



CENTIPEDE . THEY / THEM . THE WORLD EATER.

NAME: Centipede

*the predatory venomous arthropod with many legs.*

ALIASES: "Cen", "Centi"

Gender: nonbinary (AFAB)

Pronouns: they/them

Starting Age: 2 years, 8 months

Current Age:

Height: 11 inches

Appearance: a void of color that stands out starkly in all but the pitchest of nights. no light reflects off of their body, which absorbs all light coming in; vantablack fur, vantablack pawpads, vantablack skin— for the most part, with no shadow or reflection of light. in effect, they almost appear two-dimensional. only their nose, the inside of their ears, and their eyes escape this, marking a splash of startling brightness in the night. centipede's fur is silky soft to the touch, and is obviously cared for well— not that you would know unless you touched them.

none easily see their build, but centipede is lean yet strong with muscle. trained in much of an enforcer role, the sharpness of their claws, the strength in their blows, and the hidden quickness ready to spring gives them an always ready look.

unseen, scars litter their pelt underneath their fur; small ones, and then a few large ones, across their chest, their side...

Accessories: none.

Inventory: x1 coin, x1 lucky bracelet, x1 battleclaws

Health: reasonable, for the times. unable to get medical help, their wounds have healed remarkably well over time, but it isn't uncommon for phantom pains or strains to tear their way across centipede's body. they are fit, and they are able to act and speak and converse, and that is what they place in importance.

Disabilities: none.

Notable mutations: vantablack fur; absorbs all light. no highlights or shadows to their body outside of their eyes, inside of ears, and their nose.

Soul Class: Green

Soul Level: 0 (3)

Soul Shade: X

Soul Partner(s): X

#### STATS

Strength: 6/10

Dexterity: 2/10

Intelligence: 7/10

Charisma: 5/10

Speed: 6/10 +1 (7/10)

#### Strengths:

- THE SILENT CRAWLER.
  - fast and silent as they go about their business; they know how to keep their paws soft against the ground, and are better at stealth in complete and utter darkness than anyone else around. even in daylight, where they are blatantly visible, little sound comes from their pawsteps.
- ONLY A FLESH WOUND (SIDE A)
  - easily disregards damage; has thick skin. it takes more than just a measly wound or sickness to keep this insect down.
- WORLDLY CONNOISSEUR
  - knows more about other groups, cultures, and the world than one may expect, having traveled for the last year in full. their good memory helps them retain that information.

#### Weaknesses:

- TEAMWORK DOES NOT MAKE THE DREAM WORK
  - doesn't work all that great in groups; often goes with their idea, as they think they know best.
- NOT QUITE A PRETZEL
  - is strong and fast, but not nimble enough to avoid every blow or trap. they're working on their dexterity, sure, but it ain't quite there just yet.
- ONLY A FLESH WOUND (SIDE B)
  - ignores their wounds to the point that they can easily collect without even noticing just how dire things are; sprains, wounds, whatever. lets themselves go too far when sick or hurt, and the consequences can be dire.

Purpose:

- WANTS TO MAKE A MARK ON THE WORLD, TO NEVER BE FORGOTTEN; TRUE DEATH ONLY COMES WHEN YOU ARE FORGOTTEN. THEY WILL TRULY BE ALIVE FOREVER THIS WAY.
  - *to rule or end the Web.*

Vice: pride, wrath, envy

Virtue: diligence

Personality:

- positive
  - confident
  - insightful
  - resourceful
- neutral
  - skeptical
  - ambitious
  - intense
- negative
  - volatile
  - jealous
  - reckless

History:

- - *Exclusions: Feel free to use anything.*

A child blacker than black, dark enough to suck the light out of the surrounding area; an omen of a kit, and one that was loved dearly. Skitter and Centipede were welcomed into the world by Spider, the kind of monarch that knew she was better than the others around her. One kit was blessed by starlight, glittering pinpricks flecking over their fur, while the other seemed to reject all light. Both had mutations of the fur; Spider, matriarch of their colony, merely looked at those of the colony that wanted the kits gone and silenced them that way.

They were blessed, she patiently explained to them and their colony, one that was wary, almost hostile towards many mutations in their strange world. There was a difference between them and the afflicted, Spider said, told them over and over and over. *My little starscape*, Skitter was deemed. *My little shadow*, she murmured to Centipede. *Oh, my dears*.

Theirs was a hard world. Cats had to work or they were cast out; those who could not help provide could not partake in the fruits of their labor. That meant defending the territory of the Web, as Spider deemed her domain, hunting and fighting and dying for the colony. Most cats in the colony were of an extended family, with new blood taken in for children; as a halfway stable colony, others fought to come in, fought for the limited spots.

Spider's kits would have to prove themselves, just as every other kit in the colony had to. They were no exception. Spider was even harder on them; *you will be the best*, she often told them, the high expectations of a sharp-eyed parent. *Two halves to lead this colony in the future*. Skitter was the brains, the politically minded cat; Centipede was always two steps behind in that regard, even though they were quite smart on their own. Skitter was just— a level ahead of them.

Skitter got lessons on politics. On treating with cats. The persuasion that Centipede always wished for.

Centipede got to learn where to go for weak spots, where to hit and score a lasting strike, how to balance their speed and their strength to best even the strongest.

Skitter was destined to be the voice. Centipede was destined to be the fangs.

Centipede wanted both roles. They wanted to be the voice, the fangs, the claws, the honeyed words. They wanted it. They wanted it all. They could do it, they *could*. Why did their mother not think so? Why did she talk so much more to Skitter than to them?

Arguments would never sway Spider. Spider was on a whole other level, even to Skitter; her gaze bore into Centipede and made them feel weak. Worthless. *You will work on your killing blow*, she told them. *And your hunting. Your strengths lie elsewhere*.

***I CAN DO EVERYTHING JUST AS FUCKING GOOD AS THEY CAN, I CAN DO IT ALL AND BETTER, JUST BECAUSE SHE HOLDS THE DAMNED STARS IN HER PELT, JUST BECAUSE SHE'S PRETTIER, BECAUSE CATS LIKE LOOKING AT HER MORE, BECAUSE THEY WANT TO ARRANGE TO BE THEIR MATE—***

*You are just as beautiful.*

***THEY'RE SCARED OF ME AND YOU FUCKING KNOW IT!***

*As they should be.*

*I CAN DO EVERYTHING SKITTER CAN, AND BETTER! THAT BITCH DESERVES NONE OF WHAT YOU'VE GIVEN HER—*

*Cen?*

They turned. Skitter was behind them. Hadn't they been out hunting? Out talking at the border with a representative of another colony interested in her?

- Is born alongside older sibling Skitter to Spider, matriarch of the Web
- Raised to be the brawn to Skitter's brain
- Resents this; is also smart, fast, diplomatic, just...not as much as Skitter is. Skitter is also seen as more palatable because of a more appealing mutation, while Centipede's mutation is seen as unnerving and more unnatural.
- Constantly argues with Spider over this. Skitter doesn't often hear this; Centipede is nice to Skitter, but just. Thinks they deserve much more than she does.
- Comes to a head in a series of arguments after they become adults, at about 15, 16 months old.
- Skitter becomes upset and the two fight. They are at a stalemate; the two are forcibly separated by Spider.
- Centipede turns on their parent and the fight becomes bloodier; Centipede was not willing to harm Skitter, and just wrestled them, but Spider knows fighting very, very well, and has more muscle mass and strength than Centipede. If Centipede were any less skilled, they would have either gotten a serious wound or died. Has scars under their fur from this, but they cannot be seen; they are both under long fur and cannot be differentiated from normal skin or their fur because all of it is vantablack. The only way they are even known is by feel, by touch.
- Centipede gets some blows on Spider, but is soundly defeated. Because they will not back down, they are cast out of the Web in disgrace.
- Wants to prove that they can be better, do better, make more friends, be more powerful. They want to get power and come back to take over the Web. They also wish to kill Spider, and potentially Skitter; they don't hate Skitter as much, but indifference and a belief that their sibling is lesser could devolve into hatred...
- Centipede clings to their thoughts on their namesake; the world-eater, the venomous killer, that which eats other insects for its own gain. A strangely ferocious name, in the Web, where those of insects tell a story. 'Skitter' toed the line, the kind of name that encompassed all insects; a clear name for a leader.
- Taking the Web, whether to rule or to tear it down, will not be easy. But their name is a strength, and Centipede holds it close as they quest out to gain everything. Favors, names, strength, experience.
- Their travels for the next year are incredibly varied. They train their own charisma, making friends, allies, or just practicing on cats and dogs to develop a half-silver tongue. In no particular order, they meet:

- Rome (Maria), who they traded protection and food in for information on good resources or cats to contact. This information was bad; it sent them into the claws of a gang of cats that they had to fight to get out from, and they're now looking to come calling for Rome whenever they see him again.
- Goop (Alex), who runs an 'art museum' among some ruins. Despite themselves, Centipede enjoyed both discussing the art with the dog and in watching the museum run itself; it was their vacation, almost, from their quest.
- They are pleased as their skills grow. Stronger, faster, better at talking. They pay the snowfall no mind; they are on a mission.
- And then, suddenly, with a flash of fiery eyes— they are whisked away.

Writing sample:

*I am curious. And I do want to know why.*

River's tail lashed back and forth, an echo of thunder on the horizon before they could get a closer grip on themselves. They would hear him out. It didn't stop the sharp frown on their face as they looked solidly out to sea, though, refusing to fully turn and face Samel yet again. It just wasn't right, the...ogling. But the more he talked, the softer the angry waters seemed to grow. Not calm, never calm, not now— but softer. Not a harbinger of a storm as it was just seconds ago.

He was much larger than them, of that was a fact. His paws were large, and he was large, but there was a solidness to him that made River breathe in and exhale it slower without feeling like it was a race. **"The church,"** they said, ear flicking. **"Nobody's told me of a church, although I heard...people talking of it."** A pause. **"...Physical death."** River seemed...not amused, but interested of the description. Their heavy tail whacked softly against the wood planks as they gave a huff of exhale and leaned their head to one side, glancing sidelong at Samel. **"Yes, that's what he said."**

Was it true? Nothing in their posture gave away an answer. Instead, they looked...unsure. It was a matter that they were pondering, the sacrifice of the self to the only thing they had ever felt true company with. Even now, the bay swelled and receded at the rhythm of their soul, expanding and contracting and beckoning storms with their stray thoughts. The sea was vast and fearsome, moreso than they were, but it was a friend. A companion, one that remained even when land surrounded them. It beckoned. Called.

***[JUST AS YOU HAVE GIVEN YOURSELF TO ME, YOU HAVE BEEN REBORN IN TURN. TELL ME, O TRIBUTARY, WHEN YOU ARE BORN AGAIN, IS IT STILL YOU IF YOU HAVE A CHANGED BODY AND RETURNED MEMORIES AND YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED? IF A SHIP HAS REPLACED ALL OF ITS PARTS, IS IT STILL THE SAME SHIP?]***

**“Paul set me up to be one, though.”** It called to mind their patrons insisting upon live art exhibitions, the pressure of feeling much like the animals at the zoo. *What will the artist do next? Will it fold? Will it crumple? It is not as human as you or I.* **“Anyhow. Would you think I died? Have I died, or am I just a different person than the one that met you our first time in the white void?”** *Am I still the same, even if I was taken away and a copy of myself with my exact everything were placed here without you noticing?*

Perhaps the sea was right to question it.

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