

Mother Saccharine

the Sugarplum Widow — a confectioner necromancer and her thralls

Content note. Her crimes are against children. Everything here is written to be run through aftermath and implication — a ledger, a shelf of shoes, a tooth in the resin — never through depiction. Check in with your table before you put it on it.

Mother Saccharine

Medium humanoid (human, necromancer), neutral evil

Gelatin is rendered bone, and every confectioner knows it. Mother Saccharine has kept the corner shop for forty years, gives generously to the almshouse, and is the woman you send for when a child will not eat after a fever. Her ledger runs to thirty-one names, each with a date, a weight, and a note on how well it set.

Armor Class 15 (candy-glass carapace)

Hit Points 172 (21d8 + 78)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9	16	16	20	14	18
(-1)	(+3)	(+3)	(+5)	(+2)	(+4)

Saving Throws Int +10, Wis +7, Cha +9

Skills Deception +14, Persuasion +9, Insight +7, Arcana +10

Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, slashing from nonmagical attacks while a thrall is within 30 ft.

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Infernal, Undercommon

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Sweet Tooth. Any creature that has eaten her confectionery in the last 24 hours has disadvantage on saving throws against her spells and features. She offers samples. She always offers samples.

The Recipe Remembers. When a thrall within 60 feet drops to 0 hit points, she regains 10 hit points and the thrall's victim screams, in the child's own voice, audible within 120 feet. A creature that recognizes the voice must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be stunned until the end of its next turn.

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

Spellcasting. She is a 15th-level spellcaster (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks, Intelligence). She prepares only necromancy and transmutation:

CANTRIPS chill touch, mage hand, prestidigitation, spare the dying

1ST (4) false life, ray of sickness, detect magic

2ND (3) gentle repose, blindness/deafness, hold person

3RD (3) animate dead, vampiric touch, bestow curse

4TH (3) blight, polymorph

5TH (2) cloudkill, danse macabre

6TH (1) create undead, circle of death

7TH (1) finger of death

8TH (1) maddening darkness

Actions

Multiattack. She makes two Candy-Pull Lash attacks, or one Lash and uses Ladle of the Rendering.

Candy-Pull Lash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 5) necrotic damage, and the target is restrained. It can use its action to make a DC 17 Strength check, taking 7 (2d6) acid damage on a failure — the taffy is still hot.

Ladle of the Rendering RECHARGE 5-6 She hurls boiling gelatin in a 30-foot cone. Each creature there makes a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) fire damage on a failure, half as much on a success. A creature that fails is **glazed**: its speed is halved and it takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns until it or an adjacent creature uses an action to scrape the glaze away. A humanoid that dies while glazed rises as a gummy thrall under her control at the start of her next turn.

Confection of Waking (1/Day). She bites into a sugarplum. She regains 50 hit points, and every thrall she controls gains 30 temporary hit points and has advantage on attack rolls until the end of her next turn.

Bonus Actions

Portion Control. She commands up to three thralls within 60 feet. Each moves up to its speed and makes one attack.

Reactions

Sweeten the Deal. When she is targeted by an attack, she moves a thrall within 5 feet of her into the path. The thrall takes the damage instead. She does not flinch.

Legendary Actions

She takes 3 legendary actions, choosing from below. Only one can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. She regains spent actions at the start of her turn.

- 1 Stir.** She moves up to her speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
- 1 Taste Test.** One creature within 30 feet makes a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, taking 13 (3d8) poison damage and gaining one level of exhaustion on a failure. *"Too much salt in you, dear."*
- 2 Fresh Batch.** She summons 1d3 gummy thralls from display jars anywhere in the lair.
- 2 The Oven Speaks.** Ladle of the Rendering recharges.

She is charming, maternal and entirely unbothered. She calls the party poppet and lamb. She never raises her voice, not once, not at 0 hit points. If she loses, she does not beg — she asks whether they have considered what happens to a town when its confectioner is gone.

Her thralls

Gummy Thrall

Small construct (undead), unaligned

AC 12 HP 45 (10d6 + 10) Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12	14	13	3	6	5
(+1)	(+2)	(+1)	(-4)	(-2)	(-3)

Vulnerabilities fire Resistances bludgeoning, slashing Immunities piercing, poison Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amorphous. It squeezes through a 1-inch gap without squeezing.

Sticky Grasp. A creature that hits it with a melee weapon makes a DC 13 Strength save or the weapon sticks fast (action to retrieve).

Death Throes. At 0 hit points it bursts — 10-ft. radius, DC 13 Dexterity, 7 (2d6) acid damage.

Clinging Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning, and the target is grappled (escape DC 13).

Translucent and child-shaped. Look closely: a milk tooth suspended in the chest, a braid of hair through the arm.

Marshmallow Hulk

Large construct (undead), unaligned

AC 13 HP 114 (12d10 + 48) Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19	8	18	3	7	5
(+4)	(-1)	(+4)	(-4)	(-2)	(-3)

Vulnerabilities fire **Immunities** poison, piercing, slashing **Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

Multiattack. It makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft. *Hit:* 16 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Smother. If it hits one creature with both slams, that creature is engulfed: restrained, unable to breathe, and taking 14 (4d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns until it escapes (DC 15 Strength).

Two children's worth of bone-broth went into the batch. It is soft, and warm, and patient.

Licorice Whip

Medium construct (undead), unaligned

AC 14 **HP** 58 (9d8 + 18) **Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15	17	14	3	8	4
(+2)	(+3)	(+2)	(-4)	(-1)	(-3)

Resistances slashing **Immunities** poison **Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 20 ft. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is pulled 15 feet toward the vats.

Reel (Bonus Action). It drags one creature it has grappled 15 feet along with it.

It exists to move people toward the kitchen. It is not trying to kill anyone. That is the frightening part.

Nougat Revenant

Medium undead, neutral evil — levels 13+

AC 16 **HP** 130 (17d8 + 51) **Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18	14	17	7	11	9
(+4)	(+2)	(+3)	(-2)	(+0)	(-1)

Immunities damage from nonmagical weapons; poison **Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

Slow Set. It regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn unless it took fire damage since the end of its last turn.

Nine Children. It has nine thresholds. Each time it drops another 15 hit points, a different child speaks through it.

Multiattack. It makes three Claw attacks.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

If a player freed a child in an earlier session, that is the voice they hear. Use this once, at one table, and never again.

Running her. Describe the aftermath objects — paired shoes on a shelf, a ledger in a careful hand, the milk tooth in the resin — never the killings. The table's imagination does more than you can, and what it does will be theirs.

Encounter math. At CR 12 with thralls on the field she runs about 2× a level 9–10 party's Deadly budget under the DMG thresholds. Run her one tier below the party and cap the field at two thralls — the CR 9 version against level 9 comes to 1.23×, a hard fight rather than a coin flip.

Give them an out that costs something. The ledger names thirty-one children. *Gentle repose* and a cold room mean some bodies are recoverable. A cleric who spends the fight freeing thralls instead of fighting saves children and loses the damage race. Let that be a real choice with a real price.