



WHO SHALL NEVER FAIL

Gargantuan dragon, lawful good

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)
Hit Points 518 (28d20 + 224)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 30 (+10) | 14 (+2) | 27 (+8) | 18 (+4) | 15 (+2) | 28 (+9) |

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +15, Wis +9, Cha +16
Skills Insight +9, Perception +9, Persuasion +16, Stealth +9
Damage Immunities fire
Senses Blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 26
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 24 (62,000 XP)

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the dragon fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Allied Hunters (1/Day). The dragon chooses one ally and one enemy creature it can see within 90 feet of it and forges a mystical bond between itself and those creatures. For 1 hour, the dragon and the chosen ally deal an extra 1d6 damage to the chosen enemy when either one hits the enemy with a weapon attack, and both the dragon and the chosen ally have advantage on any Wisdom (Perception) or Wisdom (Survival) checks made to track or locate the chosen enemy.

Prideful. The dragon has disadvantage on Persuasion checks made against it that appeal to its vanity.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon can use its Frightful Presence. It then makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target.
Hit: 21 (2d10 + 10) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target.
Hit: 17 (2d6 + 10) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +17 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target.
Hit: 19 (2d8 + 10) bludgeoning damage.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 24 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a

creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fire in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw, taking 71 (13d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The dragon can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The dragon regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Detect. The dragon makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. The dragon makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). The dragon beats its wings. Each creature within 15 feet of the dragon must succeed on a DC 25 Dexterity saving throw or take 17 (2d6 + 10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. The dragon can then fly up to half its flying speed.

Charm (Costs 3 Actions). The dragon targets one humanoid it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the dragon, the target must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by the dragon. The charmed target regards the dragon as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dragon's control, it takes the dragon's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can.

Each time the dragon or the dragon's companions do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the dragon is killed, is on a different plane of existence than the target, or takes a bonus action to end the effect.

THE DRAGON'S LAIR

Who Shall Never Fail makes its home near a besieged seaside community called River's End, which is ruled by a benevolent wizard. As such, the dragon considers the entire extent of the community its lair, as well as its protectorate.

Despite its moniker, the dragon is still a mortal creature, and it is of advanced age and has lost some of its sight. In order to aid its protective mission, the dragon partners with warriors chosen to help defend River's End. For as long as the warrior currently partnered with the dragon commits to this cause, the warrior's own stronghold in River's End functions as if part of the dragon's lair, allowing the warrior or the dragon to use the dragon's lair actions.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the dragon or its chosen warrior takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the dragon or warrior can't use the same effect two rounds in a row:

- The lair falls under the effect of a *guards and wards* spell that lasts until the next dawn, with specific effects chosen by the dragon or the warrior.
- A strong wind blows within the lair. Each creature within 60 feet of the dragon or the chosen warrior must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed 15 feet away from the dragon or the warrior and knocked prone. Gases and vapors are dispersed by the wind, and unprotected flames are extinguished. Protected flames, such as lanterns, have a 50 percent chance of being extinguished.
- Flames erupt from a point on the ground the dragon or the chosen warrior can see within 120 feet of it, creating a 20-foot-high, 5-foot-radius vortex of fire. Each creature in the vortex's area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

River's End and the surrounding region benefit from the dragon's magic, which creates the following effects:

- Whenever a creature that can understand a language sleeps or enters a state of trance or reverie within 20 miles of River's End, they dream of the settlement's

STRENGTH AND LOYALTY

Though this dragon's true name might never be known, it goes by numerous monikers, including Who Shall Never Fail, That Which Will Never Fall, and Fortress of River's End.

I'm so amped to have this dragon become a D&D monster! I haven't really gendered the dragon because one thing I've always liked about fantasy worlds is you don't have to gender everything—they're all creatures. Even though the dragon is very blue that's not lightning coming out of its mouth, it's fire. And they definitely have some age because I prefer them to be an old dragon.

I also imagine the dragon being very charismatic but in a darker, more seductive way. They'd have that kind of irresistible glare. They're also very strong but that can be as much a dragon's weakness as its strength. When you don't meet a lot of people or other creatures who can defeat you in battle you become arrogant. I imagine pride is another major weakness.

That's tempered by this dragon's greatest strength: loyalty. This is not blind loyalty and presumably the wizard has done some kindness to the dragon to merit it. One of the best fables is the removal of the thorn from the lion's paw. I also think because this dragon has aged, its vision may be bad. Maybe at some point the warrior has either helped the dragon to find food and water, or provided shelter by hiding the dragon or protecting it from harm.

We know we live in a world where we don't have any dragons. So your dragon is a reflection of a value you hold dear. The way I see it, this dragon is a reflection of the wizard at the end—and his value is loyalty.

—John Darnielle

beauty and are drawn to visit and pay homage to its protector dragon.

- Water sources within 1 mile of River's End are supernaturally clean, and alcohol never spoils while in the region. If any creature intent on threatening or harming River's End or its people drinks the local water or alcohol, or any alcohol brought into the region, the creature regurgitates the liquid within minutes.
- Singing or performance made within 1 mile of River's End is always exceptionally fine, adding a +1 bonus to any Performance check and to any roll of a Bardic Inspiration die.
- In any area of the region in which they are present, the dragon and its chosen warrior can be accompanied by illusory sounds chosen by each, such as soft music or strange echoes.

