

VLAAKITH THE LICH-QUEEN

Commanding vast armies in citadels across the Astral Plane is Vlaakith, the thousand-year-old lich-queen to whom all githyanki owe fealty (or at least pretend to). She rarely ventures beyond her obsidian Palace of Whispers, but her eyes, ears, and mind-probing instruments are everywhere.

Vlaakith is also the reason why there are no githyanki clerics. A would-be goddess herself, Vlaakith cannot abide the notion of a githyanki worshipping anyone else. In githyanki society, offering a prayer to anyone other than Vlaakith is a capital crime.

Vlaakith is described below with the items she's never without, including the *crown of corruption* and the *scepter of Ephelomon*.

➤ **Vlaakith the Lich-Queen, Female Githyanki Lich Wiz25:** CR 28; Medium Undead; HD 25d12; hp 180; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 33, touch 20, flat-footed 27; BAB +13; Grap +16; Atk +21 melee (2d6+9/19–20, +5 *dancing vorpal silver sword*) or +16 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, negative energy touch); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+9/19–20, +5 *dancing vorpal silver sword*) or +16 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, negative energy touch); SA damaging touch, fear aura, paralyzing touch, psion-

ics, spells; SQ damage reduction 15/magic bludgeoning, immunities (cold, electricity, polymorph, mind-affecting attacks), +4 turn resistance; SR 30; AL CE; Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +17; Str 16, Dex 22, Con —, Int 32, Wis 16, Cha 25.

Skills: Concentration +28, Craft (alchemy) +37, Diplomacy +9, Hide +14, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +39, Knowledge (history) +23, Knowledge (the planes) +39, Listen +11, Move Silently +14, Search +34, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +41, Spot +26. **Feats:** Craft Epic Wondrous Item, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Extend Spell, Forge Ring, Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Focus (Transmutation), Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Spell Capacity (10th), Improved Spell Capacity (11th), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Focus (Transmutation), Spell Penetration.

Damaging Touch (Ex): Vlaakith's black, desiccated body courses with negative energy, such that her touch deals 1d8+5 points of damage. A successful Will save (DC 29) halves the damage.

Fear Aura (Su): Vlaakith's form is so horrid that creatures with fewer than 5 Hit Dice within 60 feet must succeed at a Will save (DC 29) or be affected as the *fear* spell cast by a 25th-level caster.

Immunities: Liches are immune to cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-influencing spells and effects. As long as she is holding the *scepter of Ephelomon*, Vlaakith is also immune to fire.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): Any living creature touched by Vlaakith must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 29) or be permanently paralyzed. *Remove paralysis* and any curse-removing spell can free the victim, but the paralyzing touch cannot be dispelled. The victim appears dead; only a successful Spot check (DC 20) or Heal check (DC 15) reveals that the victim is still alive.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 17), *dimension door*, *mage hand*, *telekinesis* (DC 22); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 24). Caster level 25th; save DC 17 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/7/7/7/10/6/6/6/5/5/2/2; base save DC = 22 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *mage hand*, *open/close*; 1st—*change self*, *magic missile* ×2, *obscuring mist*, *shield* ×2, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*bull's strength*, *detect thoughts* ×2, *mirror image*, *touch of idiocy* ×2, *web*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *lightning bolt*, *magic circle against good*, *empowered ray of enfeeblement*, *slow**, *extended spectral hand*; 4th—*animate dead*, *contagion**, *dimensional anchor* ×2, *enervation*, *extended haste* ×2, *extended heroism*, *screaming stonemason*; 5th—*dismissal* (DC special), *hold monster*, *empowered vampiric touch*, *magic jar**, *wall of force*, *waves of fatigue*; 6th—*disintegrate** ×2, *empowered enervation*, *greater dispel magic* ×2, *true seeing*; 7th—*extended eyebite** ×2, *finger of death**, *greater teleport* ×2, *waves of exhaustion*; 8th—*empowered circle of death**, *horrid wilting**, *protection from spells*, *screen* ×2; 9th—*foresight*, *gate*, *empowered spell turning*, *wail of the banshee**, *wish*; 10th—*extended dominate monster*, *empowered horrid wilting**; 11th—*empowered time stop* ×2.

*Necromancy or Transmutation spells. The base save DC for these spells is 24 + spell level.

Possessions: +5 dancing vorpal silver sword (treat as greatsword), crown of corruption, scepter of Ephelomon, headband of intellect +6, bracers of armor +8, gloves of Dexterity +6, cloak of Charisma +6, ring of wizardry IV, ring of protection +4, robe of eyes, scrolls (prismatic sphere, time stop, protection from spells, shapechange, stone shape), ring of 12 iron keys (keys unlock chests in area 36).

VLAAKITH'S TACTICS

Vlaakith begins the adventure in her throneroom (area 7) and senses whenever living creatures enter her palace. At that point, she begins using the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* ability granted by the magic of her palace to spy on the interlopers. If she detects the arrival of githyanki, she sends Xam'kras and his Ch'r'ai lieutenants (see area 10) to confront them and determine their intentions. If she detects the arrival of non-githyanki intruders or discovers that the newly arrived githyanki seek to destroy her, she sends any nearby tl'a'ikiths to annihilate them. If the tl'a'ikiths are destroyed, she sends Xam'kras, his subordinates, and any nearby duthka'giths to finish the job.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

While her minions keep the PCs busy, Vlaakith prepares for battle. She casts empowered *time stop* so that she may cast the following array of spells on herself before leading six tl'a'ikiths and six kr'y'izoths into battle against the interlopers:

Round 1: *Foresight* (lasts 250 minutes; can't be surprised or flat-footed; +2 insight bonus to AC and Reflex saves) and quickened *displacement* (lasts 25 rounds; attacks suffer a 50% miss chance).

Round 2: *Stoneskin* (lasts 250 minutes or until discharged; gains damage reduction 10/adamantine; spell can absorb up to 150 points of damage) and quickened *protection from spells* (lasts 250 minutes; gains +8 resistance bonus on saves against spells and spell-like abilities).

Round 3: Empowered *spell turning* (lasts 250 minutes or until expended; 1d4+6 levels of targeted spells are turned back at the caster, +50% because the spell is empowered).

Round 4: Extended *haste* (lasts 50 rounds; gains extra attack during a full attack action; +1 bonus on attack rolls; +1 dodge bonus to AC; +1 dodge bonus on Reflex saves; speed increases by 30 feet).

Round 5: *True seeing* (lasts 25 minutes; sees through darkness and illusions, and recognizes true forms) and quickened *magic circle against good* (250 minutes; gains +2 resistance bonus on all saving throws; prevents bodily contact by summoned or conjured creatures except evil elementals and evil outsiders).

If half of her undead bodyguards are turned or destroyed, or if she is reduced to 90 or fewer hit points, Vlaakith casts *greater teleport* to reach her reliquary (area 38). There, the lich-queen instructs her kr'y'izoth minions to use their spell conversion ability to heal her, which they do at once. She then casts empowered *time stop* so that she may cast the following defensive spells on herself:

Round 1: Extended *heroism* (lasts 500 minutes; gains +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks).

Round 2: Extended *haste* (lasts 50 rounds; gains extra attack during a full attack action; +1 bonus on attack rolls; +1 dodge bonus to AC; +1 dodge bonus on Reflex saves; speed increases by 30 feet).

Round 3: *Dimensional anchor* (lasts 25 minutes; protects against *maze* spells) and quickened *blur* (25 minutes; attacks suffer a 20% miss chance).

Round 4: *Bull's strength* (lasts 25 minutes; +4 Strength) and quickened *mirror image* (lasts 25 minutes; creates 8 images).

Round 5: *Stoneskin* (lasts 250 minutes or until discharged; gains damage reduction 10/adamantine; spell can absorb up to 150 points of damage) from the scroll she carries.

If Vlaakith is destroyed, her life essence returns to her phylactery, which is hidden in area 49.

OFFENSIVE TACTICS

Vlaakith's offensive tactics vary, depending on whom she's fighting. When faced with multiple opponents, she prefers to send her *dancing vorpal sword* after the most threatening foe while casting the following spells:

Wail of the banshee: Affects up to 25 creatures within a 40-ft.-radius spread, starting with creatures closest to the spell's point of origin; undead are immune.

Horrid wilting: Deals 20d6 points of damage (20d8 against water elementals and plant creatures) to living creatures, no two of which can be more than 60 feet apart.

Slow: Up to 25 creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart, can take only a single move action or standard action each turn, but not both; creatures also move at half speed and take a -1 penalty on attack rolls, AC, and Reflex saves.

When targeting spellcasters or characters with poor Fortitude saves, Vlaakith prefers the following spells:

Greater dispel magic: Targets enemy spellcaster (roll 1d20+20 per ongoing spell in effect)

Extended *spectral hand* (lasts 50 minutes): Used to deliver touch range spells such as *contagion*, *touch of idiocy*, and empowered *vampiric touch*; +2 bonus on melee touch attack rolls; Vlaakith loses 1d4 hit points that return when the spell ends, but not if the hand is destroyed.

Finger of death: Creature dies or takes 3d6+25 points of damage on a successful save.

Disintegrate: Creature takes 40d6 points of damage, or 5d6 if the save succeeds.

When targeting armored characters or characters with poor Will saves, Vlaakith prefers the following spells:

Enervation: Target gains 1d4 negative levels; each negative level gives a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, ability checks, and effective level.

Empowered *enervation:* Target gains 1d4 negative levels, +50% because the spell is empowered; each negative level gives a -1 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, ability checks, and effective level.

Dismissal: Forces extraplanar creature back to its own plane (80% chance) or another plane (20% chance).

Extended dominate monster: Target follows orders for 50 days.

Empowered ray of enfeeblement: Target takes 1d6+5 points of Strength damage, +50% because the spell is empowered.

CALLING FOR AID

Vlaakith's palace contains plenty of guardians. If these prove insufficient, the lich-queen uses the *gate* ability of the *scepter of Ephelomon* to bring forth a very old red dragon (see *Monster Manual*, page 75). She can also use her *gate* spell to call forth a paeliryon devil (see *Fiend Folio*, page 58) named Urrfestro that owes her a favor.

NEW ARTIFACTS

Vlaakith has two artifacts in her possession at all times: the *crown of corruption* and the *scepter of Ephelomon*. These unique items are described below.

CROWN OF CORRUPTION

This slender, black-and-silver diadem has rested atop Vlaakith's head for more than 900 years, serving as her badge of office and the means of testing any githyanki who would threaten her. Those who have beheld the crown say it twitches of its own volition, and that the 5,000-gp rubies that adorn the crown's spires look something like flickering eyes.

The crown has the following command-word activated powers:

Energy drain (Fortitude save, DC 23, negates).

Mass suggestion (Will save, DC 19, negates).

Control undead (Will save, DC 20, negates)

In addition, if the wearer of the *crown of corruption* touches the corpse of a creature killed by its *energy drain* attack, the corpse transforms in one of three ways. Each transformation takes 10 minutes.

Ritual of the Tl'a'ikith: The corpse rises as a tl'a'ikith under the control of the wearer of the crown.

Ritual of the Kr'y'izoth: The corpse rises as a kr'y'izoth under the control of the wearer of the crown.

Ritual of Death's Ichor: The corpse liquifies, then congeals into an ectoplasmic substance useful for magic item creation or spellcasting. Each corpse provides enough ectoplasm to count for (100×HD) experience points when making an item or paying the experience point cost of a spell.

The *crown of corruption* has 30 hit points. However, only a magic weapon with the holy and disrupting special qualities can damage it. If the *crown of corruption* is destroyed, all tl'a'ikiths and kr'y'izoths created by the crown are destroyed as well.

Caster Level: 25th; *Weight*: 3 lb.

SCEPTER OF EPHELOMON

This ruby-encrusted, dragon-shaped scepter was Ephelomon's gift to the githyanki centuries ago when the pact with red dragons was forged. Ephelomon gave the scepter to the first

Vlaakith (the current Vlaakith's ancestor), saying "go forth and conquer all."

The scepter has the following powers:

The bearer has total control over red dragons. Any red dragon who approaches within a half-mile of the scepter must succeed at a Will save (DC 35) or be affected as a *dominate monster* spell cast by a 30th-level caster.

The bearer is immune to fire and fear effects.

Once per week, the bearer can create a *gate* through which a very old red dragon flies (see the *Monster Manual* for the very old red dragon's statistics). The dragon must immediately make a Will save (DC 35) or serve the scepter-bearer without reward. Even if the dragon makes its save, it is considered controlled as described in the *gate* spell and may be ordered to fight the scepter-bearer's foes, or the dragon can bargain with the bearer of the scepter.

The *scepter of Ephelomon* has 60 hit points and can only be damaged by the claws of Bahamut or one of his chosen vassals, a magic weapon with the bane (evil dragons) special ability, or by the cold breath weapon of a good-aligned silver dragon. If the scepter is destroyed, the pact between the githyanki and the red dragons dissolves. The red dragons do not immediately turn against the githyanki, but only the most subservient ones continue to serve or assist the githyanki in any way. Red dragons in Vlaakith's service continue to serve the lich-queen out of fear, but not loyalty.

Caster Level: 30th; *Weight*: 5 lb.

DEATH TO VLAAKITH!

Assuming the PCs don't abandon their quest to destroy the lich-queen, the adventure can end in one of two ways: Either they succeed in destroying Vlaakith forever, or they perish heroically in the attempt. If the PCs destroy Vlaakith and her phylactery, the lich-queen is destroyed forever. Her demise triggers several events:

The earthquakes rocking Tu'narath cease as the One in the Void returns to a state of rest.

The Palace of Whispers releases all of its trapped souls. These souls burst from the walls of Susurrus and depart for various outer planes. The obsidian turns brittle and, ten rounds later, the palace collapses in on itself, dealing 40d6 points of damage to any creature trapped within (Reflex save DC 30 for half damage). Only the great statue of Gith (see area 1) remains standing.

Githyanki everywhere lose their spell-like ability to *plane shift*. With the exception of warlocks and gish with access to the *plane shift* spell, githyanki on the Astral Plane are stranded and separated from their invasion forces and egg hatcheries on the Material Plane. Various githyanki warlords in Tu'narath and elsewhere are left to contemplate the future of a githyanki race, whose ability to travel the planes has been greatly diminished. They and the citizens of Tu'narath must also grieve for their fallen queen.





Vlaakith's rise to godhood does not come without cost. Quakes shatter the dead god into several pieces, and more than half of Tu'narath's population perishes in the devastation. However, word of Vlaakith's ascendance begins spreading to every corner of every plane, and the githyanki people enjoy a period of exultation matched by the nearly overwhelming desire to crush their pitiful enemies in their goddess's unhallowed name.

Ancient prophecies foretell that when things look bleakest for the githyanki people, Gith will return to save her people from despair. The reappearance of this legendary champion-turned-demigod might serve as grist for an epic-level campaign, possibly centered on the reunification of the githyanki and githzerai people, the appearance of the first githyanki clerics, and a gith holy war against the ancient empires of the illithids.

Until Gith returns, the githyanki must find a new leader to replace Vlaakith. Although Zetch'r'r has the charisma to gain a political foothold, some of his beliefs are radical and unpopular, and he has many competent rivals. Conflicts between power-hungry warlords leave the githyanki people in turmoil for years to come. The githyanki invasion of the Material Plane comes to a gradual end as githyanki forces retreat, regroup, and fortify their faction strongholds.

Zetch'r'r honors any deal he made with the PCs, if only to avoid the fate that befell Vlaakith. He vows to use his influence to stop any further githyanki incursions on the heroes' world, and he takes great pains not to cross paths with the PCs in the future.

VLAAKITH LIVES!

If the PCs fail to destroy the lich-queen and her phylactery, she will eventually achieve godhood by capturing the divine spark of the One in the Void. From that point forward, githyanki may become clerics of Vlaakith. The lich-queen bequeaths spells to her loyal worshipers from the domains of Chaos, Destruction, and Evil.