

The Blightburst

Death Comes Bursting

“At first, we mistook it for another of the countless pitiful shamblers that infest the marsh. It lurched toward us, stumbling through knee-deep muck, its bloated form swaying grotesquely, limbs swollen beyond recognition. We joked nervously, taking bets on who'd land the killing blow. How quickly our laughter died.

Of the numerous torments that the [Rotmire Blight](#) has visited upon [Faulmoor](#), few are as cruelly deceptive as the creature known to locals simply as the *Blightburst*. These tragic beings were once ordinary people—farmers, merchants, and travelers—now reduced to hideous vessels swollen by decay, their bodies distended and distorted, stretched impossibly by vile fluids and trapped gases. Their skin, marbled with sickly shades of purple and green, is stretched taut like overripe fruit, pulsating disturbingly with each labored movement.



From afar, they appear harmless enough: sluggish and cumbersome, their steps slow and unsure as if uncertain of their grotesque new form. Yet this very frailty is a sinister deception. Within their bloated carcasses lies a foul concoction of rot and contagion, pressurized until even the slightest

puncture can unleash a catastrophic explosion of infectious gore and suffocating spores.

Seasoned travelers and hunters alike know to fear their presence, for when ruptured—whether by blade, arrow, or even a particularly reckless shove—they burst violently, drenching nearby victims in thick, pungent ichor. This vile fluid clings stubbornly to clothing and skin, exuding a stench potent enough to attract every Blighted creature within leagues. Those unfortunate enough to become covered find themselves hunted relentlessly, as though marked by an invisible beacon of suffering and despair.

Grim tales speak of doomed expeditions and desperate warriors falling victim to the Blightburst's terrible trap. It is said that entire scouting parties have been overwhelmed in mere minutes after mistakenly striking down one of these grotesque figures, their last moments spent frantically trying to scrape the poisonous muck from their bodies as the marsh itself seemed to come alive, disgorging hordes of ravenous undead drawn to the scent.

Thus, the wise traveler heeds the old marshfolk saying:

“If you see it swollen, let it walk. Better lost minutes than lost lives.”

Yet caution alone is not always enough. In the cruel, twisting marshes of Faulmoor, encounters with the Blightburst often occur at close quarters and with little warning. Their slow shuffle and pained moans, like the anguished groan of rotting timber under strain, can easily be drowned out by rain or masked by the dense fog. Many seasoned explorers carry long pikes or sturdy poles, gently pushing away the bloated creatures rather than risking direct confrontation.

One final detail persists among those few who have witnessed the aftermath firsthand: a faint, almost plaintive sound—a low hiss or sigh—often heard just before a Blightburst ruptures. Perhaps, in that briefest moment, something of their human soul remains, trapped within the horror they have become, desperately longing for release. Or perhaps it is simply the sound of foul gases escaping the prison of flesh at last. None remain close enough, nor brave enough, to learn which is true.

Stat Block

Medium Undead, unaligned

Armor Class:	13
Hit Points:	15 (2d8 + 12)
Speed:	30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities: Fire

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Poisoned, Exhaustion

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 8

Languages: —

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Traits

- **Volatile Demise:**

On being reduced to 0 hit points, or upon receiving 10+ damage from a single attack, the Blightburst explodes violently in a 10 ft. radius. Creatures within range must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** or take 2d6 poison damage and become **marked by infectious gore**, attracting undead from up to 120 feet.

- If marked by infectious gore, the affected can use an action to clean themselves off to remove the effect. The effect is removed at the end of combat.

Actions

- **Slam:**

Melee Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Damage: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

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