

A'Kosh

Background

Despite his impoverished childhood and adolescence, A'Kosh always envisioned something more. He grew up in the slums of Upper Kighfalton, avoiding the constant purges by the Emperor and the regional Overlord to rid the region of the subterranean races such as Ratlings, Goblins, and Ratton. Somehow, he survived, though he became embittered and resentful after his kin were slaughtered. Starving and alone, he wandered the streets and sewers, stealing what he could and using his cobbler abilities to keep from being caught.

When A'Kosh was ten, he joined a thieves' guild, as an apprentice to the guild's chief assassin. He trained hard and learned quickly the tasks he was given. At first it was simple strong-arming and the occasional assault, but his responsibility quickly grew. At age fifteen, he was given his first murder assignment. Nervous as he was, he was ten times more determined, more so after learning about the target. He was charged with killing one of several wizards responsible for the murder of his clan. A'Kosh set to this task with an enthusiasm and fervor he had never known before, tracking the mage down quickly.

The battle that ensued was a spectacular display of skill, both magical and mundane. A'Kosh prowled through the sewers searching for some way in, eventually locating a hidden door in the stone. He moved up the spiral staircase silently, coming to an archway. Seeing that many wizards mulled about this floor, A'Kosh willed himself to another form; that of a small, gray mouse and skittered along the wall. It took him only few short hours to work his way to the second floor, past the other wizards (and numerous cats roaming the corridors). Finally, A'Kosh spotted his prey, studying alone at a desk in his bedroom.

The wizard's name was Sauron. He was not very remarkable and, in fact, looked to be rather fragile. A'Kosh, however, knew differently. Still in his rodent form, A'Kosh moved underneath the bed. There, he shifted back to his goblin form. He drew the dagger from its sheath in his boot, coating the blade with poison as he did. Peeking out from beneath, he was surprised to see Sauron staring back at him. He was further surprised to see that Sauron was standing. A'Kosh scrambled from beneath the bed, dodging an energy bolt in the process, to stand before his opponent. The wizard began to concentrate again and mutter ancient, arcane phrases. Knowing this to be the beginnings of a spell, A'Kosh attacked, only barely catching the wizard's robes. The spell was released just as A'Kosh flew by. He was lucky, catching only a fraction of the searing heat from the fireball.

Sauron quickly cast another spell, creating a magical flameblade in his hand. The two opponents circled, waiting for the other to strike. The wizard struck first, lunging at the assassin and landing a blow to A'Kosh's arm. A'Kosh grimaced at the incredible burning sensation, but continued his assault. He faked to one side, then darted around the opposite, getting to the vulnerable back of the wizard. He then jumped, landing a blow into the wizard's ribs with his dagger. The poison was slow to work, and had not yet taken effect, but it was indeed in the wizard's system. A'Kosh grinned evilly at this development, only to be stabbed again with the flameblade. He backed away from Sauron, hoping he could bide his time until the poison began its subtle work. He circled the wizard, waiting. Sauron soon began casting another spell. This time, A'Kosh waited until the spell was released to do anything. That was his first mistake. The room was suddenly filled with a great rush of air and it was all A'Kosh could do to keep his balance, unable to move, for fear of being blown away. But Sauron was advancing, and A'Kosh was already wounded badly.

In a daring (and desperate) move, A'Kosh leaped up into the rushing, magical wind. He flipped over in mid-air, landing feet first against the wall, then, giving a mighty push with his legs, he sailed through the air. As he flew over the wizard, A'Kosh threw his dagger down, right into the stooped wizard's back. The final blade attack, combined the poison's effects, dropped the wizard trembling and twitching to the floor. Immediately, the wind stopped and A'Kosh retrieved his dagger. Shifting back to his rodent form, he rushed out of the room and down the hallway taking care to avoid the feet of the guards, other wizards, rushing toward Sauron's room. Smiling, as much as a mouse could, A'Kosh left the guild in the same manner he entered: silent and unseen.

Following his amazing assassination, he was catapulted to the highest rank in the Thieves' Guild (below the al-Sahid, of course). Unfortunately, fate would seem to take away anything that made A'Kosh happy and the Thieves' guild was wiped out in one of many recent and bloody guild wars. A'Kosh took to freelancing for three more years before meeting Neklor Darkblade. At first, they did not see eye to eye, however, they soon grew on each other. Most especially after they learned of their seething hatred for the Western Empire. A'Kosh began working for Neklor, enforcing his will and removing dangers that might stand in the way of his grand scheme. But A'Kosh still fears that, like everyone else he consorted with, Neklor will be wiped out and he will be left with nothing. Because of this fear, A'Kosh is carefully saving his gold and silver, amassing a small fortune of his own. He uses this fortune to finance the building of a fortress stronghold in the Scarlet Mountains. He plans to use this stronghold to train assassins and as a shelter for outlaws. What A'Kosh doesn't know is that his stronghold's site sits on rich vein of gems and ore. It's only a matter of months before he discovers this and steps up the building. Unfortunately, a small settlement of dwarves and gnomes live close by (about ten miles). Once the stronghold is big enough, it will be impossible to hide and there will be confrontation.

Appearance

A'Kosh hides his appearance as a goblin as much as possible, particularly the floppy ears. Oddly enough, he simply ties the ears back, similar to a ponytail, to keep them from making any noise while on a mission. A'Kosh is also the typical assassin, wearing almost solid black. He wears knee-length, leather boots, pants and a tunic (which is midnight blue or purple). Over his shirt he wears a black vest and bracers on his wrist, enabling him to parry even bladed weapons (when unarmed) without fear of losing a hand. If traveling, he wears a long cloak, usually with the hood pulled up to conceal his racial characteristics. He also tries to walk like a dwarf, to further conceal his race and prevent unwanted attention.

Disposition

A'Kosh is calm, most of the time, but it's best not to anger him. Every being that has agitated or insulted A'Kosh is either dead, or wishing he (or she) were. In battle he is merciless, attacking with the fervor his occupation requires. He's actually quite happy and enjoys his life of murder and intrigue, but he still needs his allies. A'Kosh is also rather intelligent and cunning, using strategy and tactics to end a fight as quickly as he can. A'Kosh has become quite adept at fighting wizards and other spell-casters, but he is certain that it will be a spell-caster that does him in (he knows that he will slow down with age and meet a violent death, but doesn't really care).

Weapon	Damage	Range	Payload
Short Staff	2D6	HTH	----
<i>Surefingers (cannot be disarmed)</i>			
<i>Additional Damage</i>			
Grappling Hook	1D6	30'	---
<i>Entangle</i>			

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