



# !BEASTS!

Plate 04 . Beast of Bray Road (Eyewitness Close-Up) . MARVIN KIRSCHNIK





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# Amermaid



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The voracious AMERMAIT of Egypt sits beneath the scales of justice in the underworld. Comprising aspects of three deadly beasts—the jaws of a crocodile, the head of a lion, and the body of a hippopotamus—the AMERMAIT, or Ammut, devours the souls of the unworthy with expert ferocity. When a soul arrives for judgment, its heart is weighed upon the scales against a feather that represents the truth. The heart must weigh the same as the feather—neither more nor less—for a soul to escape the appetites of the AMERMAIT.

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Previous: Plate 05 . TIM BISKUP



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# Acephalite



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Meaning literally “those without heads” in Greek, the horrendous and largely anarchic ACEPHALITES have been sighted in many different locales in northern Africa. These headless humans, if one can call them humans, are said to have eerily penetrating eyes below their shoulders and wide mouths above their waists. Little is known of their behavior and tendencies, but their appearance alone is likely to inspire alarm and terror.

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Opposite: Plate 06 . JASON ROBARDS





## Aeternae

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For countless generations, the terrible race of giants known as AETERNAE has terrified those Europeans who have dared to stray from the civilized regions of their continent. The monster is a tremendously large humanoid creature with shaggy gray fur. A fierce, sawtoothed horn juts from its immense forehead, and is used both for attacking and, eventually, dismembering prey. Though AETERNAE may prefer livestock, they are not averse to eating even large groups of people who come too near. Lying squarely between the great apes and humans in their level of intelligence, they are best dealt with using cunning, traps, and, best of all, avoidance.

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Plate 07 . RYAN CLARK



A decorative flourish featuring the word "Ahui-zotl" in a stylized, gothic-style font. The word is centered and flanked by two circular icons, each containing a stylized face or mask. A horizontal line runs through the center of the flourish.

## Ahui-zotl

The doglike, vengeful AHUIZOTL hunts unsuspecting fishers who have allegedly stolen its fish. Distinguished by its monkey paws and the third hand at the end of its tail, this dark, aquatic creature of Aztec origin lures anglers by forcing small fish to the surface, creating the illusion of a lucrative fishing hole. Once the boat is situated to its liking, the AHUIZOTL uses its clever hand-tail to overturn the vessel and drag its human prey to a horrendous underwater death. Corpses of those attacked by the AHUIZOTL are easy to identify—the bloated victims float to the surface robbed of eyes, nails, and teeth.

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Plate 08 . CHARLES GLAUBITZ





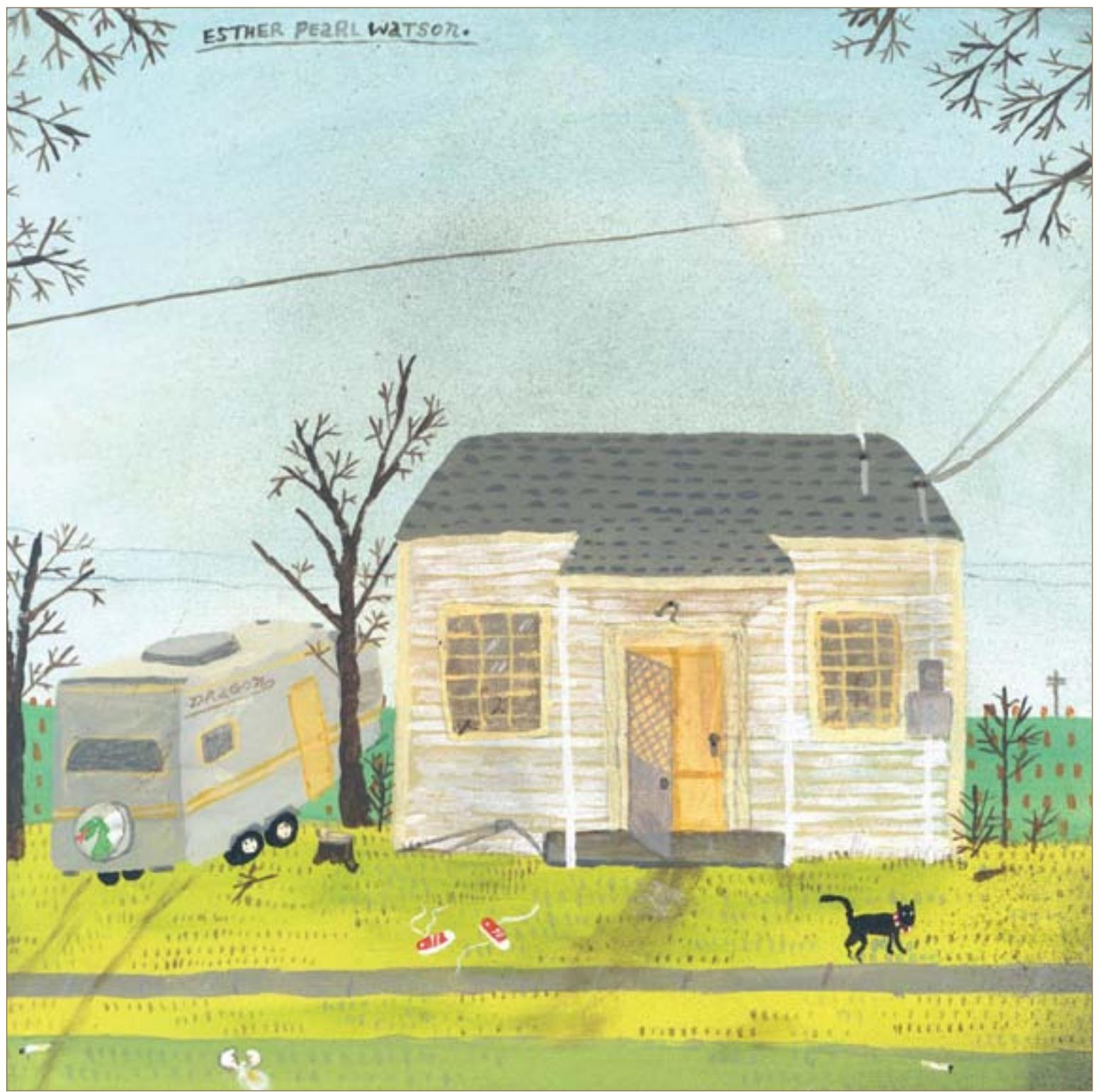
## Aitvaras

Also called the Damavykas or the Koklikas, this Eastern European entity brings luck and riches to any house where it resides—although often at the expense of nearby homes, from which it pilfers gold, corn, and other valuables. The AITVARAS arrives in many households by accident; in others, its arrival comes in exchange for a person's soul. In either case, removal of the AITVARAS is extremely difficult. Usually appearing near or within the home as a black cat (or sometimes as a white or black cockerel), the AITVARAS travels in the form of a fire-breathing dragon.

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Plate 09 . ESTHER PEARL WATSON

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# Albastor

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It is rumored in certain former Soviet republics that when a bastard child dies without having received the sacrament of baptism, its soul remains behind and gathers new flesh about it to form an ALBASTOR. Most frequently discovered lounging in rustic saunas in the form of an enormous man or woman with long, sweeping tresses, the monster may turn into a cometlike shower of sparks if disturbed and fly from place to place until settling down once again. The ALBASTOR enjoys kissing humans more than any other activity—but those who spend too much time in its ardent embrace develop recurrent sores on their faces that identify them as too lustful.

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Plate 10 . RONALD KURNIAWAN





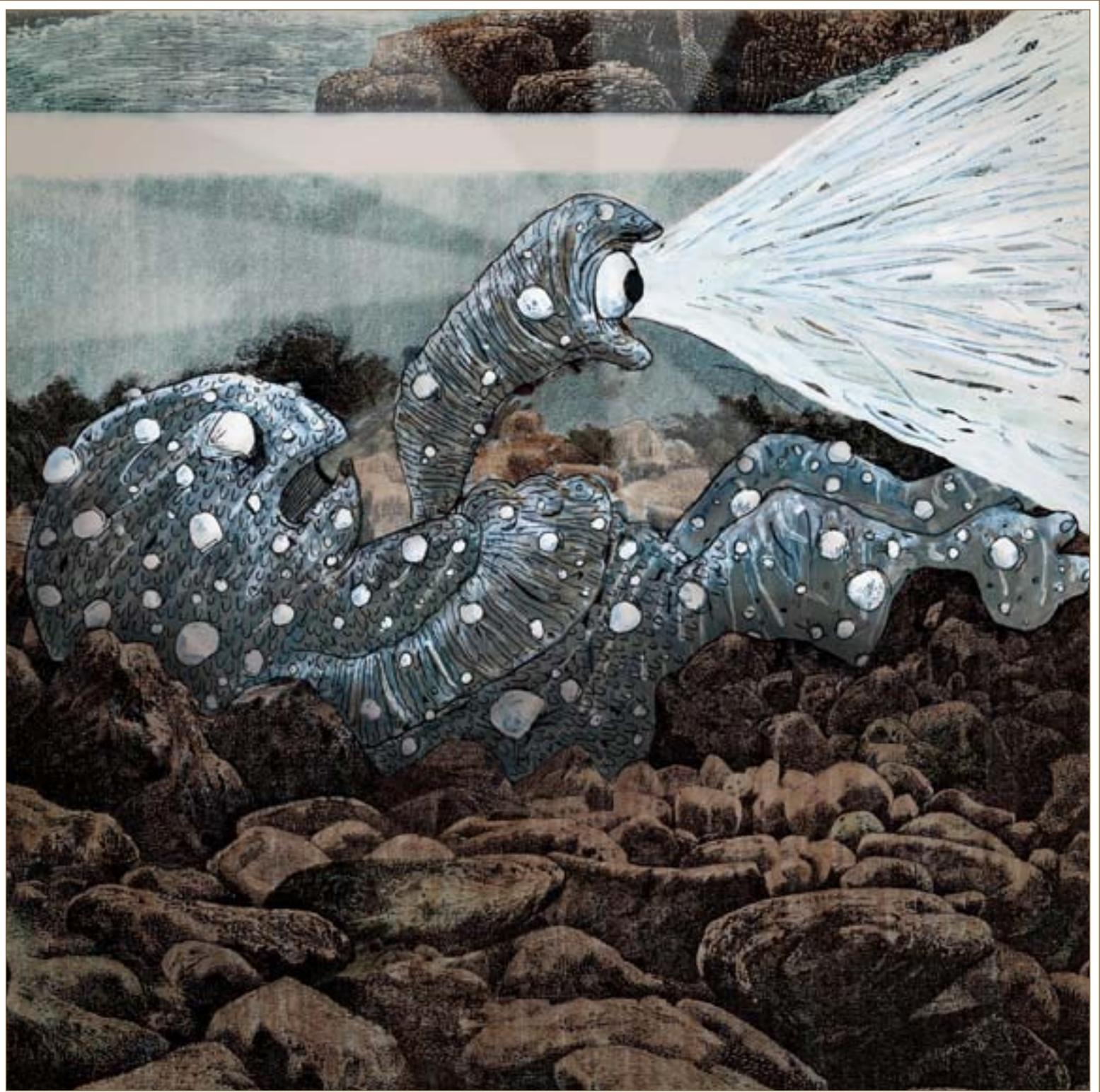
# Argus

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Suffering a fitful existence, never fully awake nor wholly at rest, the benign ARGUS is a Greek giant of 100 eyes—50 of which remain asleep, 50 of which are always open and alert. The restless ARGUS is a superb watchman whose greatest vulnerability is the boredom that may lull him into complete unconsciousness, rendering him susceptible to the possibility of assassination.

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Plate II . JACOB COVEY





## Aries

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The origin and qualities of ARIES, also called Chrysomallos, are clouded by legend—in part because ARIES' fleece is better documented than the creature itself. Thought by early Greeks to be either the agent or the manifestation of a cloud spirit, this flying golden ram is known for its daring rescue of the spirit's twin children from ritual sacrifice. The sister twin fell into the sea shortly after the rescue. The brother, upon reaching safety, showed his thanks by sacrificing ARIES and hanging its fleece in an oak grove guarded by a sleepless dragon.

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Plate 12 . DETH P. SUN



## Asp Turtle

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In Mediterranean waters spotted with islands, the ASP TURTLE (the Greek Aspidochelon) unintentionally beckons inattentive seafarers to dock upon its massive hide. Floating dormant as a crocodile, the breached back of the ASP TURTLE appears as a small flinty island growing the occasional trees and shrubs. Once disturbed by the landed sailors, the creature may banish the nuisance by simply sinking lower into the sea and dragging ship and crew to the ocean bottom. However, it is not always so passive. When particularly hungry or aggravated, the ASP TURTLE (likely the same ancient beast to have swallowed Jonah) will surge from the water in pursuit of men, its gaping maw booming.

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Plate 13 . R. KIKUO JOHNSON

BWAOO!  
BWA-

A'AA'OO!





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Smaller than a standard dragon but no less deadly, the European ASPIS can kill its prey instantly with even the slightest bite—and the only known cure for such a wound is immediate amputation of the affected limb. Likewise, anyone who touches the skin of an ASPIS, even a dead specimen, will succumb to the creature’s virulent, tumor-producing poison. The ASPIS is easy to avoid, though, thanks to its well-documented weakness for music. Hearing even the simplest tune will charm an ASPIS to distraction. Aware of its own susceptibility, the ASPIS may attempt to hold one ear to the ground and plug the other with its tail—although this, too, renders the creature effectively harmless. Some cryptozootheologians speculate that, in this position, the ASPIS represents the wealthy and the worldly, with one ear blocked by sin and the other blocked by earthly longing.

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Plate 14 . JULIE MURPHY