

MONSTERS: DOMESTIC & ALIEN

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OVERVIEW

The Monsters: Domestic & Alien document will discuss various monstrous animal life forms present within the Destiny Omega/Gelitech story world. This includes the full range of monstrous creatures, from relatively common creatures native to the core of civilized space, all the way to truly alien non-sapient life forms.

DRIZZLE

Monster, Slime, Transdimensional, Highly Dangerous

Few alien monstrosities are more feared than the dissociated, transdimensional organism generally known as the drizzle. What makes it most fearsome is that, scientifically speaking, this exotic creature does not exist. It has never been detected on sensors. It has never been recorded on film. Only a few eyewitness accounts of its attacks exist, along with some indirect evidence present in the results that points to a common cause.

According to eyewitnesses, the drizzle comes from nowhere, it's shiny, olive green substance percolating through space and time onto its victim's flesh, regardless of the presence of clothing. At first there is nothing but small droplets, but these soon form blobs, threads, and a drizzle of thick slime that forms a small pool on the ground around the victim's body. The few observed victims have always expressed curious fascination with their forming coat of slime, and even seem to find the sensations distinctly enjoyable, if not even pleasurable.

In all witnessed cases, it takes the drizzle about three minutes to fully coat its victim, who remains quite happy throughout. Once coated, the victim appears to remain alive for about ten to fifteen minutes, despite having their mouth and nose completely blocked by the slime. After this time passes, the drizzle vanishes the way it came, little drops popping out of existence until there's nothing left but a puddle of water on the ground where the victim had been.

The drizzle has never been witnessed attacking two individuals at once. In one observed case, however, the drizzle did percolate onto two additional individuals who came into physical contact with the initial victim in an ultimately futile attempt to render aid. Their concern with the victim turned into fascination with the slime the moment it began to form upon their bodies, and all three were coated and vanished when it departed.

The exact effects of the drizzle on its victims is completely unknown. It may consume them, killing them in the process, or it may simply absorb them, and their minds, into its own transdimensional mass. The water it leaves behind is absolutely pure, completely devoid of minerals or other evidence of having been part of the victim's body. This pure water is the only common factor providing any tangible evidence of a drizzle attack.

Within the whole of the Fey'li Empire, only four drizzle attacks are believed to occur in any given month. Generally, these occur in more sparsely populated areas with little in the way of sensing technology to catch the event as it takes place. Locations with expansive, multi-faceted operational surveillance such as spacefaring vessels and military facilities have never recorded a suspected drizzle attack. This suggests that the drizzle(s) may be aware of technology which might be used to detect it, and take active steps to avoid it.

At the current time, there is no known way to avoid the drizzle, nor is there any known way to resist it once it attacks. Victims are advised to relax as best they can and allow it to take them as expeditiously, and pleasantly, as possible.

GIANT ANEMONE

Monster, Aquatic, Vore-Absorption Peril, Highly Dangerous

Depending on who one asks, an anemone is either a perfectly harmless flower or a highly predatory water dwelling invertebrate. Despite the stark differences in nature between the two, mistaking one for the other is generally without serious consequences. Assuming one isn't diving in the habitat of the infamous giant anemone, that is...

The giant anemone is arguably one of the most beautiful hazards to divers ever recorded by modern science. Its bulbous, egg-shaped body is translucent white, with a layer of sparkly purple dots just beneath its surface. These natural retro-reflectors shine brightly in even the dimmest of illumination. Beneath this two meter tall structure is a broad, gummy looking foot that allows the creature to wiggle its way along the sea floor, as well as to attach itself quite securely to any firm surface.

Atop the giant anemone is a writhing nest of entrancingly iridescent tentacles. These can number anywhere between twelve and twenty-four, and extend to a length of roughly two meters. At the very center of the tentacles is the creature's sole orifice. This serves as both a mouth and an anus.

A giant anemone is largely dependent on prey blundering into the reach of its tentacles. It mainly subsists on moderately sized fish, though it certainly won't turn down a larger mammal or two. Divers, entranced by the creature's colorful display are a special treat.

Should the creature's tentacles come into contact with exposed flesh, microscopic barbs will inject a potent mix of toxins into the unfortunate victim. The victim immediately loses the strength to swim away from giant anemone. Over the next ten seconds the victim loses almost all of their strength altogether, rendering them helpless to resist as the tentacles force them into the creature's gummy maw. At the same time, the victim loses all will to resist, and all ability to feel pain or discomfort. They will thus happily

allow the giant anemone to consume them without putting up even a token resistance.

A giant anemone victim cannot drown while in the creature's forceful embrace. While being pulled in, one tentacle will force its way into the victim's mouth. This will provide a breathable gas mixture that has sufficient oxygen to ensure that the victim remains alive and conscious. Once fully within the giant anemone, the victim will experience a momentary feeling of drowning as oxygen rich liquid fills their lungs. The creature's toxins help ensure that the experience isn't traumatic.

Once within the giant anemone, a victim will be painlessly dissolved over the course of several hours. The resulting mass of nutrient jelly retains many of the victim's body structures, transformed in such a way that the victim doesn't actually perish during the process. As the jelly is absorbed into the flesh of the anemone, the still conscious mind finds itself being reduced to animal intelligence and forced to control a new tentacle that grows amid the others.

When a giant anemone reaches twenty-four tentacles, it begins a month's long process during which it splits into two twelve tentacled giant anemones. This is the creature's sole known means of reproduction. Owing to this, it is speculated that the species has been either engineered or specially bred for the purpose of consuming sapient captives and was subsequently released into the wild when the unknown civilization of its origin collapsed.

Giant anemones are found in the wild on more than a dozen worlds in the core of civilized space. They are also found captive in zoological facilities across known space. It is in these xenozoo facilities, such as XenoZoo Mashiva, where one might most reliably encounter the creatures. Owing to regulations on the control of invasive species, private ownership is prohibited.

GLOUX

Monster, Vore-Absorption Peril

One doesn't typically consider a mundane and relatively harmless industrial accident as a potential catalyst for truly monstrous peril, but in the right environment even something so pedestrian as a non-toxic glue pill can quickly become astonishingly catastrophic. Born of common white glue, a seemingly harmless bacteria, and several individually harmless bacteriophages, the gloux has become the perfect example of everything that can go wrong when a combination of extremely unlikely factors combine in an unexpected way.

In a purely technical sense, the gloux is an artificial polymer slime initially created by the combination of a large volume of spilled white glue and the thickeners added to help control its spread and make cleanup easier to manage. Within this polymer slime is suspended a colony of generally harmless bacteria whose genetics have been modified by a series of different and also quite generally harmless bacteriophage viruses. In combination, the effects of each of these viruses serve to transform the bacteria into voracious organisms capable of transforming living beings into nutrients with terrifying speed.

Normally, the bacteria in question would never survive the effects of even one of the bacteriophage viruses, let alone all of them in combination. The spilled glue and thickeners, however, proved to be the perfect environment to mitigate the viruses' harmful effects and allow the bacteria to thrive virtually unchecked. This results in a thick, mobile mass of bright green slime that glows wherever it happens to be actively consuming organic matter.

The gloux can only move at about one meter every ten seconds, making it unable to actively hunt animals. Most of its nutrients come from whatever plant and organic soil matter that it encounters along its way. The slime is capable of consuming virtually any form of organic matter, with much of the consumed mass growing the volume of the gloux. Waste material is deposited beneath the creature's mass in the form of solid

black beads, so rich in valuable mineral content that several doomed efforts have been made to collect it for refining.

While the gloux cannot actively hunt, it does have a highly effective ability to draw unwitting victims into its grasp. The gloux constantly emits a selection of chemicals that serve to render victims quite willing to approach and allow the gloux to surround them. The only warning a potential victim will get is a smell described as being very much like that of warm apple cider. Should they fail to escape the scent within thirty seconds or so, they will feel compelled to seek out its source. When confronted by the mass of glistening slime, they will become first entranced, and then enthralled. Many victims will denude. A few will actually enter the slime of their own accord. Unless forcibly removed from the situation, all will be consumed.

A combination of the airborne chemicals and physical contact with the gloux will render the victim incapable of feeling any form of pain. It also dampens shock response, resulting in victims quite happily allowing the creature to rapidly dissolve whatever portions of their body happen to be drawn into the slime at any given moment. Owing to the highly cohesive properties of the slime, the victim only perishes when the brain, heart, or lungs is dissolved.

Most victims of the gloux are entirely willing, though this was not always the case. The initial phase of its growth was quite rapid, devastating an area of several hundred square kilometers around the glue factory on Tabria VII where the accident occurred. Since that event five years ago, the creature has spread to cover almost 1/6th of the planet's surface, even spreading along the bottom of oceans in its quest to consume every living thing on the planet. It is expected to fully cover the planet in a layer a hundred meters thick within two years. Given its composition and efficiency in converting nutrients, it is then expected to enter a cycle of self-sustenance lasting millennia, slowly reducing in volume to a

planetary thickness of twenty-five meters before suffering a total collapse.

There is only one gloux. Anyone wanting to gaze upon its voracious mass must travel to Tabria VII to see it. This fairly easy to accomplish, as its sister planet Tabria VI is a modest agricultural colony world. Ships are constantly traveling between the two worlds in order to help salvage what can be salvaged from the former, and a few enterprising captains are quite willing to get passengers close to the gloux' edge for the right price.

If one doesn't want to pay for the trip to Tabria VII, publications such as XenoExotic are quite willing to arrange free travel in exchange for exclusive rights to video one's consumption by the slime. These sorts of videos are quite popular on the 'net. A sub-genre known as 'gloux diving' being among the most popular short videos in the XenoExotic library.

Gloux diving videos involve volunteers diving into the slime from two or three meters overhead. The slime is liquid enough to allow ready entry. The resulting sequence of penetration, ripples, and then a bright glow fading to darkness is quite visually appealing, assuming one doesn't think too much about what's actually happening beneath the surface.

SPINE SERPENT

Monster, Undead, Transformation Peril, Highly Dangerous

Once thought to be a creature solely of myth, the spine serpent was a creature who's long forgotten ancient name was sufficient to induce terror even in the hearts of the typically uncaring key'vin'ta. The recent discovery of actual living specimens came as a considerable surprise, not the least of all to the dozen members of the Mashiva Mariners' University Naked Spelunker's Club who discovered just why the creatures were so feared. A total of only four specimens were recorded by the unfortunate spelunker's cameras, living in a bone-filled cavern on the suggestively named Serpent's Isle, far out in the Southern Ocean of Maria IV, though it is assumed that more must exist elsewhere on the lonely island, and perhaps elsewhere in equally isolated and relatively unexplored locales on the planet.

A spine serpent appears as a long spine with a humanoid sized, dragon-form skull on one end, and a tail tip with four barbs on the other. All four of the observed examples were initially concealing themselves among the bones of their prior victims, where they were virtually undetectable until the moment they floated up out of the piles and slithered through the air toward their selected targets. They seemed capable of moving about with almost arbitrary ease, and were able to snare their first victims before they could react.

A spine serpent attacks by approaching a victim from behind and wrapping her waist and legs within its bony coils. An energy visible only as a deep violet light flares around its tail-tip, which the creature first directs towards its victim's feet, before aiming it ever-upwards. Her flesh seems to dissolve into nothing at the energy's touch leaving only bone in its wake. Throughout the process, she remains standing as if she were still whole, though her progressively stripped and separated bones fall to the floor beneath her.

There is no indication that the victims of a spine serpent feel any particular discomfort as they are reduced to a heap of bones on the floor. Observed victims seemed shocked, confused, fascinated, or some combination thereof. There is some

indicator that direct observers of a spine serpent are somehow compelled to remain in its presence and watch passively, as all of the spelunkers failed to make any attempt to escape, or even help their snared comrades.

Once each of a spine serpent's victims is reduced to bones, it gains a new vertebra toward the base of its tail. According to what little is known of the key'vin'ta myth, it is said that the soul of the victim is eternally trapped in this new bone, helping to fuel the creature's powers and make them more potent as it grows.

ZUKA

Monster, Slime, Transformed Sapient, Enticement Peril

Feminine sapience transformed into pure, gelatinous pleasure, unfettered by the needs and concerns of a mortal body. That's the theory behind the little crystalline blobs known as zuka, at least. Existing in a state of constant, euphoric ecstasy, their captive souls are forever trapped in a state akin to that of unending foreplay, on the cusp of orgasmic release. Only the handling of another sapient being can send them tumbling over the edge.

The alien Zarata originally created the zuka, and their male equivalent, the zuxa, nearly five hundred years ago, as a means to dispose of the populations of neighboring, sparsely populated colony worlds who dared make petty war against their homeworld of Zembax. Largely pacifistic, yet extremely determined to protect their way of life, any colony so presumptuous as to attack them would be first defeated, non-combatant age and/or ability colonists forced to leave, and then its combatant age population transformed into zuka and zuxa. Such takings were considered part of the risk of living in the legal limbo of interstellar space at the time, an attitude which would come back to bite the Feyli Empire when they failed to respond effectively to the initial phases of rowa expansion centuries later.

Physically, every zuka is an identically sized, 30cm blob of transparent, usually colored, softly luminous slime. When placed on a hard surface, it flattens into a low, hemispherical shape. It can ooze about in a slow, haphazard fashion on any reasonably level surface, but lacks the ability to adhere to and climb any incline more than a few degrees.

All zuka were once sapient females, or other sexes of essentially feminine inner nature. Their color is based on a number of factors. These include physical strength, endurance, agility, health, basic intelligence, and basic wisdom. Loosely speaking, these represent fundamental genetic attributes and their development. The intensity of a zuka's color is dependent on overall intellectual and physical charisma, learned skill,

overall societal value, and social standing (as classified by their creators, the mysterious aliens known as zarata).

As a rough guide to those who find themselves about to be transformed, each factor might be considered to add a certain number of points to the color and intensity scales. Low = 0 points. Average = 1 point. Above Average = 2 points. High = 3 points. Extraordinary = 4 points. Totaling the points generally results in a value reflecting the color & intensity of the resulting zuka.

Zuka Color Chart:

- 0-5: Clear
- 6-9: Red
- 10-15: Yellow
- 16-20: Green
- 20-22: Blue
- 23-24: Purple

Zuka Intensity Chart:

- 0-6: Pale
- 6-10: Moderate
- 11-14: Vivid
- 15-16: Deep

In addition to varying color, zuka have varying abilities, many of which are oriented toward the pleasure and enjoyment of other sapient species. The number of special abilities a particular zuka might have is determined by its color. Clear zuka have one ability, and each step on the rainbow above them gains one additional ability. The total number of different abilities is unknown, and largely a matter of conjecture. A sampling of those known to exist is listed below. All require direct physical contact with the subject of the ability.

Zuka Abilities (Common Examples):

- Aphrodisiac.
- Calming.
- Dream enhancement.
- Enhanced lactation facilitation.
- Enhanced sexual stimulation.
- Inhibition limiting.
- Intellectual arousal.
- Intoxication.

- Limited healing.
- Limited local clairvoyance.
- Limited telepathic empathy.
- Meditative trance.
- Observational focus enhancement.
- Stress relief.
- Wisdom enhancement.

The actual transformation process which converts a sapient female into a zuka is relatively straight forward. The subject enters a special transformation chamber and stands in the center. The transparent door allows other to watch as a null-gravity field causes her to float off the floor, while energy coils at the top and the bottom of the chamber energize. These effect the actual transformation, which slowly causes the subject to become a large, amorphous blob of slime.

The initial transformation into slime takes between three and five minutes, and is extremely pleasurable, both physically and mentally. Even the least enthusiastic prospective zuka can't help but be caught up in the sublime, fluid sensations of full, physical liquefaction. Once this process is complete, the blob is sucked into an overhead opening, where it undergoes a 'distilling' process. Much of the blob's mass is drawn off over the course of two or three minutes. The resulting zuka is then dispensed into a clear sphere, consumed by unending pleasure, and ready to accept the attentions of their future owners.

Zuka do not seem to need any physical nourishment. It is theorized that they exist in a constant cycle of creating and then feeding upon sexual energy, though why they don't seem to lose energy over long periods of time without external stimulation is a total mystery. Another, more recent theory, suggest that they garner energy in the same trans-dimensional fashion as biogel, though without the need for technological accessories. In this respect, it may more resemble the ancient key'vin'ta purple slime, though lacking the need for constant addition of new, sapient fuel to keep the power flowing. Strangely enough, zuka are both immune to the effects of purple slime, and the physically transformative effects of biogel. This is a major point in support

of the latter theory, though further study is required.

One remarkable note about zuka transformation is its ability to subsume symbiotic organisms. Non-intelligent organisms simply become slime along with their host's body. This property can, and has, been used to provide hosts of unwanted, irremovable, and inevitably fatal symbiotic organisms, to obtain a potentially more desirable life outcome. Intelligent organisms are fully united with their host, becoming one in both mind and in zuka body.

Zuka transformation is just as capable of subsuming biogel cladding as it is any other symbiotic organism. Indeed, it can even transform beings who have previously been completely transformed into biogel. This does not break the transformed individual's link with the biogel Unity, though it does prevent the Unity, or it's controlling soul Omega, from doing much more than being aware of what it senses, and how it feels. Owing to this, and the above noted theory on sustenance, the Destiny Omega has visited Zembax in an effort to obtain a transformation chamber to use for further study. This has not been forthcoming, though the Zarata Council has agreed to allow specially appointed representatives access to study zuka, provided they provide a sum of at least thirty new zuka of yellow or greater quality a month in return for the privilege. This duty is being currently being supported by the new Ri'shathi Class Destiny Epsilon, a light freighter sized, biogel powered vessel fitted mainly for courier service.

The Zarata typically keep zuka as high class toys and pets. One can often discern the more subtle aspects of a Zarata's social standing by noting the number, color and intensity of the zuka in their possession. Zuka are found in the possession and use of both Zarata sexes, though their male counterpart, the zuxa, tend to find themselves exclusively in the hands of aristocratic Zarata women.

Outsiders are rarely gifted zuka, though they are freely loaned to distinguished visitors. Again, the color and intensity of the loaned zuka is a reflection of the opinion the loaner has of the recipients own social standing and qualities.

For the average person, the only places that zuka can be experienced are on the Zarata homeworld of Zembax. Numerous resorts cater to travelers, offering all sorts of pleasures at rates far lower than the equivalent prices to be found within the Feyli Empire. Most of these resorts cater exclusively to female guests. A few cater specifically to males. Others cater to both sexes, and are typically marketed to couples who might be inclined to become zuka and zuxa together.

Several zuka of varying special abilities are provided to each resort guest, hand picked to match the guest's perceived qualities as potential zuka themselves. Each ornately appointed suite includes a transformation chamber plated in polished copper, silver, or gold to match the suite's particular décor. Sensuous imagery of particularly attractive prior guests undergoing pleasurable transformation into blobs in an identical chamber are constantly played on video screens embedded in the main room's glowing, flowing gel-walls.

The Zarata expectation with respects to their zuka resorts is that constant exposure to zuka, transformation imagery, and even subtle, subliminally acting sounds, within an environment catering to blissful, carefree vacationing, will induce guests to transform themselves into zuka. In this, the Zarata have been highly successful, and each week, more than sixty percent of present resort guests enter their private chambers, or the communal chambers provided throughout each resort, and become zuka.

For those who might venture out of the resorts, there are plenty of opportunities to be snared, coaxed, and cajoled into being transformed. Ever the social climbers, major and minor aristocrats alike will happily invite prospective zuka into their homes, in hopes of adding them to their collections, thereby enhancing their social status.

There are few rules to this conduct, save that they are not permitted to forcibly coerce, threaten, or physically compel their guests in any way.

Zuka are periodically offered as diplomatic or good-will gifts to particularly significant figures. Outright gifts are rare, however. Most often the gift involves someone of significance to the recipient being transformed, and the resulting zuka becoming the offered gift. In situations where that might produce certain awkward feelings with respects to handling what might well be a close family member, the Zarata will keep the new zuka and give an identically colored one as the gift.

Genuine gel-walls are the only aspect of zuka transformation available off Zembax. These are crafted from the excess mass of slime created during the zuka transformation process. While technically not alive, they move and flow all on their own, their luminous colors never mixing. Owing to the cost of the real thing, numerous imitations can be found throughout known space. Vixanti Corporation, and now Gelitech, have proved willing to pay the premium, and gel-walls can be found aboard all Destiny named vessels starting with the Destiny Beta.

The cost of staying at a zuka resort is a measly ¢50 per night, per guest. Special packages are offered for a major port 2nd class round trip and two week stay at a price of only ¢1,000 for up to two companions, or a 1st class, two week stay for ¢1,850. With transit to a major port costing between ¢200 and ¢800 from just about anywhere in the Feyli Empire, this makes for about as inexpensive and exotic, alien world vacation as there is.

Rainbow gel-walls can be acquired at a cost of ¢2,500 per square meter. Specific color combinations can be obtained at the price of ¢8,000 per square meter.

ZUXA

Monster, Slime, Transformed Sapien, Enticement Peril

Masculine sapience transformed into pure, gelatinous pleasure, unfettered by the needs and concerns of a mortal body. That's the theory behind the little crystalline blobs known as zuxa, at least. Existing in a state of constant, euphoric ecstasy, their captive souls are forever trapped in a state akin to that of unending foreplay, on the cusp of orgasmic release. Only the handling of another sapient being can send them tumbling over the edge.

Most aspects of the zuxa are virtually identical to those of the zuka. See the zuka entry above for details. All exceptions will be noted below.

Unlike zuka, zuxa are roughly 36cm in diameter, and their transparent slime is filled with a web of whitish threads and blobs. This gives it an appearance not unlike that of a large glass marble. Zuxa are also more capable of physical motion, able to adhere to surfaces to some degree, and thus climb an incline up to twenty-five degrees in slope.

All zuxa were once sapient males, or other sexes of essentially masculine nature. They are almost exclusively found in the possession of aristocratic Zarata women. When loaned to outsiders, they are exclusively offered to women. This is quite rare, as many consider a zuka more effective than a zuxa in enticing women into having themselves transformed.

For the average person, the only places that zuxa can be experienced are on the Zarata homeworld of Zembax. Zuxa are not offered in the resorts like zuka. One must leave the resorts to find the private dens that cater to those who wish to obtain a taste of what the often quite sexually aggressive little blobs of masculinity can do.

Zuxa are periodically offered as diplomatic or good-will gifts to particularly significant female figures whose reputations wouldn't be marred by the relatively public acceptance of such a plaything. Outright gifts are far more common

than with zuka, largely owing to the higher demand for zuka among the Zarata themselves.