

Halak-Sha

Halak-Sha is the extremely powerful **Lamia** that controls much that happens across the Bakhaarka Tableland area, including the Oasis in which her Lair is situated. The Tableland, Oasis and her Lair are detailed by three separate Atlas maps.

Lamias in myth and legend can take various forms, including fully Human, and although commonly beautiful, their lower halves are frequently considered bestial in some way - typically having a great serpent's body and tail, or sometimes a four-legged leonine body in a lion-centaur shape, with a Human upper body, head and arms. They are usually described as living in wasteland ruins, often in deserts, in association with various inimical creatures, such as jackals, wolves, vultures, owls, serpents, ghosts and similar unpleasanties. Able to use magic, notably illusions, they lure lone travellers to their doom, enchanting them as slaves, or as food, or both.

In the case of Halak-Sha, she can assume a variety of forms at will, including Human, half-serpent, lion-centaur, part raptor (with clawed feet, bird legs and wings, and can fly) and upper half Human, lower half two clawed leonine legs. She can also animate and control a certain type of undead creatures, called "Sandy Skeletons". These are like the typical undead animated creatures of RPGs, but their bones are covered with a magical armouring of rough desert sand. This makes them much more robust and a lot harder to damage than normal ones. They are armed with scimitars, spears and bows, and they have a magical spiderweb tracery covering them, which enables them to reform even if completely destroyed or magically de-animated, after a short pause, providing they are still within Halak-Sha's Tableland zone of influence. Other undead, including the Mummies, Shadows and Ghûls of the Tableland are drawn to this zone by her power, and although not directly controlled by her, part of their own power derives from her presence, and they may act as her agents, albeit unconsciously.

Her magical abilities include a suite of illusion-based options, including charming individuals to do her bidding, disguising and enhancing her own appearance and that of her surroundings. Parts of her lair are so imbued with illusory magics that some elements have become genuinely real over the ages since she first appeared here, while other illusions that remain unreal are now permanent and cannot be dispelled by outsiders. She always has access to a variety of wavy-bladed daggers and scimitars, even when she appears completely unarmed, seeming able to conjure them from the air at times when required.

This map shows a portrait of her, and with access to the FCW file, her appearance can be toggled between her Human form, and her half-Human serpentine, bird and lion forms.