his Bluff Skill (opposed by Sense Truth if further than base to base (base to base creatures may use observe to see the creature breathing). Shift Shape Mimic Disguise requires a (S) action and must pass a +15 Endurance test to take on the shape of any non-animated Object (Treasure chests, Beds and the like) or structural object (Doors, Pillars ect). The Creature may maintain the form with little efforts unlike the shifting Deceiver ability of a Myrror); **Improved Swallow Attack:** Automatic if Bite Attack hits, Can swallow and hold 1 Medium Creature or 2 small or 4 Tiny or 8 Mini, Swallowed Creatures Suffer AUTOMATIC ATTACK and must test Vigor against 1d20 + each round.

(Sp) Vice-like Grip: +10 Bonus to ALL Test made while grappling: Attacks, Brawn and injury rolls includes swallow attacks); **Sticky Grapple Attack (Rating 5)** (Pseudopod only) (Adds rating and effect to grapple attacks made with stated weapon); **Sticky Spit Bolt Attack (Rating 5) 12"** (12" Ranged Bolt Attack with Rating 5 Sticky Effect if hit, no damage); **Extend Reach 1&2** (pseudopod only) (Adds 1" reach per level); **Rapid Reaction** (+10 to initiative rolls); **Motion Sense 24"** (Allows Observe Test and targets do not count in soft cover within range); **Blind Flaw** (all targets count as having full soft cover out side of Motion Sense); **Slow Movement Flaw:** (base move is 1/2 per size); **Vulnerability to Acid (FLAW)** (creature is VULNERABLE TO ACID Attacks and Effects, allowed only a Straight 1d20 roll to resist injury); **Improved natural Attack (Bite) 1&2** (Bonus to attack and Injury Rolls equal to rating); **Rubbery Body** (IMMUNE from Crushing and Falling Damage); **Dense Mass 10** (gains a +10 Vigor bonus, but adds double the rating to encumbrance if calculating weight); **Thick Hide 5** (natural armor bonus to defense equal to rating); Speaks Barter Tongue and Dark tongue.

Treasure Rating: Hoarder (always counts as In Lair)

Templates: none

Gear: (See Rewards)

Special Abilities / Attacks: Improved Swallow Attack (see talent), 3" reach with Rating 5 Sticky pseudopod; Sticky Spit 12" Ranged Bolt Attack (rating 5 Sticky, no damage); Vice-like Grip (+10 to all Grapple attacks, injuries and Tests); Immune to Crushing and Falling damage; Vulnerable to ACID; Blind Flaw; Motion Sense 24"; Shape-Shift Mimic Disguise (+15 Endurance to take on the shape of object (Treasure Chest, beds ect.) or structural object (doors, pillars ect.) plus see talents

DefB (+22); MCB (1" reach Bite +43 plus Swallow Bite Grapple +53) or (3" reach Pseudopod +45 (+35 Brawn, +5 base, +5 Sticky) (Pseudopod Grapple +55) / RCB (+15 12" rating 5 Sticky Bolt Attack, no Injury just Sticky 5) / IM+20

Lore Rating: Scarce +15

Max Scores: B 40, A 15, E 30, M 20, S 25, C 15, L 20 / VB +70

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Devote Brute (Human/ Humanoid)

(110 pts)/ Size: Medium / Move: 6” / Vigor Bonus: +30

B 20, A 10, E 20, M 5, S 10, C 5, L 10

PRSB +5

MRSB +2

Skills: Gossip +5, Intimidate +16 Observe +5, Survival +10. World Lore +3

Talents: Hearty (+5 Vigor Bonus); Improved Punch 1, Heavy Hitter 1, (Sp) Burst of Strength 5 Talent (+5 to Brawn for 5 rounds useable 5 times per adventure)

Treasure Rating: none

Templates: The Brute

Gear: Heavy Armor (+3 Def) and Grim Mace (+5)

Special Abilities / Attacks: +5 to Vigor Bonus and Human +5 Luck bonus, Burst of Strength 5, Heavy Hitter and Improved Punch

DefB (+19); MCB (+26 w/ grim mace) or (+31 when Burst of Strength) / RCB (+10 base) / IM+10

Lore Rating: Everyman (+0)

Max Ability Scores: B 20, A 20, E 20, M20, S20, C20/ VB +40

Popell The Minstrel (Human/ Humanoid)

(155pts)/ Size: Medium / Move: 6” / Vigor Bonus: +22

B 10, A 15, E 15, M 15, S 15, C 20, L 10

PRSB +4

MRSB +5

Skills: Bluff +20, Gossip +8, Observe +10, Perform +25 Survival +13. World Lore +6 (+11)

Talents: Hearty (+5 Vigor Bonus), (Sp) Vagabond’s Lore Talent, (Sp) Minstrel Song Talent

Treasure Rating: none

Templates: The Minstrel

Gear: Sword (+4), Light Armor (+1 Def) and Lute

Special Abilities / Attacks: +5 to Vigor Bonus and Human +5 Luck bonus., Vagabon’s Lore (+5 to ALL LORE), Minstrel Songs: (S) Activate, (f) to maintain, Duration = Perform (Songs Known: Hymn of Battle, Lullaby of Deep Slumber, Ditty of Distraction, Dirge of Dread and Chant of Charming) See page 60 H/20 Fantasy Guidebook for song details.

DefB (+20); MCB (+14 sword) / RCB (+15 base) / IM+15

Lore Rating: Everyman (+0)

Max Ability Scores: B 20, A 20, E 20, M20, S20, C20/ VB +40

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Peasants (Human/ Humanoid)

(70pts)/ Size: Medium / Move: 6” / Vigor Bonus: +15

B 10, A 10, E 10, M 5, S 10, C 5, L 10

PRSB +3

MRSB +2

Skills: Gossip +5, Observe +5, Survival +10. World Lore +3

Talents: Hearty (+5 Vigor Bonus)

Treasure Rating: none

Templates:

Gear: Peasants clothing and farm tools (treat as club)

Special Abilities / Attacks: +5 to Vigor Bonus and Human +5 Luck bonus.

DefB (+14); MCB (+14 club) / RCB (+10 base) / IM+10

Lore Rating: Everyman (+0)

Max Ability Scores: B 20, A 20, E 20, M20, S20, C20/ VB +40

Peasant Children (Human/ Humanoid)

(40pts)/ Size: Small / Move: 6” / Vigor Bonus: +10

B 5, A 10, E 5, M 5, S 5, C 5, L 10

PRSB +2

MRSB +1

Skills: Gossip +3, Observe +4

Talents: Hearty (+5 Vigor Bonus)

Treasure Rating: none

Templates:

Gear: Peasants clothing and farm tools (treat as club)

Special Abilities / Attacks: +5 to Vigor Bonus and Human +5 Luck bonus.

DefB (+13); MCB (+8 club) / RCB (+10 base) / IM+10

Lore Rating: Everyman (+0)

Max Ability Scores: B 20, A 20, E 20, M20, S20, C20/ VB +40