



The Redcap

*"Tonight tonight, my plans I make,
tomorrow tomorrow, the blood I take.
The nobles, they'll not win their game,
for Krompleripskins is my name."*

*- mutterings of the Redcapped Hermit
from Lonely Rock (since banished)*

Description: Redcaps are the terrible men of the moors, known for their beastly grins and horrid words. They appear as twisted, bow-legged old men with crooked yellow teeth, long noses and exaggeratedly debased demeanours. They are roughly man-sized, although often appear sinewy and emaciated. All redcaps wear some sort of a piece of red headwear, although styles vary wildly. Indeed, it is a known fact that a redcap keeps its namesake headgear freshly coloured by soaking it in the blood of its victims. Otherwise they are usually described as wearing rags and wielding long pikestaffs. Oddly, some fringe scholars have posited a genealogical relation between redcaps and gnomes. If such a connection exists it must be ancient beyond memory.

F Although indigenous to the ageless dimension of the Elflands, they swear no allegiances to known patrons or deities - those who are knowledgeable of such things

say that the redcaps follow an ethos of some unknown, ancient power buried deep beneath the endless summer glades and flowering fields. Some scholars have even posited that redcaps are diametrically opposed to the royalty and nobility of Elfland, being a part of some hidden, repressed anarchist faction of the fae. Redcaps are filled with vicious animal cunning and possess a sinewy strength well beyond their malformed frames. As if this wasn't enough, they are suffused with the ancient magics of the Elflands. They are vicious and malevolent creatures, known for their murderous urges and foul attitudes. As solitary creatures, they often react with extreme violence to travellers who infringe upon their haunts.

Often described as ornery, mean and downright evil, there are some stories of redcaps acting as stewards and servants of equally depraved masters. It is said that one can strike a deal with a redcap, and if worded just correctly the beastly creature will abide by it until the end of its days, with the usual neurotic rigidity found among such arcane creatures. Magicians and conmen seeking to achieve such a deed should be forewarned and wary however, as should the wording of the contract be off by a single syllable, the vengeance of the crooked redcap will surely be a grisly sight to behold.

Ecology and environment: In the mundane realms of men redcaps are most usually encountered in forgotten places associated with stone, brooding and loneliness. Redcaps are solitary creatures, for the most part. They can sometimes be found living in small groups, which are always limited to a magically significant number (the Three Old Men of the Hills, the Five Strange Uncles of the Forest, the Seven Hermits of the Mountain, and so on), but this is exceptional, and most calamitous for the lands surrounding their haunt. Some travellers of the Elflands claim to have stumbled upon great moots of the foul creatures, but scholars generally regard these tales with derision, as working in concert as a large group goes against the acrid temperament so common in this ornery fae clan.

As natural denizens of the Elflands, redcaps require little in the way of traditional sustenance. It is said that they can survive on rocks and thistles, and keep their potent magics as long as their caps remain red and glistening with blood. To this end they trap and kill unwary travellers and those who would trespass on their chosen haunts. Some redcaps have been known to show mercy to those who they deem innocent, although as is usual for the fae this definition is quite mercurial. Redcaps are extremely fond of traps and will certainly build a number of dangerous hidden devices on their hunting grounds

Redcaps are apparently bound by some form of very ancient arcane law, which gives them their profound magical powers, but also causes their solitary true weakness - knowing the true name of a redcap grants its wielder unprecedented powers over the creature, even more so than usual. Some redcaps are also open to strike deals with mortals, usually requiring blood and life in trade for their continued assistance - those who enter into such a contract usually come to regret it later, as the merciless men of the hills are always wily and cunning in their dealings.

Statistics: *Init:* +6; *Atk:* pikestaff +6 (1d10 + 6) or thrown boulder +6 (1d8 + 6); *AC:* 16; *HD:* 4d8 + 6; *MV:* 40'; *Act:* 2d20; *SP:* immunity to mundane weapons; vulnerability to iron (normal DMG + 1); can cast *Strength*, *Enlarge*, *Magic shield*, *Invisibility*, *Force manipulation*, *Knock*, *Locate object*, *Ward portal* and *Scare* with +6 to check¹; weakness to true name (see below); *Saves:* Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +6; *AL:* C.

Redcaps are obeisant to the ancient laws of the arcane, and as such are extremely susceptible to the use of their true name. Anyone who knows a redcap's true name may attempt to cast *Banish* on it, with their level and highest attribute modifier added to the spell check (regardless of whether they know the spell or are generally able to cast spells). Any casters targeting a redcap with *Banish* or *Binding* and using the target's name as a part of their incantation find their spell succeeding automatically as the highest spell check result and permanent effect duration. Any other charming magics cast using the creature's true name have a +10 bonus on the spell check.

1 All redcaps are individuals, and Judges should feel free to tweak this list of spells to suit their own adventures. Some redcaps have even been known to grant wishes after their own fashion, and their magical power should reflect this.