

SWORD
SORCERY

Ravenloft

VAN
RICHTERS^{CM}
GUIDE TO



THE
WALKING DEAD



VAN RICHTEN'S GUIDE TO THE WALKING DEAD

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Introduction

Now I know, I can divine. The reign of man is over. And He has come. He whom disquieted priests exorcised, whom sorcerers evoked on dark nights, without seeing him appear. He to whom the imaginations of the transient masters of the world lent all the monstrous or graceful forms of gnomes, spirits, genii, fairies, and familiar spirits

— Guy De Maupassant, "The Horla"



remember quite well when I discovered fear.

When I was ten years old, my household duty was to look after my ailing grandmother, Martha Scoville. In the last years of her life, she could not walk, so it was I who brought her food, herbs, and medicines. While I loved my grandmother dearly, I hated taking care of her.

I hated it for one reason: all of her medicines and herbal remedies were within the root cellar. My grandmother, who could not walk, would often order me into the root cellar for something to ease her pain — a spot of wine, a poultice for her headache.

Under the compulsion of her order, I would open the door to the root cellar and look into the darkness below. No matter what time of day, no matter how bright the sun, that root cellar was always the blackest place in the world. A solid wall of night would greet me, and the rickety stairs of that place would lead down into the deep, deep earth. Into nothing.

On that black canvas, my mind would paint the most horrid of images: things that lurked under the stairs, waiting to grab my ankles; creatures that crawled along the ceiling; terrors that breathed, causing that slightest breeze on the back of my neck.

I told all of this to my grandmother, of course. She would smile in that knowing way that only grandparents have. She would reach out to me from the bed and say to me, "Give us a kiss, darling. Give us a kiss," as if such a fragile and transient thing could allay my deep-set fears.

Then, one day, my grandmother died. She was buried in the family plot, gently folded into a funeral dress. I watched her coffin lower into the earth. I cried, because as much as I hated taking care of her at times, I truly did love her.

On that day I opened the door to the root cellar for the last time — to say goodbye to the darkness, to the raw fear that gnawed at my stomach each time I opened that accursed door.

Yet this time I did not see a wall of black. I did not see a deep and murky darkness. I saw an old woman at the bottom of the stairs. Her arms were straight down by her sides. Her gaze was directed up at me, never wavering. She





raised her arms up toward me, and her mouth turned up in a vacant smile. As she spoke, dirt and gravel fell from her lips.

"Give us a kiss, darling. Give us a kiss."

It was my grandmother. My grandmother was walking. She was walking down there in the darkness.

I then knew true fear. True fear is not some imagined creature lurking about somewhere in the dark. True fear is right here and now. True fear is right before you.

Some Memories Never Die

Greetings, Gentle Reader. I am Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove.

As you well know, this book is entitled *Van Richten's Guide to the Walking Dead*. We have kept the name of Dr. Rudolph Van Richten in the title both to honor his name and to give him credit for much of the information contained within this volume, for much of what was gleaned here was wrought from Dr. Van Richten's own research.

Many of you who read this text will assume that you already know most of what you need to know about the Walking Dead. Shuffling bodies that moan in the night, bones that rattle as they walk: these are what the minstrels would have us believe are the Walking Dead.

Yet these folktales could not be further from the truth. I believe the example that I have provided above shows the conventional folktales to be wrong.

I have never spoken of this moment in my childhood until now. I remember on that day that I slammed the door to the root cellar shut, ran from it, and never spoke to anyone of it.

Life went on. My grandmother's grave was undisturbed. No one else seemed to notice anything strange in the passing days. People even used the root cellar, with no impediment. I never heard any report of something being disturbed or of dead grandmothers walking about in the darkness. I began to believe that the entire experience was a dream. I put it away in my mind, believing it nothing but a girlish fantasy conjured up by a wild imagination.

A year ago, I found a piece of moldy cloth stuck into the crack of my windowsill. Scrawled upon it was a message:

"Give us a kiss, darling. Give us a kiss."

Since that time, I have been searching for her, expecting to meet her in the lairs of the fiends we hunt, in the deepest woods on moonless nights, or at the foot of my bed when I awaken from my dreams.

I have not yet found her.

This latest book is dedicated to her. It is dedicated to those loved ones that we have lost in our battle against Evil. It is dedicated to those taken by the Mist and who remain missing.

A Mother's Desperation

Nothing can prepare you for the Awakening that is motherhood. From your womb is ripped a tiny soul into the world, flailing and bawling. When you hold this trembling bundle of flesh, you know. You know very well that you would gladly give up your life for that fragile thing that you hold so tightly in your arms, that you would gladly give up the lives of others for the sake of that child. This is the Awakening that is motherhood, a beautiful and terrible love to behold.

If you cannot understand this love, how then can you understand my grief, the awful barb that wraps around my very lungs? Yes, it hurts to breathe nowadays. The very air burns here, as if the atmosphere has turned into a heavy smoke that weighs me down.

I visit Henri every day underneath the tree. The breeze blows and the leaves of the willow whisper. Many times, I can hear Henri's voice in that whisper. He is crying with me. He is asking me why this has happened. He wants to know why I cannot hold him any longer.

Now, I have something new to tell him. Soon, I will be able to hear his voice once again. No longer will a wayward wind or hissing branches obscure it. I will be able to hold him in the night and sing to him the lullabies we once sang together.

Henri is happy, now. He grows more and more excited every day. I can hear him singing already, his childlike voice floating up from the earth. Soon, very soon... we shall sing together.

Some Memories Should Never Live

Greetings, Gentle Reader. I am Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove.

I found this piece of parchment stuck within a book from the great Dr. Van Richten's library. Upon the parchment was a simple date and place: Fall in the Year 750—Rivalis. This date and place struck me immediately, for the note is written around the time of Dr. Van Richten's disappear-





ance, and the place it indicates is indeed Dr. Van Richten's own home town.

This sudden discovery prompted our journey to Rivalis, to see if we could track down the source of this strange journal entry. After a careful search of the town and numerous interviews with the populace, we ascertained the identity of one Madame Alexandra Von Goering. She was a widower who had lost both husband and child. Supposedly, she lived in an old isolated mansion on the outskirts of town, but no one had heard from her in years.

My intrepid sister and I then went to the Von Goering Estate — and made our horrible discovery. The house itself was nothing but an empty shell, the windows long since broken and vacant. The door stood listlessly open, slowly swinging in the wind.

Within, we found the remains of what we can only guess is Madame Von Goering's research....

Apparently, this woman had been experimenting for quite some time with the arcane crafts, and in particular with those arts that some call necromantic. Madame Von Goering made it her mission to specialize in magic that would allow her to raise the dead. She had already participated in grave-robbing to find the grisly supplies for her experiments. She was determined, apparently, to bring back her son, who passed away from hemophilia.

Whether she succeeded or not, I do not know. Henri's grave plot, underneath the tree of which she wrote, had been dug up. Yet this does not mean that Madame Von Goering was successful; our clues only tell us there is now an empty grave, where once a child lay in the earth. Madame Von Goering herself had vanished, along with her son's body.

After our terrible discovery, my sister and I began furiously researching, studying, and training — for we knew that wherever this woman went, she would spread madness and despair.

Thus, we come to this volume. These assembled pages are the result and culmination of our combined research on the Walking Dead. We spent months arming ourselves with the greatest weapon one can find against Evil: knowledge.

Indeed, knowledge enabled us to understand the tools of our enemy. Knowledge allowed us to trap Madame Von Goering's minions. Knowledge allowed us to understand which tactics, magic, and

minions she would use against us. Finally, knowledge gave us our victory against her. That knowledge, however, came at a great cost.

In our research, we skirted the brink of Darkness and looked into the rift. We interviewed strange and disturbing beings to gain the information we present in these pages. We asked our dearest friends to open their diaries and personal lives to us. We wrestled with Dark Texts that no person was ever meant to read.

In the end, though, we attained only a partial victory, for the reason we set out in our endeavor in the first place was to obtain knowledge of Dr. Van Richten's disappearance, and for that effort we have come to naught. We know nothing more of the good doctor's ultimate fate.

While Madame Von Goering and her minions lay defeated, we could not find Henri's body anywhere. Some of our collected evidence suggests that she may have hidden his body, to continue to experiment with it later. Yet I cannot help but feel that Henri is out there still, somewhere, singing in the wind — waiting for his mother to join him.

For all those who would take up the Hunt, for all those who would hold a lantern to the darkness, for all those who would stop the perversion of nature — we salute you. Take up this tome and use it well. We hope that you will find your loved ones, your grandparents, your children, and with this knowledge bring them eternal rest at last.

Chapter Overview

The **Introduction** presents our reason for compiling the information contained within the rest of these pages.

Chapter One: Necrology explains the physiology, psychology, and abilities of the Walking Dead.

Chapter Two: Vital and True Information on the Obedient Dead takes a close look at zombies and skeletons from the very mouth of one who knows.

Chapter Three: The Hungry Dead reveals the grisly truths behind the creatures known as ghouls, ghosts, and other Walking Dead impelled by their insatiable hungers.

Chapter Four: The Restless Dead considers those self-willed undead driven not by hunger but by other strong passions such as revenge or greed.

Chapter Five: Weaknesses discusses the vulnerabilities of the Walking Dead and how to use





these liabilities to one's advantage in combating and defeating them.

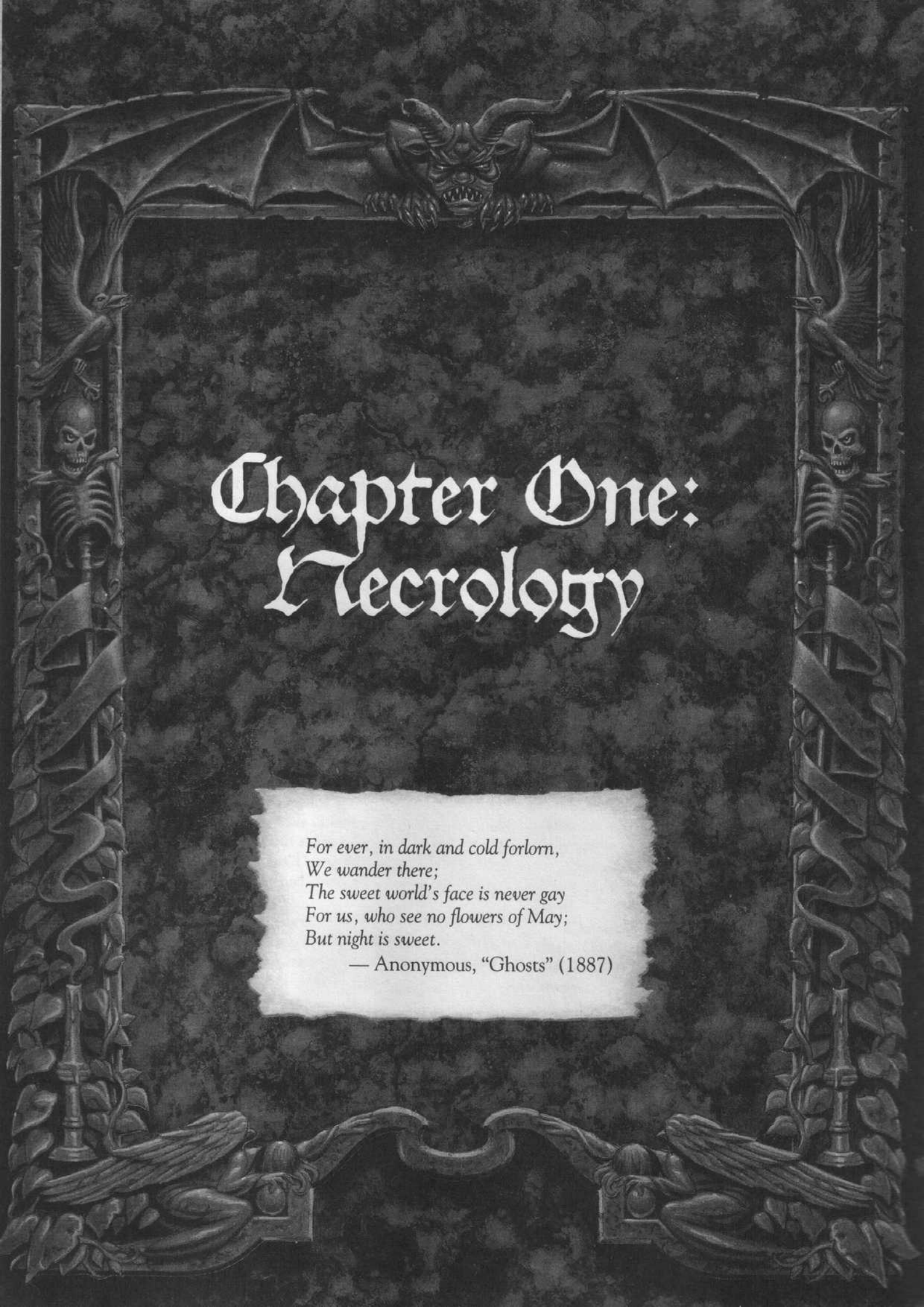
Chapter Six: Necromancers presents new spells and abilities useful to the would-be hunter of the Walking Dead.

Chapter Seven: Hunting the Walking Dead provides a philosophical and practical guide for those ready to take their knowledge and skills and put them to use.

How to Use This Book

Information regarding game rules and rules-related commentaries on the topics discussed in **Van Richten's Guide to the Walking Dead** appear in sidebars. The **Appendix** at the end of this book includes descriptions and statistics on new creatures and singular individuals introduced here for the first time as well as information on using the Walking Dead in **Ravenloft** adventures.





Chapter One: Necrology

*For ever, in dark and cold forlorn,
We wander there;
The sweet world's face is never gay
For us, who see no flowers of May;
But night is sweet.*

— Anonymous, "Ghosts" (1887)



he Walking Dead — skeletons, zombies, ghouls, and similar undead animated by negative energy — are both the most common form of undead and the least appreciated for the menace they present to the living. Even the great Rudolph van Richten tended to overlook the Walking Dead, seeing them as nothing more than minions of the true threat that he was hunting.

The Walking Dead, however, are more than just obstacles to overcome before facing a “real” monster. They are a true threat in their own right; the fact that they are also easy to create, manipulate, and empower and able to work together effectively makes them more dangerous, not less so. To help hunters deal with this oft-ignored threat, we have devoted countless hours of research and practical investigation into their powers and weaknesses, hoping to uncover the tools that will allow heroes to confront the Walking Dead with a minimum of risk to themselves and others.

Unfortunately, as van Richten often said, this research is immensely frustrating. No sooner did we decide we knew everything possible about the Walking Dead than some new piece of information forced us to re-evaluate everything we regarded as fact. Once again, we remind the reader that all undead are unique and individual, the Walking Dead doubly so.

Not only must hunters remember that their quarry may manifest salient abilities evolved from its personality during life, they must also consider that their prey might also have been further “improved” by necromancers, lichs, and other dark spellcasters. Hunters also face the danger of mistaking a degenerate vampire or ancient dead as a simple ghoul or unusually powerful zombie. They must be prepared for every eventuality, investigating a target as thoroughly as possible to avoid these kinds of fatal mistakes. This chapter, in which we detail the *necrology* — or, notable aspects — of the Walking Dead’s physiology, psychology, and abilities, will hopefully allow hunters to do so.

General Observations



he Walking Dead are similar in many ways both to ghosts and the ancient dead, the latter more popularly known as mummies. As with ancients, all Walking Dead are entirely corporeal, their spirits trapped in the bodies they inhabited during life. Because their physical shell is already dead,

they are immune to any attack that depends on living processes: toxins, sleep, paralysis, and disease to name but a few. They do not feel pain — at least, not as the living do — and cannot be struck unconscious. They are also very difficult to detect in the dark; without the tell-tale sounds of breathing and the ceaseless small movements that all living creatures make even when still, noticing the Walking Dead when they wish to hide can prove almost impossible.

Despite these powers, however, all is not lost for the undead hunter. The walking dead possess a wide variety of immunities to physical attacks because they are so closely tied to their physical bodies; if the body can be destroyed, the creature’s threat is almost certainly dispelled with it. Unlike the ancient dead, very few of the Walking Dead can recover from complete or even partial destruction.

Most Walking Dead attack by slamming their foes with their fists or by rending them with claws or teeth. Few actually use weapons, although doing so is not unusual, and those that do usually prefer melee weapons. Generally, the Walking Dead are too bloodthirsty or their minds are too degraded to kill from a distance. Wise hunters use this to their advantage, ensuring that they attack the Walking Dead only when their prey cannot close with them, thus protecting themselves from harm. A cliff ledge, *levitation* spell, or even a tree may be sufficient to keep the undead at bay long enough to destroy or at least incapacitate them.

Silence and the Walking Dead

Because the Walking Dead do not breathe and can be unnaturally still, they are unusually difficult to detect when concealing themselves. When not moving, the Walking Dead gain a +6 competence bonus to Hide checks. While moving, the Walking Dead still gain a +2 competence bonus to Hide checks.

Intact, bestial, and withered Walking Dead (see below) gain a +4 competence bonus to Move Silently checks. Skeletal and decayed Walking Dead do not, as they can easily be detected from their dragging movements and the click of bone on bone.





Psychology



Like ghosts, much of the Walking Dead's power arises from their force of personality. This fact may not seem immediately obvious, but it is true. All Walking Dead, regardless of their origins or powers, are motivated by need. We use the word "need" here after much consideration. "Desire," even in its strongest forms, does not adequately convey enough of a sense of compulsion to represent the psychological motivation of the Walking Dead. The Walking Dead are *compelled* to fulfil this need beyond any rational or practical limitations. They pursue this directive to the extent where it drowns out any other consideration, until, in a living being, it would be considered an obsession — an overriding madness. We have dubbed this need *the Craving*.

When the Craving is alien to the creature's native desires, the walking dead is crippled by the constant psychological turmoil between its own personality and the overpowering need that causes it to rise from its grave. Such a creature becomes a weak form of undead with few salient abilities. If the Craving is in tune with or springs from the creature's will, it becomes far more powerful.

The least powerful undead — the skeleton and zombie minions of powerful necromancers — are imbued with the Craving to serve their master. For obvious reasons, we call these weak creatures the *Obedient Dead*. As no creature wishes to be subjugated entirely by another creature, the processes that raise them from the grave and bind them to their masters must necessarily break their wills and destroy their personalities before they will accept such total domination. The Obedient Dead are not always mindless automatons, but typically, something precious is lost between life and undeath.

I recall Johann Haydyl, an acquaintance of ours born on one of the islands of the Nocturnal Sea, swapping tales of adventure with us one summer night in van Richten's house. In Mordent, such storytelling sessions inevitably turn to tales of ghosts and spirits, and that night was no exception. Johann matched our tales with blood-curdling stories from his own place of birth, featuring a grim form of undead called the *lebentod*. These creatures apparently appear exactly like their living selves and often continue to pretend to lead normal lives. Yet each and every one is bound utterly to the evil sorcerer or priest that killed and then

reanimated it and secretly plots to bring about its master's goals. Only small but sudden changes in the *lebentod*'s personality serve as warnings for its unsuspecting family: a dish that the undead once considered delicious is now eaten without relish, or the creature suddenly becomes friendly toward a neighbour he has detested for years. These simple folktales illustrate the point: the process of forcing one of the Walking Dead into subservience causes immense damage to the victim's psyche, and this aspect may be a useful clue in identifying the Obedient Dead. Also, folktales often contain more than a grain of truth. Let those who live near the Nocturnal Sea beware!

Of course, not all of the Walking Dead are motivated by something so alien to their natures. One intriguing class of undead is the *Hungry Dead*, creatures forced to *consume* constantly. Although the food does have its benefits for the undead, this is not why they feed. No matter how much they consume, these creatures can never be satiated. In Rokushima Táiyo, the *abiku* is said to need a constant diet of carrion because it has no stomach, and so can never know the pleasure of a full belly. While this may not be the literal truth, one may confidently say that ghouls, ghastrs, and their ilk are cursed with the unrelenting need to eat. In most cases, the object of their appetite is flesh or some other intimate part of the body such as the brain or bone marrow. Revolting as this quality is, it is really a blessing in disguise; few sentient creatures naturally eat these products, so again, the Hungry Dead are not as powerful as they might be due to the contest between their natural desires and the tainted needs of walking death. Only in rare cases, when the still-living creature wilfully indulges in cannibalism or similar vices, will one become a powerful member of the Hungry Dead. The Glutton of G'Henna was one such creature, although thankfully it was obsessed with normal food rather than human flesh.

The "ghoul lord" and the Glutton of G'Henna bridge the gap between the Hungry Dead and our third classification, the *Restless Dead*. Although all creatures eat, the Hungry Dead are limited by their emotional turmoil over constantly needing food alien to their normal diet. The Restless Dead, as with powerful members of the Hungry Dead, suffer no such limitation; they spend eternity doing exactly what comes naturally to them. Their living will and their undead Craving are in perfect accord, their personalities largely unchanged from





life. Considering the type of person who would have an obsession strong enough to allow them to cheat death, however, this situation is hardly reassuring. Be that the case, the Restless Dead are so powerful that at first glance revenants and wights seem almost an entirely different class of undead to the skeletons and zombies with which we started our discussion.

Of course, the same Craving does not motivate every Restless Dead. Ratik Ubel, without whom these findings would be far less detailed and accurate, was motivated by the overwhelming desire to avenge his own murder. Others rise to protect their belongings from theft or destruction, still others to complete some task that eluded them during life. Perhaps most terrifying are those Restless Dead who rise from their graves due to an envious and all-consuming rage at dying while others yet survive. They exist only to equalize this supposed wrong by killing everything — whether animals, plants, or people — around their lairs.

Even those Restless Dead who are motivated by less diabolical needs, however, are terrifying in the extreme. I dread to think how Ubel's murderer will feel when the revenant finally tracks him or her down: that villain is the object of Ratik's entire being; he quite literally exists only to avenge himself. Although we cannot bring ourselves to feel empathy for a murderer, we must sympathize with him to some extent, for Ubel's revenge will be terrible.

The Craving is the single distinguishing feature that separates the Walking Dead from other types of undead. The drives that motivate even the most obsessive lich or mummy are nothing compared to those of the Walking Dead, which will do anything to pursue their goal, no matter how self-destructive or corrupt their actions may be.

Undead hunters can use other clues to ensure that their prey is a member of the Walking Dead and not some other monstrosity. While vampires, for instance, typically appear relatively lifelike, the Walking Dead always seem decayed to some extent. The Walking Dead inhabit their own corpses; ghosts, even those that are corporeal, do not. Liches are invariably powerful spellcasters; the Walking Dead rarely cast spells and even more rarely manage to achieve more than a moderate level of ability. The ancient dead are animated by positive energy, the Walking Dead negative energy. Psychology, however, is by far the surest tool to identify the walking dead and among the easiest

to use. If your prey is motivated by obsession and will compromise its own safety to achieve its goals, it is probably a member of the Walking Dead.

Physiology



he Walking Dead come in many different forms, which can provide clues to their powers and weaknesses. These forms are not the differences between, say, skeletons and zombies (discussed in the next section), but rather the differences that the original race of the Walking Dead may make to the final powers of the undead.

Often, the form of the Walking Dead is very obvious. One can easily tell a dwarven corpse from that of a human, a giant, or a boar. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. During his investigation of the lair of the lich Phantom's Bane, Dr. van Richten and his fellows were confronted by a monstrosity large skeleton that attacked them with a club that was little more than an uprooted tree. Van Richten records in his journal that the beast was a skeletal giant.

While we have no firsthand experience with this monster, we mention it to reinforce our previous point. What if this skeleton was not actually that of a giant? It is entirely possible, considering Phantom's Bane's prowess as a spellcaster, that the skeleton consisted simply of *enlarged* human bones, designed to frighten those who faced it into thinking that it was a creature of legend. Obviously, the truth is hidden with Phantom's Bane itself, but the point is still one to consider. Just because your foe *looks* like a particular creature does not always mean that it will have the expected abilities. This warning is particularly relevant for the walking dead, as necromancers frequently alter the appearance of their minions to resemble more closely creatures of legend due to the additional fear they inspire — or simply to reflect their own perverse tastes. As always, caution must be your watchword.

Humanoid

Most of the Walking Dead have a humanoid form, be it human, elf, or even a lowly goblin, probably for practical rather than philosophical reasons. Undead that create their own spawn typically make humanoids their victims, drawn out of envy and hatred to attack that which reminds them most of their living selves. Also, necromancers will find humanoid corpses more readily available for their evil magic than those of more





powerful creatures, and undead created from humanoid can perform tasks that undead animals cannot.

When facing humanoid Walking Dead, one must remember that they were once living, feeling beings like you or I. While you may find yourself arrayed against them in combat, they still possess the inalienable rights of the sentient creature and should be treated with respect once you have defeated them. The walking dead are rarely animated out of any personal malice; more often, they rise from their graves through no real fault of their own, such as a curse or magical summons. By destroying them, you are carrying out the laudable task of returning them to their eternal reward. Further desecration is not only unnecessary, it may prevent the spirit from returning to the Other Side and trap it here as a ghost. Needless to say, this will only compound your problems.

Animal

Unsurprisingly, Walking Dead created from animals are almost as common as humanoid walking dead. Their bodies are certainly easier for necromancers to procure than those of humanoids, but they are less able to perform complex tasks, such as those that require the use of hands. Thus, they are more common as guardians than servitors. Still, exceptions are the rule when dealing with the undead: the Pale Herd, for instance, is a vast collection of undead animals amassed by a vampiric druid in Verbrek to pander to her every need. Everything from chipmunks up to stags comprises the dread assemblage, and they perform almost every conceivable task for her. To the best of our knowledge, the Pale Herd and its malevolent mistress are still active in southern Verbrek, so travellers in that region have more to beware of than vicious wolves.

Of course, necromancy is not the only way for the Walking Dead to arise, and walking dead animals formed by other means do exist. Roald Varlin, a Darkonese contact of ours, encountered several Walking Dead formed from animals in the Mountains of Misery. One of the more primitive dwarven clans in that area ritually bonds each dwarf with a mastiff puppy. The mastiff acts as friend, companion, and guardian for the dwarf throughout its life and upon death is interred in its master's sepulchre. As dwarves are very long-lived, each master can amass a sizeable pack of mastiffs by the time he joins them in the tomb. Even there, the

mastiffs are expected to protect the dwarf and his grave goods. If the tomb is disturbed, the pack rises from the dead as withered wight-like monsters that relentlessly hunt the grave robber until the damage is restored. Roald encountered one such pack hot on the heels of a desperate thief. He returned the stolen item — a small golden statuette — to the tomb without being attacked by the dogs, which then went back to their rest.

Monsters

To rise from the grave as a walking dead, a creature must be both fully mortal and corporeal. It should be a great relief to many to realize that there are no ghoulish golems, skeletal demons, or fey wights. These creatures are simply not tied to their physical shells closely enough to return from their graves.

Other creatures, however, are more than capable of becoming undead. We have encountered kobolds, stirges, and even a hag that returned as walking dead, and there is of course the skeletal giant in the lair of Phantom's Bane. Such unnatural creatures typically lead violent lives that leave their bodies unsuitable for reanimation, but when their corpses *are* intact, the results can be truly terrifying.

Composite

Certainly the most intimidating of the Walking Dead, composite undead are formed from the bodies of several different creatures, united by a combination of magic and physical joins such as with a flesh golem. While any corporeal creature can be used, at least one humanoid must be included to provide the animating spirit.

Composite creatures are usually — though not always — created by necromancers to act as powerful minions. Even when this is not the case, as in the Gnarled Man of Liara, who spontaneously arose from a necromancer's discard heap, the composite walking dead is usually a sign that a necromancer or lich is active somewhere in the area.

Composite Walking Dead

"Composite Walking Dead" is a template that can be applied to any corporeal aberration, animal, beast, dragon, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, shapechanger, or vermin (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "undead."



The DM must also select up to three other creatures of these types to provide the modifications to the base creature (referred to hereafter as the “modifying creatures”). If the base creature is not a humanoid, at least one of the modifying creatures must be. All of the modifying creatures must be within one size category of each other and the base creature; thus, a Medium-size base creature could accept modifying creatures of Medium-size and either Large or Small size, but not both.

As body parts from each modifying creature are grafted to the base creature, they add traits to the base creature as detailed below.

The composite walking dead uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities, except as noted below.

Hit Dice: The base creature’s Hit Dice increase to d12.

Speed: The composite uses the highest speed of either the base creature or one of the modifying creatures (this creature supplies the legs of the composite). Each modifying creature can add one additional movement form, if available. If one of the creatures has wings, for example, the composite gains that creature’s fly speed, but its maneuverability drops by two categories (such as average to clumsy). If a composite’s maneuverability drops below “clumsy,” it is too ungainly to fly. Speeds granted by multiple creatures do not stack.

AC: The base creature’s natural armor improves by +2.

Attacks: The composite retains all the attacks of the base creature. Each modifying creature can also add up to one attack form (bite, claw, gore, or slam), depending on the body part used. A composite cannot gain attack forms from more than one creature. (Thus, all of its bite attacks must come from a single creature, etc.) The composite uses the base attack bonus of





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a wizard of a level equal to its HD. All attacks from modifying creatures are secondary attacks.

Damage: The composite retains the base and modifying creatures' damage ratings or uses the values shown on Table 1-1: Undead Attack Forms below, whichever is better.

Special Attacks: The composite retains all of the base creature's special attacks and gains any extraordinary special attacks that apply to the limbs it has taken from the modifying creatures. In addition, each modifying creature can add up to one supernatural special attack, if possible.

Special Qualities: The composite retains all the extraordinary special qualities of the base creature. Each modifying creature can also add up to one extraordinary special quality, but only if it applies to the donated body parts, rather than the body as a whole. Thus, a composite using the eyes of a giant owl would gain superior low-light vision, but a modifying troll could not grant regeneration to the composite as a whole.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, or choose one of the modifying creatures and apply all of its racial modifiers to the base creature's abilities. As undead creatures, composites have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: The base creature gains the Multiattack feat.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organization: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Usually neutral; always evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Sample Composite Undead

This example uses a dire wolf as the base creature and a gargoyle and a large monstrous hunting spider as the modifying creatures.

Composite Undead

Hit Dice:	Large Undead 6d12 (39 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	50 ft. (wolf), climb 20 ft. (spider), fly 75 ft. (clumsy) (gargoyle)
AC:	17 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +7 melee (wolf jaws), 2 claws +7 melee (gargoyle), gore +7 melee (gargoyle)
Damage:	Bite 1d8+7 and poison, claw 1d4+3, gore 1d6+3
Face/Reach:	10 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Poison (spider), trip (wolf)
Special Qualities:	Scent (wolf)
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 25, Dex 15, Con —, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +1*
Feats:	Multiattack
Challenge Rating:	5

The creation of Strahd von Zarovich, this horror prowls the shadowy corridors of Castle Ravenloft, endlessly hunting for intruders.

Combat

Poison (Ex): Bite — injury, Fortitude save (DC 16); initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Strength.

Trip (Ex): If the composite hits with its bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a melee touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the composite.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to any effect requiring a Fortitude save, unless such an effect targets objects.





States of Preservation



n many ways, most hunters consider the state of preservation to be the Walking Dead's defining feature. Knowing whether an undead was once an elf or a human is seldom as important as simply knowing whether or not it is skeletal. Discerning a walking dead's state of preservation is generally quite easy; it is also the key to predicting many of its abilities.

Skeletal

A skeletal creature's original flesh has completely rotted away, leaving only bare bones supported by negative energy, a strange mockery of the muscles that supported the living creature. Occasionally, scraps of flesh cling to the skeleton, or a particular organ such as the eyes or the tongue has escaped decay, but the creature is definitely more bones than flesh.

Skeletal undead are generally resistant to piercing and slashing weapons, as they have little soft tissue left for the blade to pierce. Likewise, without flesh to be frozen, they can also usually ignore freezing temperatures.

Having no tongues, skeletal undead usually lose the ability to speak or otherwise make any intelligible sounds, even if intelligent. They somehow retain the ability to hear, however, so parleying with them is still sometimes possible. They typically make a dry clicking noise as they move.

Decayed

Decayed undead retain some flesh, but it is typically rancid and crawling with maggots. As one could well imagine, these creatures are foul enough to turn even the strongest stomach, and once smelled, their disgusting aroma can never be forgotten. We hope this will not be taken as a sign of aristocratic weakness, but we must confess that we would prefer to face a pack of ghouls rather than a single decayed undead. Quite simply, these foul corpses are some of the most revolting undead in existence.

Zombies are the most common and well known form of decayed undead. Although slow and awkward, we must warn readers that not all decayed undead are so hampered. We have seen zombies that moved with blinding speed, battering us with their fists almost faster than we could see. Luckily, we escaped by crossing a line of flour, but we have

never since forgotten that our preconceptions could be dangerously wrong.

Decayed undead often carry infectious diseases, rot grubs, and other unwholesome parasites, which can easily be transferred to their living victims, returning to inflict suffering long after the undead itself has moved on. If you are forced to confront decayed undead, try to maintain your distance if at all possible and then see a priest or experienced healer afterward to ensure that you are free of disease.

Because of their corroded nerves and soggy flesh, decayed undead may be resistant to one or more forms of damage, typically bludgeoning or fire attacks, although resistance to other forms of energy is also common.

Withered

In this case, the undead retains all of its flesh, but it is withered and dry, almost mummified. The skin is like parchment, but it is often as tough as leather — or even stronger.

For some reason, withered undead are often more powerful than decayed or skeletal undead. Perhaps powerful undead are more closely tied to the Negative Energy Plane, resulting in this desiccation, or perhaps the more intact a corpse, the more negative energy it can contain. Of course, the correlation may be entirely coincidental. Whatever the reason behind it, this correlation is a good rule of thumb to remember.

Like decayed undead, withered undead may bear parasites beneath their dry skin, so care must be taken to avoid infection.

Bestial

Bestial undead retain all of their flesh and may even seem alive at first glance. Yet undeath twists these creatures into horrible parodies of their living forms. Their hands may twist into cruel talons, or their tongues may become obscenely swollen and discolored. Teeth can become fangs; hair can sprout into a wiry, untamable mane. Bestial walking dead are rarely still, always twitching and rocking from side to side. During combat, they release frightening roars, howls, and animalistic gibbering. Even animals and monsters suffer similar distortions. They become more grotesque, their features more coarse. Their fur bristles from their bodies and their eyes bulge from their heads.

The distortion of their bodies seems to rob most bestial undead of all but a vicious cunning.





Only the most powerful retain their full intellects, so adventurers should beware Walking Dead that look like perverted, degenerate creatures yet still act with care and insight.

the closest to being unchanged by death, at least in a physical sense.

Undead in the intact state of preservation appear to have been dead for only a short time, showing little to no signs of decay. If they are injured, spectral flesh may be overlaid on the wounds, but their eyes are dull and glazed and their faces are often contorted with horror and pain.

Intact

No walking dead can appear truly lifelike without the use of magic, but intact undead come

States of Preservation

Skeletal: Skeletal undead take only half damage from piercing and slashing weapons and are immune to cold damage. Lacking vocal chords, the only noises they can normally make are hisses and the click of bone on bone. Walking dead spellcasters must use the Silent Spell feat to cast spells with a vocal component. Intelligent skeletal walking dead can also take the Dust-tongue feat, which grants them the supernatural ability to vocalize normally.

Decayed: Seeing a decayed undead is often cause for a Horror save (DC 10–12). The stench of decay grants creatures trying to track decayed undead via scent a +6 circumstance bonus to their Wilderness Lore check. In some cases, decayed walking dead may take only half damage from piercing attacks.

Withered: Seeing a withered undead can be cause for a Horror save (DC 8–10). A withered undead's natural armor typically improves by an amount equal to 1/2 its HD + its Charisma modifier.

Bestial: If the walking dead had hands in life, then it gains one claw attack per hand, and if it had a mouth, then it gains a bite attack, assuming it did not already have these attack forms. Refer to Table 1–1: Undead Attack Forms to determine the damage values of a walking dead's natural attacks. If the walking dead already had natural attacks, use the original damage value or that below, whichever is better.

Seeing a bestial undead is often cause for a Horror save (DC 13–15).

Table 1–1: Undead Attack Forms

Size	Bite Damage	Claw Damage	Gore Damage	Slam Damage
Fine	1	—	—	1
Diminutive	1d2	1	—	1d2
Tiny	1d3	1d2	1	1d3
Small	1d4	1d3	1d2	1d4
Medium-size	1d6	1d4	1d3	1d6
Large	1d8	1d6	1d4	1d8
Huge	2d6	1d8	1d6	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8	2d6	1d8	2d8
Colossal	4d6	2d8	2d6	4d6

Intact: Intact undead can often pass as living creatures. If an intact undead is not actively trying to disguise itself, an observer must make a successful Spot check (DC 10 + the intact undead's Charisma modifier) to recognize its true nature. Characters who took the creature to be alive should make a Horror save when the truth is revealed.

Symbiosis: Many creatures and hazards can live in the flesh of the walking dead. Particularly appropriate creatures include brown mold, carrion stalkers, grave ooze, grave scarabs, gray ooze, green slime, Tiny vipers, Tiny monstrous centipedes, Tiny monstrous scorpions, Tiny monstrous spiders, undead cloaklers, witchbane leeches and yellow mold. Obviously, the walking dead must be unharmed by their symbiont's attacks, so a wight would be encountered carrying a gray ooze only if it also has acid immunity. See "Encounters" in Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for guidelines about evaluating the EL of a mixed pair of monsters.



They may moan in distress, or they may act as though still alive.

According to Alanik Ray, Ratik Ubel was an intact undead. He appeared as he did during life, except that his skin was strangely pale and translucent, and signs of decay could be seen around his fingernails, mouth and sunken eyes. Most of his hair had fallen out, and the sparse clumps that remained were completely white. Alanik Ray assures me, however, that the signs of undeath, even after more than twenty years, were so subtle that the detective's companion, Dr. Arthur Sedgwick, took him to be merely ill at first glance. To paraphrase the great detective, a hunter's eyes must not only see, they must *observe*, lest some small but vital detail escape them. This warning is particularly relevant when dealing with creatures like the undead, which depend on deception and intimidation to survive.

Origins



The Walking Dead can arise in numerous ways. Although the five methods presented here are the most common, other means of creation should not be discounted. The particular means of creation greatly impacts the psyche of the walking dead created, so undead with especially unusual mindsets may be created by unusual methods.

Unlike the other forms of undead Dr. van Richten exposed, few people actually choose to become one of the walking dead. More often than not, the condition is foisted upon them by some grim happenstance before or after their demise.

Magic

Walking Dead can be created using spells such as *animate dead* or *create undead*. This is the most common method of creating the Obedient Dead, although one should note that these spells can sometimes create free-willed undead. Typically, undead created by arcane magic are dull and lack a sense of self; they are little more than animated tools (although tools animated by the blackest arts). Divine magic, however, is capable of creating slightly more individual creatures that retain some personality; the energies priests utilize are more suited to manipulating and preserving spirits than working arcane necromancy. Even so, undead created by mortal magic are typically weak and submissive, making them useful as servitors and guardians. Of course, like any enslaved creature,





those Walking Dead with even a touch of spirit yearn for freedom and feel the pinch of self-interest. If given the chance, these creatures may turn on their “master” — a fitting fate for those who consider themselves fit to shackle death itself.

Spawning

Many types of walking dead can reanimate their victims as creatures like themselves, an ability that lies at the heart of the horror of the walking dead. Luckily, the conditions required for the undead’s victim to rise are fairly stringent and constant, so it can be relatively easy to know when one should take special care of a victim’s corpse.

To rise as a new spawn, a victim must be killed by an existing walking dead. Often, one particular attack must deal the bulk of the damage, such as an enervating strike, fangs that spread a foul disease, or some supernatural chemical in the creature’s saliva. In rare cases, every attack — even just touching the undead — may be enough to transfer the ailment, which can be powerful enough to overcome even strong, healthy individuals.

As an illustration of how easy it can be for the walking dead to start spawning, we present a tale from one of our earliest cases, in the village of Briarton in southern Mordent. We were called to the village to investigate a series of disappearances and strange behavior. Every few days, someone in the village would suddenly stop whatever he or she was doing at nightfall and wander out into the twilight. The few people that tried to stop them were found the next morning, savagely ripped apart and half-eaten. After trying to detain one such person ourselves, it became obvious that the people of Briarton were being turned into fearsome, cannibalistic zombies — but neither of us could imagine how. Only by following one of the zombies on its exodus did we discover a revolting, half-rotted monstrosity that squatted half-submerged in a lake. The creature had been trapped in the mud for so long that it had eaten away its own legs; more significantly, its necrotic disease had contaminated the water so that those who drank from the lake or its downstream brook were infected with its cannibalistic taint. The newly formed zombie was then called to the lake by its master and devoured. We managed to destroy the monster and purify the water, but the episode remains burned in our minds as an example of how insidious and powerful spawning can be.

This example also shows that spawn created by a walking dead are typically obedient to the creature that created them, even to the point of utter subservience. If these creatures then make more spawn, the new undead are often also subservient to the original monster. In other cases, the spawn are free-willed and either go their own way or join their creator’s pack, possibly even supplanting their creator as leader. So far, we have discovered no correlation between types of Walking Dead and how much control they have over their spawn; control is apparently unique to each strain of undeath.

The spawning process appears to be immensely painful, the changes inflicting intense mental and physical trauma to the victim. In many cases, the agony of the transformation is enough to fog or even obliterate the walking dead’s memory of its past life, while others retain their memories and personalities but are tainted with evil. We can say from personal experience that both of these results are immensely distressing for the friends the victim leaves behind. We are not sure what is worse: seeing your fallen friend return as a foul hulk that remembers nothing of you or as a monster capable of taunting you with its memories.

As a note, undead created by magic rarely have the ability to create spawn themselves.

Creating Spawn

Creatures killed by undead with the *create spawn* supernatural ability rise as undead themselves at a certain period after death. This period can range anywhere from 1d4 rounds to 1 week in length. The undead’s spawn must have a Challenge Rating equal to or less than that of the original undead, and usually a given undead can only create one type of undead. For example, a CR 3 ghast can create any one strain of Walking Dead with a CR of 3 or less as its spawn — most typically, CR 1 ghouls.

Curses

The dead can crawl from their graves due to curses that afflicted them during life. This curse may be malicious or it may be the just reward for a life of evil, much like those that taste the flesh of



their own race are cursed to become ghouls in death.

Cursed undead are often malicious and vengeful, feeling wronged by the world at large. They are determined to avenge themselves upon the people or even the societies that created them. Because they can declare whole cultures their enemies, they are exceptionally dangerous. Even folk who have nothing to do with the laying of the curse become targets for the creature's rage.

We would also classify those undead that spontaneously arise due to improper burial — such as at a crossroads or face down — as those who arise due to a curse, although one of a more spiritual sort. Undead of this stripe can be put to rest by giving them a proper burial, although the more conventionally cursed monster can rest only through its destruction or by fulfilling the specific conditions named in the wording of the curse.

The Glutton of G'Henna was a walking dead that arose through a curse stemming from his extreme greed — a condition that also amounts to sacrilege in the land of his birth. The Glutton was cursed to eat constantly, never being satisfied, until Zhakata himself forgave his sins.

Sudden Death

Like some ghosts, some of the Walking Dead exist simply because death came so suddenly they never realized that life ended. At first, and perhaps for several years afterwards, such undead may retain their original thought processes and personality, before slowly and inevitably spiraling into madness and evil. They typically return to places they loved during life, unable to understand why they are no longer welcome but also desperate to regain what they have lost.

This is undoubtedly the most tragic origin for the Walking Dead, but one must still not soften one's heart toward the undead. When their attempts to return to normal life fail, these monsters express their frustration through violence directed at those who will not accommodate them — their friends and family. Van Richten records the tale of a hunter, killed by a stray arrow, who refused to accept that he was dead. When he tried to return to his horrified family, they locked him out. En-

raged, the hunter battered down the door and dealt savagely with those within. Sadly, the hunter was capable of creating spawn, and his family rose as nearly mindless imitations of themselves. The hunter spent the rest of his sad undead existence forcing his victims to parody their previous lives. Although deeply frustrated by his hollow existence, he still viciously attacked Dr. van Richten and his fellows when they tried to return the family to the embrace of death.

This type of Walking Dead can be put to rest either via physical destruction or by simply convincing them they are dead. While kinder, this second method is both very delicate and very dangerous, as the undead can easily be enraged by the unwelcome truth and may attack.

Dark Desire

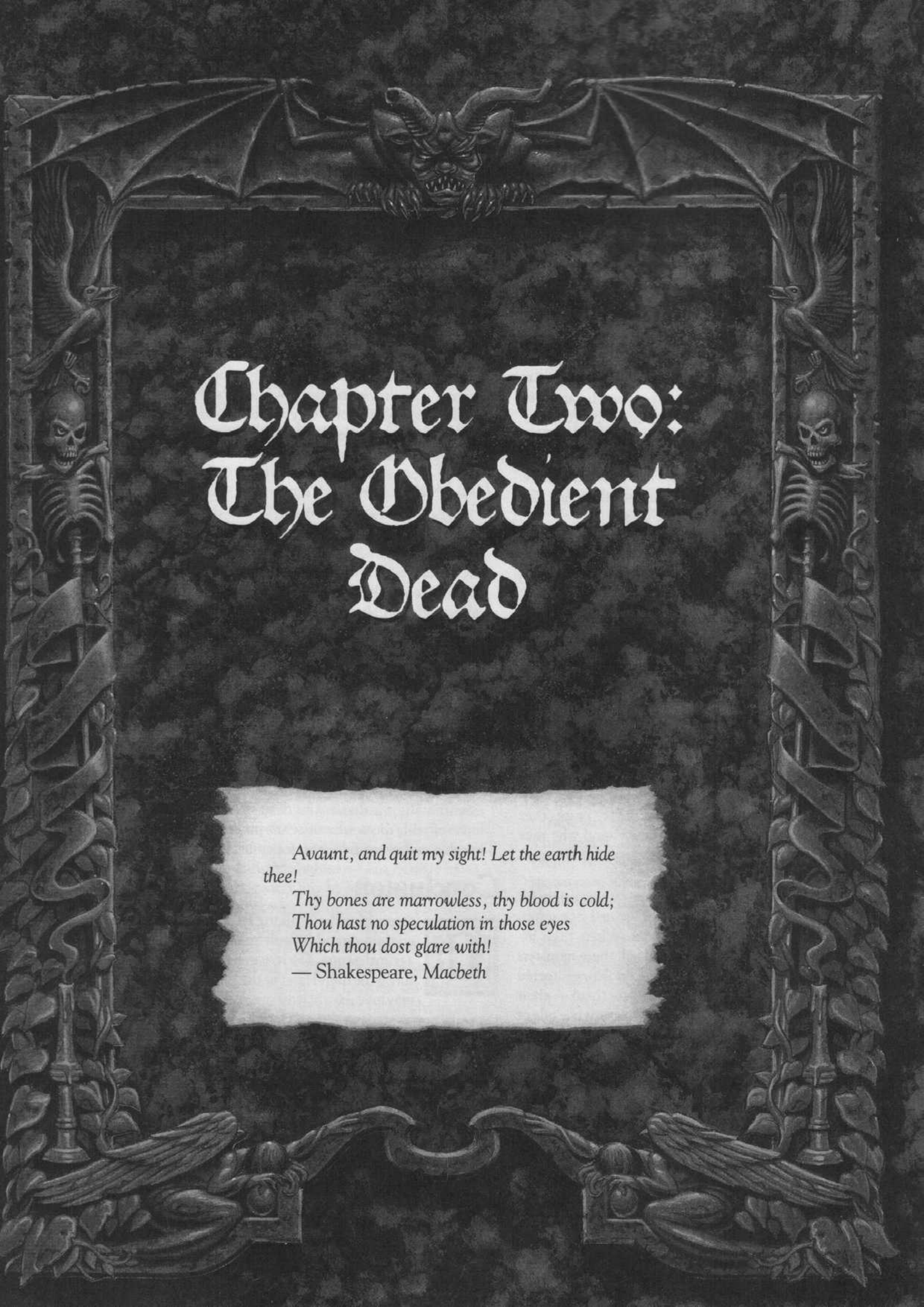
The final method of origin is also the most disturbing. If their desire is great enough, the dead can walk simply because they *want* to. This grim circumstance is the hallmark of the Restless Dead, although some villains deliberately transform themselves into the Hungry Dead. Their reasons for rising from the grave are many and varied, ranging from the desire to avenge themselves on someone who wronged them during life, to hatred and jealousy of the living, to protecting their graves or families, or to completing some unfinished business. One also finds wretches who desire immortal life but lack the talent or knowledge to transform themselves into liches or ancient dead, and so must resort to a lesser form of eternal life. Because they intentionally join the walking dead, or rise through force of will, those who arise on purpose usually become very powerful forces for evil.

Conclusion



ategorizing the Walking Dead is a time-consuming and difficult task, but it is not a pointless one. The research involved is sure to be useful later in the hunt, and it may reveal (or at least suggest) a number of salient powers or weaknesses for which you could prepare. The necrology of the Walking Dead holds the key to their entire vault of secrets.





Chapter Two: The Obedient Dead

Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!

*Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!*

— Shakespeare, *Macbeth*



Authors' Comment: After much deliberation, we have decided to include the following letter, despite its personal nature, as it explains much about our ongoing determination to present these guides for other

hunters.

Dearest Sister,

I have retrieved vital information concerning what we have termed the obedient dead. Such information may have cost us more than we bargained for, though.

I finally located the being known as Toben the Many. As our dear uncle alluded, Toben was indeed very knowledgeable about the walking dead, perhaps the most knowledgeable being that we have met in our careers. Yet the price we have paid to collect this information, dear sister, weighs on my soul.

Our dear friend Alanik Ray informed me that he had located Toben in the small hamlet of Allendine, not too far from Mordentshire. The Great Detective had succeeded at last in tracking down this most dangerous entity and was close to the point of putting it to Final Rest. Since the opportunity was so close, I could not dare to turn down this chance.

Alanik Ray and Arthur Sedgwick cornered Toben in an old orphanage in Allendine. They dispatched with many of his defenses and were finally about to destroy him. At my behest, they stayed their execution until such a time as I could arrive.

"Are you sure you wish to do this?" Alanik Ray asked upon my arrival. "Is the information you seek so important?"

"It is my uncle's legacy," I said with a note of finality.

Alanik merely nodded and led me to a single room where they had Toben now cornered. It was an old ballroom that had been converted into a playroom for children.

Alanik lit a lantern and handed it to me. "It is very dark," were his only words before I stepped into the holding place of this most feared being.

The ballroom was indeed dark and empty. I stared for a while, adjusting my eyes to the light before I noticed something moving up ahead. Then Alanik said to me, "Look, Laurie. Look upon the ground."

All along the floor were drawings of children — children jumping, children playing, children as

they must have been in their daily lives. Strangely, all of the scrawlings had blank faces; none had any eyes or mouths, just an empty circle where a face should be. I gazed upon the drawings and saw that they extended away into the darkness.

A scuffing noise ahead caught my attention. I stepped forward, holding my lantern high.

There, dancing in the half-light of the hall, were two little girls. Their once white dresses were now stained with mud and dirt. One of them paused and turned toward me. Though she faced me, her features were hidden by her hair, which lay haggard over her face. The other glanced in my direction and gave a giggle. Her face was hidden by her hand, which she used to cover her mocking laughter. Suddenly, I became aware of a terrible stench in the air — the smell of rot and decay pressed over the place like a smothering hand. There could be no doubt about the fate of those poor little girls.

"Do you want to come and play?" asked one of the girls. "Come and play..." Her voice was disjointed and discordant, like the sound of a broken piano.

I stepped back. Alanik grabbed my arm.

"Do not back away," he said. "This is what you have come for."

"We have come here looking for Toben the Many," I said. "Not these two perversions."

The girl whose face had been hidden, whose face lay covered by her long, bedraggled hair, flicked that hair back over her shoulder. "But I am Toben the Many..." Her voice was like a scratched and worn out violin.

I was aghast, frozen in place, my blood stiff and still like a winter-born stream. With great effort, I spoke again. "I have come seeking Toben the Many. I am told he has knowledge of the Walking Dead."

"Well," said the other girl, who let her hand fall from her face. "You have come to the right place. We are Toben the Many — and we are the Walking Dead."

The bodies of the two girls stepped into the light. In the dimness of the lantern, upon a floor drawn with the perverse mockery of children's drawings, the two of them revealed their hideous countenance, their half-eaten visages. When they spoke, they spoke as one.

Transcribed below are the words of Toben the Many.... I hope our price was not too great.

— LWF





The Three Essential Lies about the Obedient Dead



ou may want to know why I can speak from two bodies. It is because I am both of these bodies. I am in many places at once. I am Toben the Many. Each person I collect becomes part of me, and I have collected many people. I have collected the young and the old, the healthy and the sick. Perhaps one day, I will collect you.

Let us discuss the obedient dead, shall we? For that is what I wish to speak of today. The obedient dead are what most people call zombies and skeletons. Yet those are such little words to describe such great and numerous things. You see, there are many obedient dead, and while some are the same, many are different. Very different.

I'll bet you think you know all about the obedient dead, don't you? They are just mobile bodies, right? They are just strange bodies that walk around, trying to destroy everything around them. That is a lie. You have been taught those lies by stories and folklore. Do you know what those lies are? I will tell you:

The Obedient Dead are Always Slow

No matter what others told you, this is not always the case. If you think it is true, collecting you when the time comes will be all the easier for me. Nevertheless, the common folk are more comforted to believe they can outrun what they fear

Authors' Comment: Our research has shown us time and again that Toben speaks truly. Skeletons are very fast; in many ways, they are more nimble than a normal mortal. While zombies are for the most part slow and shuffling creatures, our research has shown that some varieties are quicker than the living. These cunning creatures often feign a lesser mobility until their opponents realize the ruse too late.

— L&GWF

The Obedient Dead are Always Unintelligent

Would that not be a comforting thought as well? If it soothes you to believe that those wrenched from their rest to serve the whims of a master cannot sense their fate and have no thoughts of

their own, then by all means, believe the lie. Believing is easier than acknowledging the truth: that such souls do understand their circumstances, but have no means to prevent what happens to them. The best torments are subtle, after all.

Authors' Comment: While most obedient dead are mindless abominations, one should remember that almost always some force is directing them. While the obedient dead may be unintelligent for all intents and purposes, their master most certainly is not. We should also note that a small minority of obedients have a rudimentary intellect. Hunters of the damned face off against the mindless variety most often, but on a rare occasion they meet an intelligent one that spells their doom.

— L&GWF

The Obedient dead are Monsters

Ah, would that it were so. They are not monsters; rather, they are you in different circumstances.

Authors' Comment: Most people see the obedient dead as monsters to destroy. They disassociate them from their source — the bodies of the once-living. The obedient dead are easy to destroy if they are nameless aberrations to nature. Yet what if you face a dead relative? A dead child? Most hunters are unprepared for the moment when they realize that what they are fighting were once people... sometimes people who were dear to them when living.

— L&GWF

The Animate force

All obedient dead are filled with a force known as negative energy. Positive energy grows, sustains, and renews; negative energy destroys, corrupts, and decays. When we see a vine growing upon a tree, we see evidence of positive energy. When we see that tree strangled, dying, and falling apart, we see evidence of negative energy.

An obedient dead has been filled with a greater amount of negative energy than normal. A normal amount of such energy causes a body to rot and decay naturally, but a powerful infusion of such energy causes that rotting body to get up and walk around.

Why would such an increase in negative energy not cause the body simply to rot faster? When a body has built up enough negative energy, the dark force within it causes it to rise, to spread





destruction and decay in order to spread more negative energy throughout the land.

Thus, negative energy is like a fire, always seeking to destroy and corrupt. When it has built up enough, it can animate the dead to spread it to other places. This also explains the life-draining touch of a wight or vampire. Their bodies are so filled with negative energy that simply touching them destroys life.

This quality of negative energy also explains the purpose of all obedient dead: to spread destruction and chaos. They have no other purpose; they are vehicles for the force of corruption and death.

The obedient dead may be made through spells. The spellcaster binds a large amount of negative energy within someone's corpse or bones. This magical binding traps negative energy in the corpse's body, causing it to move on its own. Through the power of magic, the spellcaster can control the body.

If you seek to hunt these creatures, some spells can detect the corruptive force that they contain. Though a common spell detects the presence of undead, other, rarer spells can be used to detect their passing as well.

Those Who Command

Sometimes, the dead come back. Sometimes they come back because they are cursed; other times, they come back because someone did not bury them properly. Then there are those that have unfinished business to complete.

The obedient dead, however, do not return for any of these reasons. They return because someone has wrenched them from the earth through magic, locking them back into their dead bodies. When this tragic event happens, they can only watch themselves as they are paraded around like puppets.

That is what the obedient dead are — puppets. Like all puppets, they must have someone pulling the strings. So, who are the puppet masters? You would like to say that they are monsters, evil beings born from the shadows, wouldn't you? They are not. They are just people like you — people who for some reason decided to study magic and use it to raise the dead from their graves. Sometimes they do it for no more reason than curiosity.

The obedient dead are tools created by someone to serve a specific purpose. You might fight off a group of zombies at a local farm, but never forget that those zombies were directed there for a very

Need for Destruction

While a necromancer may create obedient dead to do nothing more than clean his grounds, the negative energy within the walking bodies desires to spread. For every week the obedient dead are not allowed to destroy some form of life, they receive a Will save (DC = 10 + the level of spell that animated them + the caster's key ability modifier) to break free from their master's control. Undead who remain passive and do not destroy life for long periods of time usually crumble apart after a few years of inactivity.

Detecting Undead Presence

Obedient dead may be detected through a *detect magic* spell as well as a *detect undead* spell because they are magical creations. Obedients do not use their negative energy efficiently and therefore "leak" negative energy in very low doses. Other, greater forms of undead do not have this frailty.

This lingering aura may be detected even a week after the obedient dead have passed through an area. Detecting the aura requires the observer first to have the *detect magic* spell active and second to succeed in a Search check (DC 15 + the number of days that have passed since the undead were present). While one might be able to detect the former presence of undead through this action, *tracking* undead in this manner is impossible. One can only detect whether undead were in the general area or not.

specific reason. Skeletons do not wander a graveyard because they want to; whoever raised them sent them there intentionally. Many reasons exist to create such useful puppets....

Instruments of Destruction

A soldier must eat. He must sleep. He needs money and shelter. Even with such things provided for him, a soldier can still betray you. A walking body, though, has no need for any of these things. It only needs someone to pull the strings. It doesn't betray you; you can order it to kill children or to eat





someone alive. It does not have a conscience to overcome; it always obeys.

The only problem with using the obedient dead instead of soldiers is that they cannot be used often. When walking corpses roam the streets, alarms are sounded. So, when obedient dead are used, their presence reveals their master's existence to the general populace. Of course, some such as Azalin Rex do not care if their presence is known.

Instruments of Warning

I like to use the obedient dead as messengers. They are expendable, so you do not have the danger of losing a valued servant. They cannot betray deadly secrets to one of your rivals; they are wholly subservient to their master. Necromancers also use the obedient dead as messengers to strike terror in those that behold them. A skeletal rider approaching your house and nailing a message scrawled on tattered parchment to your door leaves a lasting impression.

Instruments of Awareness

The obedient dead make excellent spies. I once faced a rival whose tactics involved leaving skeletons piled around his castle — some animated and some not. When anybody approached the castle, the animated bones would wait until the party was out of sight and then stalk off to inform their master.

Many undead can share their senses. They are excellent guards, because they can inform their masters instantly when they have spotted someone. Consider my case. I can peer from many bodies at once. When next you meet a zombie and look into its eyes, think about that: I might just be staring back at you.

Instruments of Diversion

Remember that obedient dead are just toys for their masters. No one cares if they lose a few puppets; new ones can always be created. Necromancers thus often use their obedient dead as diversions. Sending a mob of zombies to attack a farmer's house may merely be a means of drawing someone out of hiding — or of causing those who would oppose the darkness to be drawn to the house... while the real crime takes place elsewhere.

Instruments of Depravity

Do you want to know the worst way you can use the obedient dead? To strike terror and fear in the hearts of the innocent! When I use the obedient dead in this way, I rarely order my toys to attack directly. I want to inflict mental and emotional damage before physical conflict.

I might use my tools to taunt my victims. At night, there may be strange footsteps about your door, accompanied by the sound of bones clicking. There might be scraping at the window. I might use my obedient dead to kill livestock or destroy property.

If my victim lives in the safety of the city, I might direct my puppets to stalk through the sewers and have them attack the victim's maidservants or butlers.

The most horrific deed the necromancer can do, of course, is to raise the bodies of those whom the victim knows. I have done this many times, collecting the loved ones of my victims one by one. It always seems to provoke a reaction from them.

Awakening Intellect

The majority of obedient dead begin as non-intelligent creatures, but some begin with a greater intelligence. As time passes, however, a spark of true intelligence may flicker inside the obedient.

Most necromancers are unwilling to wait for their undead to grow more intelligent. I am told that there are spells that will boost an obedient's intelligence, but doing this is highly dangerous. A leader should always want those beneath him to follow, not to think for themselves. Many tales warn of necromancers falling to their own undead hordes as those creatures grew in intelligence.

Sometimes, the servant outlives the master, surviving long after its creator has died. These creatures are always more intelligent, becoming only more enlightened as the years pass.

Authors' Comment: As noted by Toben the Many, the obedient dead may indeed have varying levels of intellect. For the benefit of our readers, we have tried to categorize those different levels.

— L&GWF





Non-Intelligent Undead

These undead are nothing more than mindless automatons. If under the command of another, they follow any orders completely. If they are without some force to drive them, they simply attack all life indiscriminately.

Animal Intelligence

These undead are like predators, stalking their prey carefully before attacking. Their attacks are savage, like those of a rabid hound. When overwhelmed, these creatures have the presence of mind to run.

Awakening Consciousness

Undead begin to gain a glimmer of intelligence as the years wear on. For each century of existence, add +2 to the obedient dead's Intelligence score, to a maximum of +6. Note that an obedient dead's Intelligence may also be raised through spells (see Chapter Six: Necromancers) or the death of its master. Those obedient dead whose master dies instantly gain +2 to their Intelligence. The table below describes obedient dead behavior according to their Intelligence score.

Intelligence Tendencies

- | | |
|-----|--|
| Nil | These undead engage in roaming. They attack all moving life on sight, always attacking the closest living thing. They do not use tactics such as flanking opponents, for instance, unless by happenstance. These undead walk through threatened spaces without regard to safety, and they always attack until they or their opponents are destroyed. Unintelligent obedients may be taught basic tasks through the Reign Undead skill (see Chapter Six: Necromancers). |
| 1-2 | Animal-like Intelligence Such obedient undead often single out a specific target to take down first. They have the presence of mind to flank opponents, but not the intelligence to avoid walking through threatened spaces. They can and will hunt down opponents and have the wherewithal to run from a losing battle. They can be taught basic tasks through the Reign Undead skill. |
| 3-4 | Dim Intelligence These undead can identify the weakest or strongest member of a group (i.e., those with high or low hit points). They can set ambushes. They know how to flank opponents, use cover, and avoid attacks of opportunity. They can be taught basic or complex tasks through the Reign Undead skill. |
| 5-7 | Awakening Intelligence These undead can spy on opponents and recognize weaknesses. They can identify the various character classes and will adjust attacks accordingly (such as focusing attacks on the cleric). They can use missile weapons and can be taught basic or complex tasks through the Reign Undead skill. |
| 8-9 | Fully-developed Intelligence Undead such as these choose battles they estimate can be won and flee situations they believe to be adverse. Intelligent undead use tactics, ambushes, and can recognize the threat various character classes pose. They can be taught basic or complex tasks in half the time usually needed through the Reign Undead skill. They can also carry on simple conversations. |
| 10+ | Dangerous Intelligence These undead seek to preserve their own existence. Often, they try to fulfill their own goals before those of their masters'. They are capable of complex conversations and of taking on character classes. They can and will fulfill complicated instructions if such instructions seem to be in their best interests. |



Dim Intelligence

Undead with this level of intellect are beginning to awaken to true cognizance. They are intelligent enough to set ambushes. They know enough to wait for opportune moments such as holding off an attack until a victim makes camp. They can pick out the strongest and weakest members of a party.

Awakening Intelligence

The rare undead that reach this level of consciousness are truly frightening. These undead can tell the difference between a cleric and a warrior, a wizard and a scout. They will often attack the weakest member of a party first, hoping to reduce the number of opponents. Undead of this level of intellect are known to set up ambushes, create traps, and even flee combat to lead pursuers into an attack. These undead can speak in limited phrases, such as "Go!" or "Come here!" or "Why fight us?"

Fully Developed Intelligence

This form of obedient dead is rarer still. Such creatures can actually speak at length. When faced with powerful foes, they can and will negotiate. They are now intelligent enough to lie and lie well. Fully developed obedient dead always seek some way to twist a situation to benefit them. Such creatures can form elaborate schemes and are cunning enough to take hostages should the need arise. Many are adept at disguising themselves.

Dangerous Intelligence

Fighting a cunning opponent, a creature that matches your intellect, is one matter. Facing a being that is more intelligent than you is quite another. This form of obedient dead is thankfully extraordinarily rare.

Encountering such a creature is extremely dangerous, for it has usually already assessed all of your strengths and weaknesses and figured out your true motives and intentions. It will avoid confrontation if it judges you to be more powerful and destroy you if it finds your forces are unequal to its own. These beings, if ever under the service of a master, will always try to usurp the control of those who would command them.

The Art of Necromancy



When raising the obedient dead to serve, necromancers use various methods. You think that all spellcasters are the same, that they create their bone servants the same way? Please. Raising the obedient dead is an art form.

Of course, the method of raising with which you are familiar is the dark arts — necromancy and black magic. That is only one way. I know of three others.

Ritual

In some lands, the people believe that all things have a spirit — every tree, stream, or meadow has a spirit that inhabits it. Where there are spirits, there are those who can speak to them. You may call them mediums or clairvoyants. In Souragne, they call them shamans.

Most shamans try to keep peace with the spirits. Yet some would try to bend the spirits to their will. These dark shamans can cause twisted, unearthly spirits to inhabit the bodies of the dead by performing what is called an inverted burial.

The inverted burial is a backward burial ritual. The body is cursed instead of blessed, with the shaman praying for restlessness instead of peace. The ground is desecrated instead of sanctified. In Souragne, this ritual involves the burial of a live being. It is supposed to be a backward ritual, yes?

Obedient dead animated in this way are more intelligent than most, as they are inhabited by a spirit. They are thus also harder to repel when faced by clerics.

Reconstruction

Another way to create obedient dead is through experimentation and foul science. I have seen would-be doctors fashion the loveliest toys from the bodies of the dead. One of the prettiest toys I ever saw belonged to a necromancer named Grandall. He made bodies from men and beasts. One of his favorite activities was to make zombies from the skinned heads of lambs and the bodies of men. He would then replace the hands with hooves.



Reconstructing bodies in this way takes a long time. Usually, the creator must give up a piece of his soul to animate his puppets. Yet what is a soul anyway? Such a cheap and meaningless trinket!

Rapture

Sometimes, people want their dead ones to come back to life so badly... that they do. This is the rarest case. I have seen people wish very hard with all their might that a beloved might return from the grave. Of course, the darkness has a way of granting what you wish — when you least expect it.

Obedients brought back in this way always retain a fragment of their personality. They are also far more intelligent than the typical obedient dead. One of the few cases I have seen like this involved a woman named Madame Von Goering. She wanted her little boy returned back to her so badly that....

Ah, I see that you know her. Perhaps I can tell you where she is. Yes, come closer. Closer! I shall whisper it in your ear....

Here ends the transcription of Toben the Many. After this point, I had no doubt that Toben was probing my innermost concerns, questioning me just as I was questioning him. He had discovered my true purpose for the interview.

Alanik and I destroyed the bodies that Toben had chosen to occupy. I need not tell you that Toben had infected an entire orphanage of children — for sheer entertainment. We held no illusions that we destroyed him utterly by returning those poor children to their eternal rest. If you should meet this being, gentle reader, take care — and be sure that all of Toben is destroyed. *All of him!*

— LWF

Variant Animate Dead Methods

Below are several methods by which obedient dead may be brought into being.



Ritual

A spellcaster may perform an elaborate ritual before casting *animate dead*, summoning spirits to inhabit the bodies of those who have passed on. Such a ritual must last at least one hour. Undead animated after such a ritual add 1d4+1 to their Intelligence scores, as they are directed by conscious spirits. They also gain an additional +1 turn resistance. This rule only applies to obedient dead.

Reconstruction

A character may create obedient dead through the reconstruction of dead bodies and the application of twisted science. In order to complete this process, the animator must have a laboratory worth at least 1,000 gp in total value. The creator must then make a Knowledge (undead) check, Knowledge (Ravenloft) check, and Heal check (DC 25 for each). Finally, the creator must make a pact with the Dark Powers to instill life in his creations. This entire process takes three days.

A creator may animate as many HD of obedient dead (zombies and skeletons) as he has character levels. This ability is not enhanced as is the *animate dead* spell. The creator may, however, control up to four times his character level in HD at any one time. Should the creator create undead over this limit, he chooses the undead over which he relinquishes control. Undead created in this way do not count against the limit of undead controlled by an evil cleric's control undead ability or the *animate dead* spell.

Rapture

When someone in Ravenloft truly grieves at the loss of a dead one and wishes for his or her return, the Dark Powers may respond. The grieving person can increase the chances of return through various methods, prayers made to the Dark Powers, corruptive research, or oaths to darkness.

Cause of Death	Chance
Natural	1%
Sickness or Accident	2%
Violence	3%
Actions Taken	Chance Increase
Prayers to Darkness	1%
Corruptive Research	2%
Oath to Dark Powers	3%

These chances are cumulative and stack with the percent chances determined by cause of death.

Should an obedient dead rise because of one's rapture, it retains a great deal of its personality, possessing 1d4+4 points of Intelligence. It is immune to turning, for it has been wrought from a loved one's grief and longing. Obedient dead raised in this manner engage in the routines of their former lives. Undead children cuddle up to their parents, while undead spouses cook, clean, or go to work much as they did in life.

The Salient Abilities of the Obedient Dead



or information on some of the less well known powers of obedient dead, we turned to Dr. van Richten's old friend, Varik of Darkon. This worthy's contribution greatly enhances what we might

have discovered on our own, as evidenced by his detailed report below. We had only to mention that we needed his help to receive this gracious reply:

Dearest Laurie and Gennifer,

I understand that you require information on the obedient dead for your latest text. The most important information I can provide you is this: most of these creatures have no supernatural powers other than the ability to rise from their graves. Yet some obedients out there do have extraordinary abilities. We call them salient abilities, the term your dear old uncle invented.

The obedient dead have a wide variety of powers, far greater than previously believed. I've done my best to establish categories for all these powers. The ones I came up with are Powers of Movement, Attack, Defense, Sense, Alteration, and Legion. I've tried to include examples with each stated power from my collected journals. Each entry should give you an idea of the power of which I speak.

Your Servant,

Varik of Darkon

Powers of Movement

Most believe that the obedient dead are slow, ponderous creatures. I have seen evidence that tells me otherwise. Here, then, is a list of powers of movement that I have witnessed and an example from my journals.



Bending the Land

I was sure that I had lost them. I'd spurred my horse at full gallop through the darkened forest, and we had swum across a moonlit creek. By now, I was sure that the bodies that had risen from the graveyard were far behind me, and I'd be able to gather my friends. We would put an end to them properly.

That's when I heard a shuffling noise behind me, like the sound of leaves in the wind. I looked back and saw them. The bodies from the graveyard were there, just behind me, still walking, still clutching for me. Though I was still soaked to the bone from my nighttime swim, all of them were completely dry.

Bending the Land (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

A creature with this ability can always remain within a specified range of a target, no matter how fast or long that target may travel. If the target runs away from the creature and looks back, the creature always appears to be the same distance away. If the creature is monitored carefully while retreating, it disappears into the distance, only to appear again in front or to the sides — still at the same distance. The creature may, of course, approach the target should the target stop moving.

For example, a 5th-level monk runs away from a zombie with the *bending of the land* (120 ft.) ability. The monk flees at a speed of 160 feet because he is running. When the monk gets 120 feet away from the zombie, whenever the monk looks back, the zombie will still appear to be 120 feet behind him. If the monk were to watch the zombie as he ran away, the zombie would disappear into the distance and reappear 120 feet in front of the monk or off to the side.

If the undead in question flees or decides to leave the area, it may do so normally. The minimum range for this power is 100 feet.

Exhumation (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

This power allows a creature to set up an ambush or trap by burying itself in the earth. The creature can then exhume itself instantly from the ground as a move-equivalent action. When it bursts from the ground, the earth around the creature explodes into the air.

This power gives undead a +12 bonus to all Hide checks. A successful tracking check (Wilderness Lore DC 20) allows one to notice the freshly upturned earth.

fearsome Speed (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This power adds +10 feet to a creature's normal speed. Creatures gain one extra partial action per round. It does not stack with benefits from other feats or spells (such as *haste*) designed to increase speed or the number of actions per round.

Leaping (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

This power gives the creature the uncanny ability to make fantastic leaps. It gains a +30 bonus to all Jump checks, with jumping distances doubled.

Spider Climb (Su)

CR Adjustment: +0.25

This ability allows a creature to scale vertical surfaces as if affected by a *spider climb* spell.





Bursting from the Grave

"I swear to you, they were here!" Raven cried.
"The graves don't even look disturbed," Thurgus said, frowning. "Are you sure this is the right graveyard?"

The ground exploded everywhere. Darkened soil flew into the air, and my mouth was suddenly bitter with the taste of grave dirt. Up they came all around us. They had been hiding deep within the earth, waiting, just waiting.

Berserk (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

When in combat, this creature may go into a maddened rage. This ability is different from rage, since it affects a creature that has no Constitution score.

Going berserk is a free action. While berserk, the creature gains +4 to Strength, -2 to AC, and it remains standing even after reduced to 0 hit points. Should the creature fall to -10 hit points, it dies.

The creature's berserk state lasts 4 rounds. When the berserk state ends, the creature becomes listless and slow. It no longer has enhanced strength, but retains its penalty to AC. It suffers a -2 penalty to all attack and damage rolls. These penalties last for the next 4 rounds.

A creature with this ability can use it only a limited number of times a day. Thus, a zombie with the power "berserk 3/day" could go berserk 3 times a day.

Burning Touch (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Creatures with this power are often spawned from those who have suffered death by fire. Undead with this ability are always evidenced by ghostly flames that surround them or by a burned and charred appearance.

Creatures with this ability add 1d6 points of fire damage to their normal melee attacks. They may ignite combustible objects simply by touching them.

Corruptive Touch (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Creatures with this ability add 1d6 points acid damage to their normal melee attacks. These creatures often leave steaming, foul smelling foot prints and charred places wherever they grasp.

Drowning Touch (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

When a creature dies through drowning and is reanimated, it may gain this ability. Those struck by the creature through a successful melee touch attack experience the sensation of drowning if they fail a Will save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus). Those who fail their save suffer a -2 penalty to all attacks, saves, AC, and skill checks. Those killed by an undead with this power appear to have drowned.

Verminous Host (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

Inside this creature lies an entire hive of creeping, crawling, infectious vermin. As a standard action, the creature can direct the vermin inhabiting its body to exit, attacking those whom the creature specifies. This ability otherwise functions as a *summon swarm* spell, with the swarm appearing in the creature's space and moving out from there. The swarm cannot remain separated from its host creature for longer than one minute. Should the swarm be separated from its host for longer than that period, the swarm dies and the creature loses the verminous host ability.



Moving at Unearthly Speeds

We watched as the wall of bodies approached. Raven carefully pulled out his smokepowder explosive, eying the approaching horde. Suddenly, he ran out in front of them, lighting his bomb on the way.

"What are you doing, lad!" I called out.

"It's alright," he said. "They're slow going. I'll just set it right...."

He was too late. Three of the "ponderous" bodies suddenly tensed, then dashed toward him like a pack of wolves. They leapt into the air like hounds. Then they were on him. They struggled and Raven cried out. Then, the bomb exploded....

Defying Gravity

Delilah held out a hand and concentrated. "I can sense them," she said. "They are near."

I shined my bullseye lantern down the crypt corridor.

"There's nothing," I said. "The corridor's empty."

"I'm telling you, I can sense them!" she insisted.

"Stop, both of you! Can't you hear that?" Killian asked. He held up a hand. Then, we could all hear it, the sound of a thousand bones upon cold stone. I swept

the light back and forth across the corridor. Still nothing, yet we could hear them growing closer. The sound of gnashing teeth was in the air. I shone the lantern upward. There, skittering in the darkness, massed a horde of animate bones and swarming marrow. They were crawling on the ceiling.

Powers of Attack

The obedient dead sometimes manifest strange and bizarre abilities to attack their foes. Such powers include an ability to fight ravenously, to ignite their bodies with flame, or even to summon vermin from their own bodies. Below, you will see a list of the powers that I had the misfortune of witnessing.

Unmatched Savagery

I saw the door bashed in like so much paper. Grey, rotting hands tore at the splinters that remained. Thurgus moved to intercept the creatures. With wide eyes, I saw the two stalking bodies charge in. They were a pair of twins and could not have been but ten summers in age at the time of their death. Yet their bodies were wild and filled with savagery.



Autonomous Body function (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

When this creature loses a limb or body part, that part continues to function independently of its host. Whenever the creature loses half of its maximum hit points, a random body part falls off.

Hands or arms can still attack. They have but one attack, with the base attack bonus of their host. They do not get additional attacks due to a high attack bonus or feats possessed by the host. Arms and hands always do damage as indicated on the chart below, plus half the Strength bonus of their original host. An arm or hand may crawl along the ground at a speed of 5 feet.

Legs can do nothing but thrash around; they cannot otherwise move from where they lie. They may make trip attacks against anyone within their 5-foot reach, but can inflict no damage. Legs make trip attacks with their host's base attack bonus. They do not get additional attacks due to a high attack bonus or feats possessed by the host.

A head may roll around on the ground at half the host's land speed. It may bite opponents by leaping up off the ground at them. Heads have one attack with the base attack bonus of the host; they do not get additional attacks. Heads do damage according to the table below, plus half the Strength bonus of their original host.

All body parts have a quarter of their host's maximum hit points. They cease to function if brought to 0 hit points or less. This salient ability does not function for Gargantuan and Colossal creatures.

Host's Size	Damage
Tiny	1
Small	1d2
Medium	1d4
Large	1d6
Huge	1d8

Deathless Warrior (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

This horrid power is possessed only by the most powerful of the obedient dead. Such a creature contains a nexus of negative energy within its

body that allows it to reconstruct itself instantly after damage. Skeletons shatter, only to have their bones leap off the floor and back into place. Zombies are torn apart, only to have their sinew and muscles twine themselves back together.

When such a creature is reduced to 0 hit points, regardless of the damage taken, it immediately regenerates to full hit points. Creatures reduced to -10 hit points within 1 round are too damaged to reconstruct themselves instantly, requiring instead a full minute to reassemble. A creature with this power can reconstruct itself even if reduced to ashes or tiny bits. The particles simply coalesce back into the original creature.

If parts of a creature are prevented from merging with the other pieces, the creature is prevented from re-forming.

Each creature with the deathless warrior salient power has a particular weakness that prevents it from reassembling. Damage from this specific source is taken normally. Thus, a skeleton with the deathless warrior (fire) power would take normal damage from fire but would reconstruct itself after any other source of damage, physical or magical.

Some deathless warriors are known to have unique weaknesses based on class or alignment. Thus, a zombie with the deathless warrior (cleric) power would suffer normal damage only from a cleric's physical or magical attacks. A wight with the deathless warrior (lawful good) power would suffer normal damage only from a lawful good creature's physical or magical attacks.

Keep in mind that while deathless warriors are immune to most forms of damage, they are not immune to turning, rebuking, commands, entanglement, or other attacks that might otherwise impair or hamper them.

Stitching (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The obedient dead normally cannot heal. With this salient ability, however, the undead creature may repair damage done to it by scavenging body parts from graves. For each dead body the undead uses, it may restore up to half of its original hit points.

The stitching process takes a full 4 hours to complete.

Burning or Corruptive Touch

"What is that?" asked Thurgus, peering into the darkness. "It looks like two torches."

I agreed. "But they're being carried too low." Then realization hit me. The "torches" suddenly rose up and lunged forward. The skeletal figure rushed at us with blinding fury. The torches we had seen were their hands... the creatures' hands were full of fire.

Drowning With a Touch

"It's the same with the other one," Delilah said. "Death by drowning."

I shook my head. How could a man drown while sitting in his own cabin, a hundred paces from the closest water source? I glanced down at the floor, and there I spied the outline of wet footprints upon the soil. "I think I know what happened," I said grimly.

Summoning Vermin

Raven fired an arrow into the body, pinning it to the wall. As I raised my lantern, I could see that it was the body of a cavernous old man. He was missing his entire lower jaw, making the lower half of his face a gaping abyss.

"Hurry," I said. "We've got to finish 'em before—"

I turned as I heard a hideous, dry, scolding noise. Out from the body's mockery of a mouth came pouring a host of insects. Their tiny, black bodies glistened in the sickly light of the lantern. They boiled towards us...

Powers of Defense

Most think of the obedient dead as eternal warriors. Many obedient dead, though, also possess a frightening array of defensive powers. Some of them can make their parts move even after you have severed them. Worst of all, some of them can reassemble themselves the minute you've bashed them in. Below are some of the powers I have seen.

Separating and Moving Various Parts of the Body

With my trusty axe, I swiftly cut off the arm of the undead attacking me. It was the body of an old woman, still wearing her funeral dress. Her burial veil clung to her moist, rotting skin.

As she approached, I felt an intense pain in my leg. Glancing down, I saw that the thing's arm was thrashing about on the floor like a snake. The hand's inhuman grip had found my ankle. I felt my ankle twist, then break.

Life Sense (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The creature can sense life forms (similar to a *detect undead* spell, but keyed to living beings). By concentrating, the undead in question can sense the aura of living creatures. The amount of information gained depends on how long the undead concentrates.

1st round: The presence or absence of living creatures.

2nd round: Number of living creatures and strength of strongest living creature present. Unlike the *detect undead* spell, there is no chance of an undead with this power becoming stunned by an overwhelming life force.

3rd round: The strength and location of each aura. If a life aura is outside the undead's line of sight, then it can discern the direction but not the exact location.

Aura Strength: the HD of the creature in question determines the strength of the life force.

Instant Reconstruction of the Body

Four skeletons stepped through the mist. I raised me hand and let fly the spell I was summoning. I felt the magic directing my hands. The energy coursed through me fingers and the air erupted in flame and sound.

Thurgus turned to put up his sword, then halted his motion. The shattered bones of our enemies began to skitter, bounce, and leap across the ground. Within the blink of an eye, the skeletons reconstructed themselves.

Self-Repairing the Body

We shook our heads sadly at the scene before us. The entire graveyard had been dug up. Bodies of the dead lay strewn about, thrown over gravestones, sprawled halfway out of graves. Most of them were... missing pieces.

"What could have done this? And why?" Thurgus asked.

I shook my head again, growing sick to my very heart. "They've been ... healing, Thurgus — repairing themselves."

Thurgus nodded. "We must find them quickly, then."



Powers of Sense

Most folks think that since the Walking Dead come out at night they can see in the dark. That's not the case. Most undead can't see in the dark any better than you or I, which is something to know, mind you. There are rare cases I've seen where the undead are able to see in the dark, and these are dangerous creatures, indeed.

Dark Sense

We had just settled down to camp, making our watches for the night. Around the camp, a ring of lanterns stood, making a perimeter from which we could see danger. As I lay down to get some rest, I heard a crashing sound. I looked over. One of the lanterns had been shattered. Its illumination quickly faded into nothing.

"What's that about?" I asked Thurgus, who had already drawn his sword.

"Saw a stone fly from the darkness. Hit the lantern," he replied. He peered hard into the blackness.

Another stone flew out from the dark. And another! Our attackers pelted the lanterns one by one, shattering them. The ring of light around us faded; soon we had naught but the campfire to provide light — and it seemed nothing more than a candle. In the greater darkness, I heard their numbers assembling, heard the chattering laughter of bones.

Powers of Alteration

Then, there are those obedient dead whose bodies are twisted by dark powers. Dark sorcerers and wizards shape some of them; some are the experiments of madmen. And others? No one knows how or why they were shaped. Perhaps they took form in the mysterious mists themselves.

Alteration of the Limbs

With a final spell, I struck down the door into Grandall's Tomb. Delilah lurched forward, stopped only by Thurgus, who had to use both of his great arms to stop her.

"Elisabeth?" Delilah whispered. "Elisabeth?"

For a moment, I thought I saw her, too. A wee girl of perhaps seven summers stepped forth from the broken tomb. She held her arms behind her back.

"Elisabeth!" Delilah cried, struggling in Thurgus' grasp. "Elisabeth!"

Then, we all saw it. "Elisabeth" unfolded her arms from behind her back. Still they kept unfolding.

Altered Limbs (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

Through either horrid experimentation or by the powers of darkness, this creature is horribly malformed. Its limbs are long and gangly, reaching all the way to the ground. Add 5 feet to the creature's reach.

Ghastly Wings (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

These undead have been given strange, skeletal wings through the experimentation of dark masters or the Dark Powers themselves. The wings are wide enough to make the undead a Large creature. This size alteration does not adjust the undead's Strength or attacks, though it does affect its armor class and its bonus to grappling checks.

Undead with this ability can fly at their base speed with poor maneuverability.

Self-Destruct (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

If a creature with this power reaches 0 hit points, it explodes, inflicting 1d4 points of force damage per HD it possessed. The explosion has a 5-foot radius. Those within the blast radius can make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the creature's HD) for half damage. The type of damage varies from undead to undead. Other creatures possessing this power can be affected by the damage; thus when one creature explodes, it may cause a chain reaction with others of its kind.

A creature with this power may cause itself to self-destruct spontaneously. Doing so requires a full-round action in which the creature shakes, quivers, and boils with magical energy.



Grandall had added length to her arms. They now possessed an extra joint, making her limbs look long and insect-like. Delilah let out a cry of both rage and despair. To this day, that cry echoes within me.

Sprouting of Strange Wings

I heaved a sigh of relief as our boat landed on the other side of the river. I looked back and saw the walking bones still clustered by the riverside, looking at us with hunger in their unliving eyes.

"You think they can follow us?" Raven asked.

"Not likely, lad," I grinned. "That river's deep and swift. If I—"

I looked back again. From their number rose a dozen bony figures, skeletal wings sprouting from their backs. Though the creatures bore no membranous tissue between their wings, they flew all the same.

"The game's changed, lad," I cried. "Run!"

Self-Immolation of the Body

"They've been turned by the Morninglord's Grace," Delilah declared. "Finish them off before they recover."

Thurgus gave a curt nod and stuck his sword into one of them, a middle-aged man who had died of the pox. Thurgus made a strange face as his sword stuck in the body's side. Suddenly, the body began to quake and quiver. Before I could shout out a warning, the thing exploded. Stinging gas spurted over all us, eating into our skin. Noxious smoke and the smell of burning flesh filled the air. I looked up through the smoke. The whole group of them was quivering now. Thurgus was trying to clamber away; his arm was horribly burned. More of them began to explode....

Powers of Legion

The obedient dead possess certain abilities of which I am loath to speak. These are the darkest powers of their ilk. The Powers of Legion are seen only when a group of obedient dead cluster together. Some groups have these capabilities and some do not. Should you see one of these powers in a group of undead take care, for you face the mightiest of the obedient dead.

Creation of Spawn

"Fall back!" I cried out. Yet despite my warning, the farmers advanced, stabbing at the bodies with pitchforks.

"No! We'll take back what's ours!" they shouted.

At that point, one of the bodies reached out. With a single swift motion, it crushed the windpipe of the farmer next to him. The farmer did not even have time to fall to the ground. He half-slumped toward the earth, only to be propelled up again by some unnatural force. Within the blink of an eye, the now-dead body regained its feet and lurched after its former brothers and sisters.

Occupying Many Bodies at Once

There, within the abandoned cottage, sat Toben the Many. He had infected the body of a young woman this time. The body was slumped by the window. I approached it carefully and saw the woman's body raise its head. Its dead eyes lolled lifelessly within its rotting skull. Its dead, purple tongue uttered a greeting. "Welcome," the dead woman said, giving the semblance of a grin.

I stepped back as I saw what Delilah had warned me of. The woman's body was holding a dead child. Its infant hand clutched the air toward me, and its bloated lips parted to speak. "How nice of you to drop in—"

It spoke with that same gravelly, rasping voice: Toben's voice.

"How dare you?" I raised a trembling hand to smite the blasphemy from existence.

"How dare I what?" asked another gravelly voice. It came from outside the window. I looked up and saw a host of bodies, wandering the once empty square. The monster had infected the entire village. He and the villagers were now one.

Communication of Thoughts

"Are you sure you got all of them?" Delilah asked "If just one escaped, they'll know we're here."

"We slew the lot of them," Raven said "And it was absolutely quiet thanks to your spell."

"Thank the Morninglord for—" Delilah stopped in mid-sentence.

We all turned to look at what she was watching. Skeletal forms faded into view, rising up out of the mists. They were before us, behind us, all around.

Delilah glared at Raven, "I thought you—"

"We did!" Raven insisted "We destroyed all of them in silence!"

"Then how could they know we were coming? How?"

The bones of the dead began to draw into a tight circle....



Create Spawn (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This salient power gives the undead access to the create spawn power presented in the *Monster Manual*. Any creature slain by an undead with this power rises as an undead with the same HD and capabilities as the slaying undead within one night. This rising may be prevented with a blessed burial.

This ability may be chosen more than once. The second time it is chosen, it means that creatures slain by the undead rise as spawn 1d4 rounds after their death. Only a *hallow* spell will stop the spontaneous creation of spawn.

Hive of Bodies (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Should it have the create spawn power, the creature can imprint its personality onto all of its spawn. All of the spawn and the original creature are constantly aware of each other's environment. Each sees, hears, and feels what the others experience. This multi-conscience perspective does not impair the original creature or its spawn in any way.

Thus, a creature might be able to talk to one person, fight another, and search through a chest, all with different bodies. This power does not function across Domain borders. Should a body or several bodies cross a Domain border without the majority of its host, it crumbles apart. If somehow the hive of bodies is split between two Domains, the bodies in the Domain with the least number of undead crumble apart.

Damage caused to one creature does not affect the others; however, all creatures are instantly aware if one of their own takes damage. Effects that impair one creature such as blindness, darkness, hold, or entanglement do not affect the others. Should one or several creatures be turned, the others are not automatically turned. Each creature must be turned as if it were an independent undead.

Creatures with this salient ability are immune to any magical effects that would subvert their will, such as a command from an evil cleric. A darklord's ability to command undead supercedes this immunity. Toben the Many is an undead with this ability.

Mind of Many (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This power allows the creature to communicate telepathically with others of its kind within 100 feet. Creatures with this ability often use it to coordinate attacks and set ambushes. Communicating with another of its kind is a free action.

Whispered Thoughts (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

As a free action, the creature can constantly project its thoughts into the air, filling an area with insidious whispering. Listening to this whispering provokes a Horror save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus) each minute that it continues. Should someone be subjected to this terrible noise for more than one hour, she must make a Madness save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus).

The radius of effect for this power may vary. For example, a ghoul with whispered thoughts (60) would cause all those within 60 feet of it to make a Horror check (DC 13).

Multiple creatures with this power may create a cacophony of hideous, maddening sounds within their radius of effect. Raise the DC for the Horror and Madness saves by +1 for each additional creature that uses this power within the radius of effect. For example, six ghouls who have whispered thoughts (60) all begin using it at once. Everyone within 60 feet would thus be forced to make a Horror save with a DC of 18.



Sharing of Thoughts with the Living

"Can you hear that?" I asked. I peered deeper into the dark cavern before us.

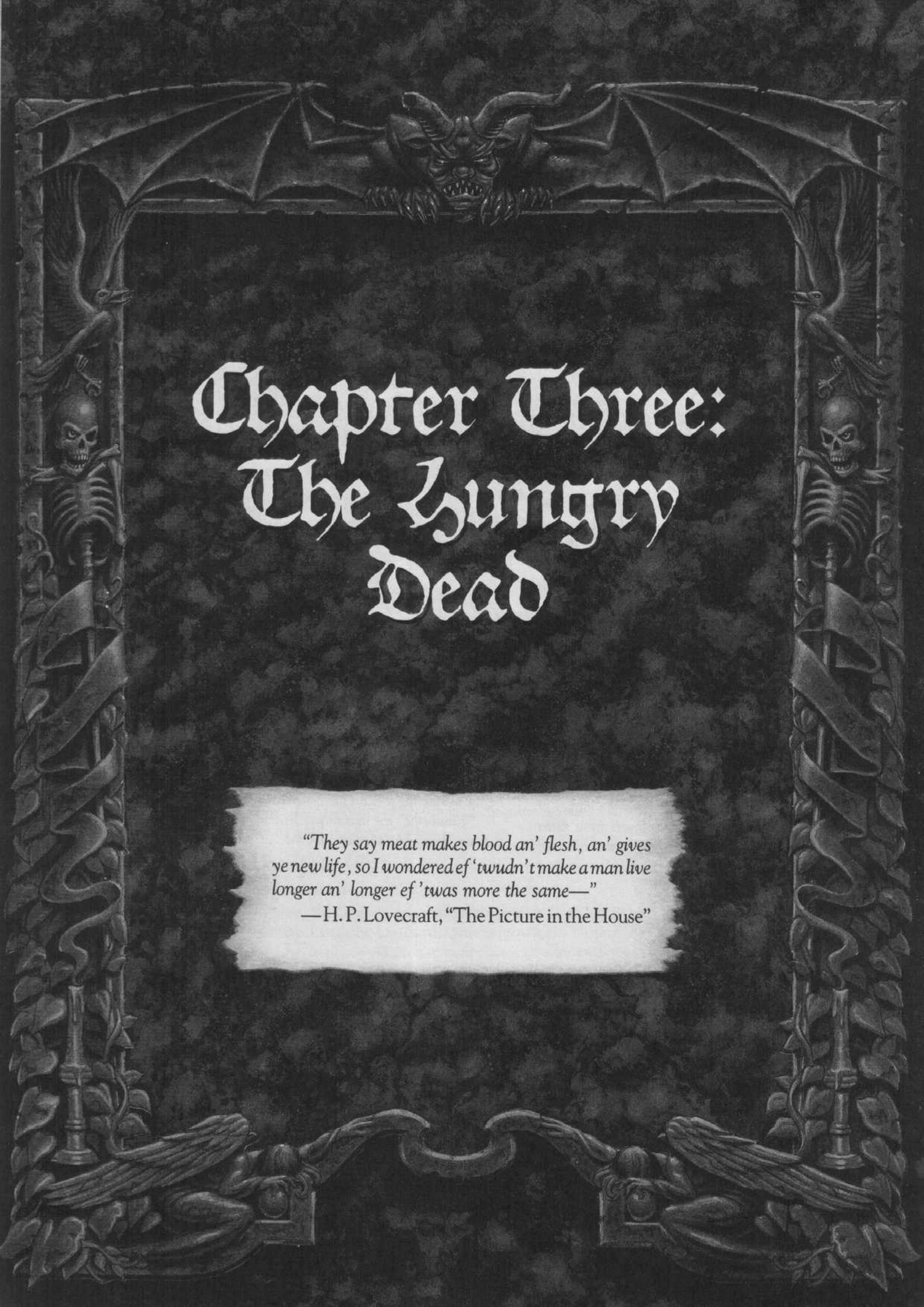
Thurgus nodded. We could all hear it: the sound of constant whispering. The whispers seemed to be calling our names. Soon, I could hear the names of others, old friends from long ago, lovers from years gone by. Then, I could hear voices — the voices of

companions I had lost in my fight with the darkness. I felt my throat tighten.

"Listen not to the whispers!" I rasped.

Raven clutched his hands to his ears, weeping. Who knows what the poor lad was hearing? Delilah began wandering toward the cavern's entrance.

"Elisabeth?" she murmured dreamily. "Elisabeth is down there. She's waiting for me...."



Chapter Three: The Hungry Dead

*"They say meat makes blood an' flesh, an' gives
ye new life, so I wondered ef 'twudn't make a man live
longer an' longer ef 'twas more the same—"*

—H. P. Lovecraft, "The Picture in the House"



Authors' Comment: We have collected several anecdotes and writings concerning those Walking Dead we refer to as the hungry dead. None have been quite so thorough in their scholarship as M. Charbonnet, originally of Sourange. This worthy gentleman has chosen to share his views with us so that we may publish them within this volume to assist other hunters in their endeavors. Some may regard his views of the hungry dead as more condemnatory than necessary, but we feel that his scholarship and first-hand experience speak for themselves. We owe him a great debt of gratitude for the work presented here. Rather than presenting his contributions separately, we have chosen to intermingle them with our own accounts so as not to splinter the text over much.

—L&GWF

To the Misses Weathermay-Foxgrove:

Upon receipt of your letter asking for my knowledge of those termed the hungry dead, I brought together a number of notations and observances made over the years. Some stem from my own experiences; others arose from the efforts of others, not least of whom was Dr. van Richten. As you may know, I and my colleagues work as a team in rooting out and destroying these creatures wherever we may encounter them. Thus, when I speak of "we" in the text, I refer to my team rather than myself, for we have found great success in working together, and our knowledge ought to reflect this fact. I hope that you will use what you find herein to arm others who seek to rid our benighted land of these abominations.

Yours,

M. Pierre-Louis Charbonnet

Many years ago, a wise man illustrated for me in a most evocative way the difference between minor undead such as skeletons and zombies and more powerful ghouls. The grizzled storyteller said that the undead we have classified as obedient inspire fear because they represent the perturbation of the natural world. The hungry dead, however, inspire horror because they are perverse reflections of ourselves.

Humans, if the reader will forgive the momentary digression, are at turns vicious and humane. We kill for the meat we need to survive, to protect ourselves and those we hold dear, and sometimes for pleasure. We hold the memories of those lost to us through old age, illness, or tragedy in high regard.

In contrast, the hungry dead are cruel without any humanitarian virtues. Unlike humans, they thrive on intelligent prey and often kill anyone who crosses their paths for simple enjoyment. They remember the respect we hold for our dead and take deliberate pains to desecrate and defile, even to the point of devouring the corpses interred within cemeteries, tombs, and graveyards. The argument that they are not truly to blame for these deeds as they are driven by their overpowering craving to feed is entirely fallacious. Consumed by their hatred of their own existence and their envy toward all they have lost, the hungry dead are driven to outrage those more fortunate than themselves. Their whole existence is geared to offend and degrade those who are unlucky enough to encounter them and to corrupt such victims into creatures like themselves.

In Har'Akir, where water is considered the holiest of artifacts and its theft is grimly punished, the loathsome Walking Dead called muduat exist solely to steal water from the bodies of their victims. In more familiar lands where respect for life and the dead are strongly ingrained, ghouls crack open sepulchres to feast on the decayed remains within. I suspect that this is more than just existential irony: the hungry dead are horrifying because they are evil with a purpose, and that purpose is to eat, violate, and spread their filth. To some extent, the obedient dead and some of the restless dead are objects of pity; the hungry dead deserve none.

General Powers



The hungry dead are a fairly disparate group, with few links beyond their eternal appetites. Even then, the objects of their longings can vary widely. A few generalizations can be made, however.

Typically, the hungry dead exist in a bestial state of preservation (discussed in Chapter One: Necrology). The warping of their physical form typically equips them with terrible fangs and vicious claws. Understandably, their bite is their primary means of attack. Encountering intact or decayed hungry dead is not unknown, however;

even then, the monsters attack in a similar fashion, using their powerful jaws or beating their prey into submission. The hungry dead rarely use weapons — even the more powerful and intelligent ones seem to prefer the primitive pleasure of tearing their prey apart with their bare hands. As in everything, of course, exceptions occur. The elven ranger Jameld, for example, once encountered a ghoulish lord that carefully killed and dissected its victims with a straight razor and bone saw before eating their soft tissues.

The similarity of appearance between the different subtypes of hungry dead has caused endless confusion in the few scholars who have tried to classify them based on their powers or origins. For example, the *Bestiary of Artak* divides what we have dubbed the hungry dead into ghouls, ghaunts (ghouls with a weak stench of evil), ghoulish lords (powerful ghaunts with the ability to impart hunger), maurezhi (ghouls with the ability to drain memories and assume their victims' forms), and ravaxa (berserker ghouls). This classification is both unwieldy and misleading. As anyone who has faced the hungry dead will tell you, these creatures are in no way limited to these classifications, and not every member of an established classification will have the same abilities or be as powerful as other members of its class. Thus, we provide this caveat: do not rely on folklore or classifications that are overly specific, as both can lead you astray. Remember that the Walking Dead are *all* individuals, and you will live much longer.

The Scent of Decay

The hungry dead are known for their distinctive smell. Most ghouls and ghaunts feed on putrefied meat, and the smell of corruption clings to them (being empowered, in the case of ghaunts, to the point where it becomes a miasma able to overwhelm even the strongest stomachs). Those that eat fresh meat emit the distinctive coppery smell of blood and raw flesh. Unlike natural carnivores that eat similar foods, the hungry dead make no effort to clean themselves after making a kill, so the scraps of their food cling to them until they rot away. Even those that hunger for other body parts carry unusual odors; the muduat, for example, smell strangely of dust and salt, while the red men smell of freshly spilled blood. Thus, the hungry dead are unusually easy to track by scent. In some extreme cases, generally where lots of undead are gathered together, this smell can seep through stonework

Tracking the Dead

Those tracking the hungry dead by scent gain a +4 competence bonus to their checks. Those near areas where the hungry dead have lingered for more than a day can also detect the lingering stench that clings to the Walking Dead with a successful Wisdom check (DC 15). The DC of this check decreases by -1 for each day that the hungry dead have spent in the area and increases by +1 for each day they have been absent. Creatures with the Scent special quality gain a +4 competence bonus to this check.

This quality does not stack with that provided by the decayed state of preservation or with the *stench of evil* special quality described below.

and infest the ground, so that a hunter standing above a ghoulish warren may be able to smell her prey beneath her.

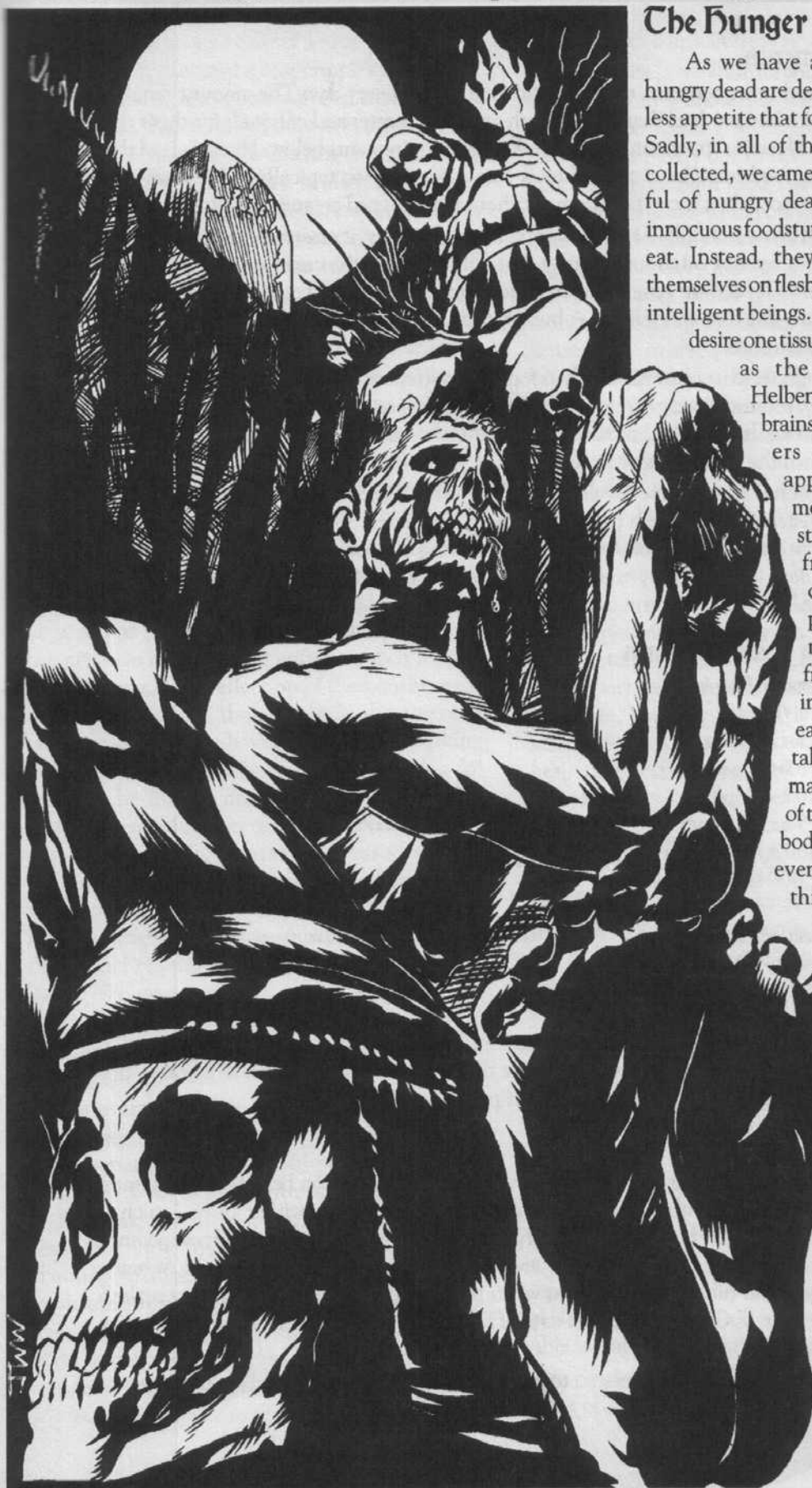
Create Spawn

Most of the hungry dead possess the ability to create more of their loathsome kind, dragging their victims from the grave to join them in their insatiable hunger. The exact means of transmission of this curse varies from creature to creature. In some strains, any person killed by the hungry dead will rise from the grave, as is the case with ghouls. In other strains, the victim must be “infected” through a particular attack, typically a toxic bite or a salient ability such as *impart hunger* or *disease* (see below). Fortunately (if only for the victim's eternal spirit), most of the hungry dead eat flesh, and the destruction of the victims' physical bodies prevents them from joining the ranks of the Walking Dead. In this sense, then, the hungry dead often inadvertently reduce their own numbers.

As a caveat, the phrase “create spawn” may actually be misleading, for the newly created undead are rarely subservient to the hungry dead that created them in the way that vampire spawn are dominated by their master. Instead, the new hungry dead simply joins its creator's pack or strikes out on its own. Only the most terrible monsters can create truly subservient minions.

The Hunger

As we have already noted, the hungry dead are defined by the relentless appetite that forms their Craving. Sadly, in all of the records we have collected, we came across only a handful of hungry dead that hunger for innocuous foodstuffs such as the living eat. Instead, they obsessively gorge themselves on flesh, usually taken from intelligent beings. In some cases, they desire one tissue in particular, such as the Headhunter of Helbenik, who ate only the brains of her victims. Others can salve their appetites only with meat in a particular state of decay, such as freshly killed, decayed to putrescence, or — most horribly — from still-living beings. Others do not eat flesh, but rather take some other intimately associated part of their victims such as bodily fluids, skin, or even more ephemeral things such as memories or strength. In essence, all of the hungry dead are driven to maim or violate the living in some way. Even those that can subsist on normal food are not adverse to live prey when the opportunity presents itself and are perfectly prepared to injure innocent bystanders in their lust to get to food.



Eating Requirements

The hungry dead must consume their specific food source every day. The amount required (both of solid food for hungry dead that require flesh or similar matter and of liquids for those that hunger for fluids or blood) is shown on Table 3-1: Eating Requirements below. Hungry dead that require more exotic food must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; typically, a Medium-sized creature requires no more than it can take from another Medium-sized creature in a single session.

If a hungry dead does not fulfill its requirements on any given day, it must make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 per day it has not eaten sufficiently). If it fails this save, the creature gains a negative level. These negative levels are removed when the hungry dead eats enough to fill its daily requirements for each day that was missed. A hungry dead that gains a number of negative levels equal to its HD is destroyed.

If a starved hungry dead is confronted with its food source (for example, a ghost confronted with any living creature), it immediately throws itself at the item or person, attacking furiously until it has eaten all that it can. It gains a +2 morale bonus to attack and a -2 dodge penalty to AC. The frenzy continues until the creature is satiated.

If a hungry dead has no negative levels due to food debt, it becomes sated after eating for 1 minute per HD for each pound of flesh (or quart of fluid) consumed. Thus, a 2 HD ghoul that ate 2 lb. of flesh would be sated for 4 minutes after its meal. During this period, the eternal hunger that plagues the hungry dead is temporarily assuaged; they are unlikely to attack passersby and may even converse with them.

Table 3-1: Eating Requirements

Creature Size	Amount Required*
Tiny	1 lb./1 quart
Small	5 lbs./2 quarts
Medium-size	20 lbs./2 gallons
Large	40 lbs./4 gallons
Huge	75 lbs./16 gallons
Gargantuan	500 lbs./32 gallons
Colossal	2,000 lbs./128 gallons

* Numbers before the slash indicate how much solid food (e.g., flesh) the hungry dead must eat. Numbers after the slash indicate the requirements for liquid food.

Feasting

When the hungry dead eats an additional amount of food equal to its daily requirement, it regains 1 hit point per HD, just like a living creature that has rested for a day. In most cases, this is the only way the hungry dead can recover lost hit points.

Hibernation

The hungry dead must gain at least one negative level from starvation before they can enter hibernation. They are likely to hibernate only when they would otherwise wither away — such as when they are sealed in a tomb. Hibernating hungry dead are helpless and suffer a -10 competence penalty to all Listen and Spot checks, but they are not subject to eating requirements. When a hungry dead emerges from hibernation (such as when it notices nearby activity), it must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + number of days of hibernation + number of acquired negative levels) or be staggered for 3d4 rounds.

Hibernating hungry dead are considered to have only half of their actual HD with respect to the aura strength of *detect undead* spells.



The endless hunger that consumes ghouls and their ilk has both its benefits and its hindrances. On one hand, the need to eat cripples the hungry dead it afflicts; the power of the hungry dead springs from their strength of personality, and the imposition of the constant Craving to eat necessarily fractures their personality, so alien is it to their normal thought processes. The Craving also serves to make them predictable to some extent. As any undead hunter knows, if one suspects a ghoul infestation in the area, the first sites one looks for clues are burial places. Later, if one is attacked by the ghouls and flees, one can often distract them by discarding a half-decayed hunk of flesh. In almost all cases, the hunger robs ghouls of the ability to reason and plan — the ability that makes greater undead so much more threatening — and reduces them to the level of beasts. All of these qualities make the undead hunter's task so much easier.

On the other hand, this same hunger empowers ghouls. The hungry dead are among the handful of undead that actually needs to ingest food in the same way as the living, and these meals replenish the negative energies that empower such hungry dead in a grotesque reflection of the nourishment the living take from their meals. In the course of our investigations, we have discovered no Walking Dead that heal naturally over time as the living do. Instead, the hungry dead repair their bodies by gorging themselves on whatever foodstuff they require. This quality carries an obvious advantage: the hungry dead can heal for as long as they can eat. If a ghoul eats its "fill," it can recover from any injury with remarkable speed, even those wounds that would require weeks of recuperation for the living. We once watched an almost completely eviscerated hungry dead gorge itself on decayed flesh, and the monster's internal organs grew back right before our eyes.

In every case that we have researched, the hungry dead have seemed to possess a truly insatiable appetite, so they could potentially return from near death to full health over the course of a single meal. For this reason, one must focus on destroying, not injuring, the hungry dead when planning an attack. Hit-and-run tactics intended to whittle down the creature's strength are ineffective. If you simply swing wildly, merely injuring packs of the hungry dead as you make an escape, you merely motivate the survivors to then hunt down some innocent to feast upon and heal their

injuries. Hunting the hungry dead is an exercise in restraint and consideration of the consequences.

Of course, a wily hunter will turn all of her foes' strengths into weaknesses. The hungry dead are reliant upon feeding to survive. They rise from their graves purely out of the need to eat; if they cannot find the right food, they wither and starve like any living creature, and just as they heal at a grossly accelerated rate, so do they decay. According to our sources, a human is in danger of dying of starvation only if she goes without food for a month. The hungry dead (in most cases, at least) waste away in the course of a week. Thus, the existence of the hungry dead is a constant battle against starvation, where even a small period of famine can decimate a colony. This is not to say that starving your prey into submission is a good idea; if they are released, they will be wild with hunger, and the anguish of their slow death may prove sufficient to tie their souls to the earth as ghosts or worse.

In addition, we have collected a few accounts of hungry dead that, when faced with starvation, entered a sort of hibernation rather than waste away. Such undead can exist indefinitely in this state, but they are nearly comatose and can arise only with great effort. A hunter should not hesitate to destroy the hungry dead as they struggle to wake.

Salient Powers



Although they are less tractable than the obedient dead and so less likely to have been "improved" by necromancers, the hungry dead show no less variation in their abilities. As one might expect, most of these abilities revolve around the hungry dead's eternal appetite, in some way improving their ability to supply their needs. Of course, a particular hungry dead's precise hunting methods depend both on its salient abilities and its food source. Thus, a ghoul that eats dead flesh will have its ability to garner that flesh improved; it will become more powerful in combat, perhaps through an ability to *rend flesh* or *rage*. A hungry dead that feasts upon its victims' creative energies or memories will instead have salient powers that are better able to trap its prey, such as *paralysis* or *assume form*.

Be aware that despite their relative rarity among most other undead, salient abilities are very common in the Walking Dead. Finding a ghoul that





does not possess at least one of these powers is quite rare, while Dr. van Richten records an encounter with a terrible creature that possessed six. The hungry dead are linked by their hunger, but remember that this is often the only trait they share. They are truly individual.

Selecting Salient Powers and Aging

The hungry dead typically have one salient ability per HD. For each century of existence, a hungry dead gains an additional HD and another salient ability

Assume form

A hungry dead with this ability can control its appearance. It can swap between illusory replicas of its past victims and its true form at will, often assuming an innocuous guise to get close to a victim before reverting to its true shape to make the kill. Unlike a vampire's shapechanging, this alteration is purely illusory (a *glamer* effect, to be exact), and the disguise can be penetrated by disbelief or spells such as *true seeing*.

We encountered a ghoul with this ability in Faronze, a tiny hamlet in northern Invidia. At first, the witnesses' descriptions of the beast preying upon them — an abnormally large wolf that transformed into a hideously bestial man — led us to believe that we were facing some kind of degenerate werewolf. We realized the truth only when we faced the monster ourselves and recognized its ghoulish traits. We were inexperienced then and grossly under-prepared for an undead foe, and only luck allowed us to escape with our lives. That encounter taught us van Richten's oft repeated warning, which we had never really appreciated before: one must always be prepared for anything. Although we do not venture into battle bogged down with equipment, we now always keep a variety of strategies prepared just in case.

Berserk

As we have already discussed, the hungry dead are base and animalistic creatures that possess mere remnants of the higher faculties of the living creatures they once were. They exist only to kill and eat. Some are so consumed with bloodlust that they fly into an uncontrollable rage when presented with the sight of freshly spilled blood or meat.

When gripped by this terrible rage, the hungry dead lose all caution in the desire to feed, falling with incredible fury upon anyone and anything unfortunate enough to be in the vicinity. If they hunt in packs and run out of victims before the rage burns out, they will fall on each other in their vicious hunger.

Although thankfully relatively rare, this ability has entered the popular psyche like no other. I refer the reader to the ancient Barovian saga of Pavel, the Heir to the Sun. In order to regain his birthright, a piece of the sun to hold back the Darkness, the warrior had to pass several tests and guardians. The Fourth Guardian of Darkness was a field full of ghouls that were driven into an insane rage by the mere scent of a living man. Pavel bypassed them by throwing the bloody pelt of a loup-garou, the Third Guardian, into the field. The ghouls were driven into a frenzy by the scent of fresh blood and fell upon each other. When only one ghoul remained, Pavel dispatched it easily with his sword.

Authors' Comment: We doubt that this legend refers to any historical figure or actual event, but it is one of the oldest folktales still extant today and clearly demonstrates the brutality and callousness of the Walking Dead.

— L&GWF

Burrowing

Ghouls are infamous for the rat-like warrens they create. They can infest a cemetery without betraying any sign of their presence above ground, burrowing from grave to grave in search of food until they desecrate every site in the churchyard. At other times, this ability is used more offensively: the ghouls dig enormous pits to trap victims or to conceal themselves just below the ground, springing out when someone passes over the top.

Allegedly, the desert zombies of the Amber Wastes use this ability to hide beneath the desert sands. When they "swim" through the dunes, they create a noticeable wake in the sand, like a sailboat slicing through the sea. We must note, however, that desert zombies are obedient dead. One should remember that the three classifications we divide the Walking Dead into are based on *common* traits, not unique ones. For a hungry dead to have an ability more commonly found in the restless or obedient dead is not unheard of, so a hunter must





always be careful and rigorous in researching all she can about her prey.

Disease

As we have already indicated, the Walking Dead are always decayed to some extent, and their moldering flesh provides the perfect breeding ground for contagion. The hungry dead are no exception. In fact, they are more likely to be diseased than most other forms of Walking Dead. As they most commonly feast on carrion, the miasma has time to appear in the flesh of the victims, spreading to the feeding undead's mouth and talons with extraordinary virulence. The hungry dead can transmit almost any disease carried by carrion in this way: filth fever, red ache, the shakes, and even the dreaded slimy doom. Fortunately, mere Walking Dead are incapable of spreading more dangerous, supernatural ailments such as lycanthropy.

If a diseased hungry dead also has the ability to create spawn, the spawn may also arise from anyone killed by the disease that the hungry dead

spreads. If any of your companions are killed by a disease contracted from one of the Walking Dead, please ensure that a priest casts *remove disease* over their bodies. This action may prevent the victim from rising from the grave as another wretched undead, and we can testify that anything — even a seemingly frivolous use of magic — is preferable to hunting down your fallen comrades to return them to the grave.

Paralysis

One of the most common salient abilities possessed by the hungry dead is paralysis. This supernatural constraint, usually transmitted by the hungry dead's natural attacks, causes the victim's muscles to seize up in rigid cramps, preventing the victim from moving even slightly for a brief period of time. The effect is thankfully temporary, lasting no longer than a few minutes, and wears off with no ill effects beyond tingling or a slight muscle ache. Of course, the hungry dead typically use the time afforded by this paralysis to devour their trapped victims. Most horribly, victims are still fully aware of their surroundings and able to feel pain while



Assume form (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +0

A walking dead with this ability can assume the form of any humanoid, monstrous humanoid, animal, or beast of the same size category that it has eaten. For example, a human ghoul can assume the form of any Medium-size animal, beast, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid it has devoured.

The walking dead can assume an illusory form 3 times per day. The glamor lasts until dispelled, the ghoul wishes to assume a different form, or the ghoul is struck by light from the setting or rising sun. The creature can switch to a new guise as a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity; returning to its true form is a free action. This ability otherwise functions as the *change self* spell as cast by a sorcerer of a level equal to the creature's HD.

Berserk (Ex)

See the obedient dead ability of the same name in Chapter 2: The Obedient Dead.

Burrowing (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +0

The creature gains a burrowing speed of 20 feet. It cannot use the run action while burrowing. Hungry dead that can burrow use claws as their primary natural weapon.

Disease (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1

Any injury or contact disease can be spread by a hungry dead's natural attacks. If the disease is actually tied to the animating force of the hungry dead (such as if a ghast creates spawn through its disease, for example), the DC of the Fortitude save to resist the disease increases by +1 or by the undead's Charisma modifier, whichever is greater. If the disease is simply incidental, the DC increases by only +1.

Paralysis (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Living creatures hit by any of the hungry dead's natural attacks must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus) or be paralyzed for a number of minutes equal to 1d6 + creature's HD. If the hungry dead has 4 or less HD, its paralysis attack cannot affect elves.

paralyzed, so survivors of ghoulish feeding must often be treated at a respectable sanitarium to overcome the lingering mental trauma.

Despite extensive efforts to discover the source of the paralysis ability, neither we nor any of our arcane contacts can positively determine why this ability is so widespread among the hungry dead but so rare among other forms of both the Walking Dead and the undead in general. Its association with the hungry dead suggests that it is somehow linked to their Craving, but the victims show no indication of this hunger being transmitted to them. Were the paralysis dependent upon negative energy interfering with the victim's nerves, one would expect that the ability would be much more widespread among all undead. The most likely theory in our estimation is that the paralysis is a manifestation of the natural fear prey hold for a predator, tainted and magically enhanced by the negative energy animating the Walking Dead. No other form of undead embodies the predatory instinct as purely as ghouls, who exist solely to hunt intelligent prey so that they may devour the ripening corpses. Just as rabbits sometimes stand quivering before wolves and make no move to escape, so humans stand in front of ghouls, the consummate predators and perverse reflections of our own predatory instincts.

Jameld of Hroth, whom we earlier, assures us that the commonly held folk wisdom that elves are immune to the paralytic touch of ghouls does not always hold true. Perhaps protected by the fey magic in their blood, elves have proven resistant to the paralysis of particularly weak ghouls, but this immunity falters in the face of more powerful paralyzing attacks. Inexperienced hunters should not rely too strongly on folklore to protect them from harm.

Uncommon Salient Powers

Many of the powers we speak of here are more uncommon than those such as causing disease.

Disfiguring Bite

Inside the room was a horrific composite zombie, an uneasy meld of three men. Their heads were stitched together in a rough line so their jaws were interlinked. Their bottom jaws had been replaced with the monstrously fanged jaw of a shark. The creature began lumbering clumsily toward us, its jaws gnashing mechanically, the shark fangs tearing chunks of flesh from its human upper jaws.

Crystal and Raiki stepped to the fore. The two priests began chanting in unison, working together to turn the hideous composite. Although they stood firm, the monster

kept coming, and I heard a quiver of doubt enter Crystal's voice. I started to shout for Geddar to protect her and fumbled for holy water, but the composite sensed her weakening resolve. In an instant, it turned on her, snatching her up in its wicked jaws. She screamed briefly, and the monster bit her in half. Geddar cursed in horror and Shauten paled, but the monster was among us, leaving no time to mourn the young priestess....

— From the private journal of Dr. Rudolph van Richten

The creature Dr. van Richten faced in the lair of Phantom's Bane possessed a bite of rare and horrifying strength. The powers of undeath and the lich's tampering had so enhanced the monster's jaws that it was able to cleave through bone and sinew as easily as a knife cuts softened butter. Sadly, we have since discovered other undead with the same disfiguring bite. We have seen our companions permanently maimed by the Glutton of G'Henna and later by Morandas the Geek, a carnival performer that continued to travel even after death. Sadly, its ability to eat even the most revolting substances served it well in undeath; it managed to grapple our friend Endieties to the ground, where it bit his head in half. The Glutton of G'Henna was kinder, only removing the limbs of its victims.

Although I would not say that this is the worst ability that the hungry dead possess (for there are certainly powers far more likely to haunt your nightmares), the ability to disfigure people in the prime of their lives and cripple them for life is truly cruel. This is especially true when one considers the dull prospects of the starvation, beggary, or enslavement in a poorhouse that awaits the crippled in most of our lands.

Drink fluids

As we have noted, not all of the hungry dead hunger for flesh or carrion. Arametrius, a friend of Dr. Van Richten, spoke of terrible creatures called the *thrax* that haunted the dunes around his desert home. On a recent expedition to the Amber Wastes, we discovered similar creatures ourselves, although the natives there called them *muduat*. These terrible beasts were withered from the heat of the sun, with swollen black eyes and a mouth like a lamprey's that they used to suck the fluids from their victims. Unlike vampires, *muduat* lack fangs. Instead, their

Uncommon Salient Powers

Disfiguring Bite (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1

The creature can sever the limbs of its victims on a critical hit. To be vulnerable to this attack, the victim must be corporeal and have fully defined limbs (so oozes, for example, are immune), but otherwise, even those creatures normally immune to critical hits such as constructs and undead can be affected.

When a creature successfully makes a critical hit with its bite attack, its opponent must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + the creature's Dexterity modifier + the creature's Strength modifier). If the victim succeeds at this save, she is merely damaged by the critical hit as usual. If the victim fails the save, she suffers the normal effects of a critical hit and loses part of whichever limb the DM judges to be closest to the creature's mouth (usually a hand for humanoids). The victim suffers subdual damage equal to the normal damage inflicted and begins to bleed as though struck by a weapon of *wounding*. A Heal check (DC 15) can stop this bleeding. See Table 3–9 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the effects of lost limbs. A *regeneration* spell or similar effect can restore lost body parts.

If the victim rolls a natural 1 on the Reflex save, the hungry dead manages to grab and bite off the victim's head instead of a limb, as though dealing a critical hit with a *vorpal* weapon.

Note that in many cases, having a character lose a limb can severely impact a player's enjoyment of the game. The DM must consider carefully whether this ability is suitable for her campaign style before introducing foes with this attack form.

Drink fluids (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1

Hungry dead with this ability automatically gain the Improved Grab special attack (see the Introduction of the *Monster Manual*). When a hungry dead successfully gains a hold on its victim, it can drain fluids through the victim's skin. This attack deals 1d8 points of damage, and the victim must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage. The victim can regain each lost point of Constitution by drinking one quart of water.

The victim is also considered to have gone without water for 1 day for each fluid drain attack suffered. See “Starvation and Thirst Dangers” in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for further details.

Hungry dead with this ability use claws or slams as their primary natural weapons.

Note that the narrators are not entirely correct in their analysis of this ability (see main text). Muduat are hungry dead that haunt the deserts of Ravenloft, thirsty for the cellular fluids of their victims. The thrax are in fact living beings with the same ability.

Flaying Touch (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

If a hungry dead with this ability deals 4 or more points of damage in a single attack, it tears a piece of its victim's skin away and plasters the skin to its own body. The victim loses 1 hit point per round due to bleeding for 1d3 rounds or until the wound is bound (Heal DC 15). The hungry dead heals a number of hit points equal to half the amount (rounded down) suffered by its victim in the original attack.

Example: A red man claws Gennifer for 5 points of damage, pulling off a piece of her skin. When the red man attaches the skin to its body, it heals 2 hit points.

For every 10 points of damage a victim loses to flaying attacks, she must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 12) or have her Outcast Rating increase by +1 due to scarring.

Gain Strength (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

Each time a hungry dead devours a victim the same size as itself, the creature gains one point of Strength (to a maximum of +5 points above its original score), and its maximum hit points increase by 1 per Hit Die. The creature must kill the victim itself (that is, the hungry dead must deal the fatal blow), and the victim must be eaten within 10 minutes of death. Only humanoids, monstrous humanoids, giants, and magical beasts can empower the hungry dead in this way.

The bonuses decrease at a rate of 1 point of Strength and 1 hp/HD per month. A hungry dead begins to starve only when its stolen strength has dissipated.

immensely painful feeding draws the fluid directly through the skin without breaking it, leaving enormous bruises instead of discrete puncture marks.

If one is attacked by a muduat, replenish the lost fluids as quickly as possible is vital, especially in the Amber Wastes' deadly heat. Sadly, distracting the muduat themselves with water is not possible; seemingly, their eternal Craving is for fluids drawn from living victims, not water in general.

Flaying Touch

Falkovnia is well known as a land of harsh — one might say, barbaric — punishment for even the most trivial crime. The most notorious penalty is impalement, but many crimes, especially in the southern town of Aerie, are rewarded with flaying, the removal of some or all of a victim's skin, usually while the victim is still alive. Some of the victims of this foul torture rise from the grave with the desperate need to soothe their raw nerves with fresh skin. These undead are euphemistically known as *red men*, and they possess the terrible ability to remove a victim's skin with their touch. They plaster the stolen skin across the raw meat of their bodies, where it stays until it rots and they must again seek out a new covering for their naked muscles.

Gain Strength

In no other power is the Walking Dead's position as macabre reflection of the living so obvious. Hungry dead with this ability gain physical prowess from their food, much like the living, but at a grossly increased rate. With each kill these creatures make, their flesh grows more resilient and their blows become far more powerful. Luckily, the negative energy that infuses and animates the Walking Dead slowly negates the boons afforded by the stolen positive energy, so that, given enough time, the hungry dead will return to its original state. If you must fight a creature with this ability, time is of the essence. The longer you delay your final confrontation, the stronger your opponent will be. If at all possible, we recommend you follow the path of Henle in M. Claude Harriet's wonderful story, “The Scrawls.” Seal the monster somewhere that it cannot escape or feed and wait until hunger weakens it to a level at which victory is more certain — or even until it starves to death. This is a good tactic to employ against any of the hungry dead, of course, but particularly appropriate for those with this power.



Rare Salient Powers

Many of the powers of which we have spoken are known to experienced hunters. Those presented here are less well known and hold some surprises the unprepared.

Impart Hunger

This ability is particularly common among ghoulish lords, those powerful creatures cursed for willingly tasting the flesh of their own race during life. Sickeningly, in undeath they become able to impart to others the same feverish hunger that damned them.

Victims infected with this terrible hunger are driven to consume flesh. At first, any kind of raw meat is enough, but as the ghoulish lord's curse works its way deeper into the victim's mind and soul, only flesh taken from humanoids (and later only from *living* humanoids) will suffice. Regardless of how much the victims eat, their bodies begin to waste away from hunger. If they try to resist, the hunger can become so intense that the victim is driven mad and will do quite literally anything to satisfy herself. Even worse, the curse instills a deep shame in the victim's heart, insidiously compelling victims to hide their affliction and avoid seeking help. Often, the hunger is not discovered until much damage has been done. Even after discovery, curing the affliction can be quite difficult, as only a *heal* spell is powerful enough to cleanse the victim's flesh.

Most of the hungry dead impart their hunger directly into their victim's blood via their claws or more usually a bite. Some, however, exude their curse into the air around them, so that anyone who inhales their miasma becomes infected. The amount of time that passes between encountering the ghoulish lord and the emergence of the hunger can vary from immediately upon contact to several days later. If you discover that one of your friends has been afflicted with the hunger, help must be sought immediately. If the victim is not cured, she will surely waste away from hunger, die, and rise again as another lord of the charnel pit.

Keen Scent

As one could imagine, the hungry dead often possess remarkable senses of smell, which they use to hunt their prey. We encountered a warren of ghouls with this ability in Falkovnia, when journeying through that land to investigate an apparent vampire infestation in Lekar. We were walking along the road when

the dirt suddenly collapsed beneath us, dropping us heavily into a rank tunnel, strewn with flesh. Our efforts to extricate ourselves were considerably hastened when Laurie heard a snuffling noise in the darkness. Luckily, the ghoul was alone and our flasks of holy water had not shattered in the fall, so we dispatched it fairly easily. The episode, however, illustrates the acuity of the hungry dead's sense of smell: the creature could smell us clearly enough to locate us at the opposite end of its lair, even above the overpowering reek of decay. We have even heard reports of ghouls able to pick up the scent of a decaying body from miles away.

Cure Victims

I was exploring the abandoned manor when the most wonderful aroma suddenly reached my senses. It bore the scent of cinnamon and soap, the way I always imagined Mother must have smelled. I was entranced and followed the fragrance all the way from the attic to the grounds outside.

A moment later, the smell soured into something rank and vile, and I regained my senses. I instinctively threw myself backward, and a dark shape leaped through the space where I just had been standing. I screamed for Laurie and fumbled for my dagger.

— From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove

Some hungry dead create a supernatural scent to lure their victims to them. The scent appears to each person as whatever smell he or she appreciates most in the world. To me, the Nightwalker of Corvia smelled of cinnamon and soap, which held a particular personal significance for me, while to Laurie it smelled of biscuit dough.

I can personally attest that the wish to follow the scent is overwhelming. It drowns out every other desire or rational thought — one must find the source of the smell at any cost. I was lucky in that once I grew closer to the creature its more natural ghastly stench broke the hold its lure had over me. Had the creature's scent not soured at the last moment, I suspect that I would have stood there quite blissfully while it devoured me.

In general, hungry dead are bestial and animalistic, so their special abilities take the form of natural (or seemingly natural) attacks. Thus, the typical ghoul's *lure victims* ability takes the form of a scent. Exceptional hungry dead, however, are known to be cunning and intelligent, and almost invariably very powerful. In these cases, the *lure* may be less crude, taking the form of an entrancing





song; a magical, imperceptible longing to visit a particular place; or even just catching sight of the creature itself.

Memory Drain

We tracked the beast to the cellar of Arnier's house. The moneylender's safe room stood open, and as I passed the yawning door, I saw a flicker of movement within.

"It's in here!" I shouted, throwing myself inside. A second later, the door slammed shut behind me and the bolt clicked home. The movement had been a mirror; the creature had tricked me!

I suspect the others will not be able to crack the lock in time to get me out. Already, the air in here is stale and stiflingly hot; I'm not sure I can last too much longer. If I am to go to the Gray Realm, I ask only two things. I hope that the others manage to find this monster and avenge my death and that, when I stand before the pale lord's throne, he can explain how the beast knew how to open Arnier's unbreakable safe.

— The last journal entry of Marcellus the Quick, gnome adventurer

According to the teachings of Bastion Sarlota Otrava, the spirit is a mystical quality that fills every part of your body. The mind is not contained within your heart or brain as some Lamordian scholars would have you believe; instead, every fiber of your being holds a tiny fraction of your thoughts and experiences. I cannot say whether this is true, but the ability of some ghouls to gain the memories of their victims by eating their flesh lends some credence to the theory.

Although *memory eaters* undeniably gain some of the memories of their victims, which specific memories are gained appears to be random. The ghoul might gain a childhood memory with one bite and a more recent recollection with the next; we can find no coherence or pattern in the way memories are transferred. This information should offer some cold comfort to night hunters, as it implies only a very small chance that your prey will learn of your plans from the corpses of your fallen friends. Still, relying on lady luck in this way would be foolish.

In some cases, like the Ragged Bard of Kartakass, the hungry dead seems unable to tell its own memories from those it has stolen, which can cause significant danger for those that the monster "remembers." A ghost that drained memories originally killed the Ragged Bard. He did not appear to realize that he was dead, and as is often the case

with Walking Dead created by sudden death, he tried to return to his original life, but was crippled by the hunger that plagues his kind. As the Ragged Bard killed and consumed more people, its memories became more confused. The frustrated ghoul grew violent, which of course led to more corpses for it to eat and more conflicting memories.

Recalled Abilities

The minds of the obedient dead are shattered during reanimation to make them pliable. As such, they rarely remember any of the skills they possessed during life. Although the hungry dead are also highly altered by their return to the world of the living, they retain more of their original intelligence and personalities. Arthur Sedgwick wrote of one such creature in *The Casebook of Alanik Ray*, when he and the Great Detective faced the Hungry Ghost. The creature was so named because it apparently possessed a supernatural ability to enter even the most tightly locked room and always killed its victims with a single bite to the throat. Alanik Ray, of course, immediately realized that a skilled thief would be able to enter and leave the murder rooms without leaving any trace of its passage and managed to hunt down the creature that had done so. The points of note in this case are the fact that the hungry dead not only remembered enough of its life to target those it had envied during life, but also disguised its presence through its retained training as a thief.

Rend

Some of the hungry dead are so eager for flesh or other bodily fluids that once they get a firm hold on their victims, they are almost impossible to remove. Gripping with unnatural strength, they bite and tear at their victims until either they or their victims are dead. Often, the hungry dead's monstrous attack is enough to strip the flesh from its victim's bones in a matter of seconds. Our uncle, George Weathermay, told us a story of a companion of his who was overcome by a hungry dead with this ability. Although George beheaded the fiend only a moment later, it had already bitten through his companion's ribcage and damaged his heart. Even in death, the monster could not be taken from its prize, and George could not rescue his friend's corpse without eating away the creature's hands with holy water.



Rare Salient Powers

Impart Hunger (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

This infects a victim with a supernatural disease — Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1/2 the walking dead's HD + the walking dead's Charisma modifier); damage 1d4 temporary Constitution and special. An infected victim must consume a number of pounds of flesh each day as determined by its size (see Table 3–2, below). Initially, any kind of raw meat will suffice; eating the required amount prevents that day's Constitution damage. Once the victim suffers more than 2 points of Constitution damage, however, she can sate the hunger only with the flesh of humanoids. If the disease claims more than 5 points of Constitution, only flesh from living humanoids will suffice.

If the victim does not consume enough of the necessary flesh, she suffers the Constitution damage and must make a Madness save (DC 10 + 1 per point of Constitution damage suffered). Failure indicates that the victim temporarily goes insane and will do anything to feed.

Infected victims must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per point of Constitution damage suffered) to speak willingly about their affliction.

Only a *heal* spell can cure the disease. If the victim is reduced to 0 Constitution by the disease, she rises from the grave as a ghoul lord (see *Denizens of Darkness*). If the walking dead that infected the new undead has the *create spawn* ability, then the new undead is subservient to its creator; if not, it is free willed.

As noted above, the incubation period can vary from 1 round to 1d4 days, at the DM's discretion. The method of transmission can vary from bite or claw attacks to simply entering within 10 feet of the creature.

Table 3–2: Infected Victim Feeding Requirements

Victim's Size	Flesh Needed
Fine	1/8 lb.
Diminutive	1/4 lb.
Tiny	1/2 lb.
Small	1 lb.
Medium-size	2 lbs.
Large	4 lbs.
Huge	8 lbs.
Gargantuan	16 lbs.
Colossal	32 lbs.

Keen Scent (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +0

The creature has the scent special quality. See "Scent" in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details.

Lure Victim (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

On detecting a hungry dead's *lure*, all victims within a 300-foot radius of the creature must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) or be drawn toward the hungry dead at her normal speed. The victim allows nothing to prevent her from reaching her goal; if restrained, she first acts in accordance with her alignment, but will resort to violence if not freed. If the victim's save succeeds, she is immune to that hungry dead's *lure* for one day.

Once the victim reaches the hungry dead, she must make another Will save at the same DC, but with a –4 competence penalty. If she fails this save, she stands as though paralyzed for as long as the hungry dead continues to emit the *lure*, regardless of what the monster does to her. If the save succeeds, she regains control of her actions. The hungry dead can exude the *lure* for as long as it concentrates.

Memory Drain (Su)

CR Adjustment: +0

The hungry dead gains an amount of memories equal to the proportion of its victim that it eats. (Thus, if a hungry dead eats half of its victim, it would gain half of the victim's memories). It also gains half of its victim's skill ranks in any Intelligence-based skill, rounded down and adjusted for its Intelligence. These ranks do not stack with the ghoul's original skills; only use whichever produces the higher bonus. If the victim has a higher Intelligence score than the devouring undead, the hungry dead's Intelligence increases by +1.

Example: A ghoul (Int 7) eats 40% of a merchant it has killed (Int 12; Appraise +8, Knowledge [local] +5). The ghoul's Intelligence increases to 8, it gains 40% of the merchant's memories, and it gains Appraise +4 and Knowledge (local) +2. Due to the difference in Intelligence between the merchant and the ghoul, each of these skills suffers a further –2 penalty. The ghoul now has Int 8, Appraise +1, Knowledge (local) +0.

Recalled Abilities (Ex)**CR Adjustment:** +1

The creature has one or more class levels and remembers much of its life. It can take levels in any class, including spellcasting classes.

The hungry dead are both intelligent and active, making it quite likely that they will continue to gain levels after death. The most useful classes for the typical hungry dead are fighter or rogue, although clerics and sorcerers are also found. As the undead are abominations of nature, hungry dead druids are very rare and paladins are unknown. A hungry dead typically gains one class level for each century of existence.

Rend (Ex)**CR Adjustment:** +1

If the creature latches onto a victim with both claws (or whatever other secondary natural attacks it possesses), it automatically inflicts bite damage with a bonus equal to 1 1/2 times its Strength bonus (rounded down). The victim is considered grappled, and every round that the hold is maintained, the hungry dead automatically hits with all of its natural melee attacks.

Hungry dead with this ability also have the Improved Grab ability (see the *Monster Manual*).

Stench of Evil (Su)**CR Adjustment:** +1

All good creatures within a radius of 10 feet x the hungry dead's HD must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the hungry dead's HD + the hungry dead's Charisma modifier) or suffer a -4 morale penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws until they leave the area of effect. This is a supernatural fear effect. Neutral and evil characters cannot detect the stench (and are thus immune) at this increased range.

All living creatures within 10 feet of the hungry dead must make a successful Fortitude save at

the same DC or suffer a -2 morale penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and skill checks for a number of minutes equal to 1d6 + hungry dead's HD.

If a creature has the scent special quality, the DC of both its saving throws against this ability increases by +4.

The stench remains detectable for 1 hour in any area where the hungry dead lingers for more than 1 hour, or 4 hours for creatures with the scent ability. The lingering stench loses the special effects noted above, but it is noticeable and can be identified by anyone that has encountered the stench before. If the ghoul is tracked by scent after this period, the DC increases by +2 every hour as normal.

Swallow Whole (Su)**CR Adjustment:** +1

If a hungry dead with this ability successfully grabs an opponent and then makes another successful grapple check, it swallows its opponent whole. The undead can hold in its stomach one creature of the same size, two of the next smaller size, four of the next smaller, and so on. Each round, a swallowed victim suffers 2d6+6 points of crushing damage plus 1d8+4 points of acid damage. The victim can cut her way free using natural weapons or a Small or Tiny slashing weapon, dealing half of the creature's maximum hit points to its stomach (AC 18). Once the victim exits, muscular action constricts the hole and other swallowed creatures must cut their own way out.

Creatures swallowed by a hungry dead suffer half the damage inflicted on the creature by well-meaning rescuers on the outside.

If the hungry dead can heal through feasting, it does not regain any hit points until its swallowed victims are dead.

Hungry dead with this ability also have the Improved Grab ability (see the *Monster Manual*).

Stench of Evil

The air around some powerful hungry dead is infused with their malevolence. This malevolence combines with the scent of death, corruption, and decay that clings to all of the hungry dead to create a sickening aura. In some cases, this miasma can

become so thick that it is actually visible as a sickly green fog. Even when invisible, the stench of evil is overpoweringly revolting. It becomes impossible to concentrate anywhere near the ghoul, as one must focus on keeping down one's supper and not fleeing in terror rather than facing the danger at hand. Truly, the stench of evil is unforgettable.

Of course, this powerful miasma can also work in the undead hunter's favor. Even more so than the usual reek that surrounds the hungry dead, the stench of evil can be detected easily. Such hungry dead are rendered unable to hide from any creature with a sense of smell. They are remarkably easy to track with hounds, provided that dogs can be found that are willing to hunt such fell prey.

Swallow Whole

One of the most horrifying powers possessed by the Glutton of G'Henna was its ability to swallow its victims whole. Although at the time we knew of only one person to have been swallowed whole and did not even witness the event directly, the act struck us as particularly horrifying. First, there is the matter of a person's life snuffed out in a single moment to feed an undead monstrosity's hunger. Then, the more practical consideration emerges that your foe is able to quarter or halve your attack force with a single bite, making it that much harder to defeat. I can only imagine what agony the victim must undergo.

Of course, many large beasts, such as the enormous serpents said to exist in the distant jungles of Sri Raji, can gulp down whole people without inspiring the terror evoked by the Glutton of G'Henna. The reason for this disparity is simple: beasts able to swallow people whole must necessarily be large and thus relatively easy to spot and avoid. They are also rare in the settled areas where most people are likely to congregate. In contrast, the hungry dead are drawn to inhabited areas, can sometimes blend in relatively well with the living, and can still swallow people up to and including their own size. How this is possible I can only guess. Even the most backward student of the sciences will tell





you that it is impossible for a 6-foot tall creature to swallow a similarly sized creature without being discomforted, let alone without showing any sign of the lost victim as the Glutton did. I can only say that I never want to discover first-hand how the feat is performed.

Society

Despite all we have written regarding the bestial nature of the hungry dead, they are still intelligent creatures and as such often form nasty, brutish societies of their own. In many ways, they behave like sharks. The hungry dead usually hunt individually and can be powerful opponents just by themselves. Yet they also team up to hunt in packs. Not only does this enable them to take down more and bigger prey with less individual risk to themselves, they can enjoy the company of their own kind, a desire that we suspect every creature secretly possesses at some level. If little prey can be found, the hungry dead can feed upon the weakest members of their own packs to survive.

Hungry dead societies typically develop from a single ghoul or similar creature. The band increases as the originator's spawn rise from the grave to join it and then as their spawn rise in turn. Eventually, the band is either discovered and destroyed or scattered to the winds; it outstrips its food supply; or the pack turns on itself with cannibalistic power struggles. Ghoul societies exist only so as long as their food supply is plentiful and safe to "harvest"; even the slightest disruption to this status quo causes infighting, murder, and dissolution into smaller groups. The amazingly fractious nature of the hungry dead should be a great relief to us all. A ghoul pack led by a leader powerful and charismatic enough to prevent these betrayals — one of the fearsome *ghoul lords* — is a force to be reckoned with. If all packs were to focus on the living rather than keeping one eye on their comrades, we would soon be overwhelmed.

Each pack has a distinct if ever changing pecking order. In some cases, the leader is the originator, and it ensures that it remains so through the supernatural control of its spawn. In these cases, the spawn feel magically compelled not to harm their master directly, and they usually obey any direct command it gives them. Of course, the hungry dead are devious and corrupt enough to plot behind their master's back, hoping to overwhelm it so that they can rise in the pecking order. In other cases, the leader is simply the most power-

ful member of the pack at that time and can be replaced at any moment of weakness. The leader is not necessarily the strongest physically; instead, it may be the most devious, most intelligent, most adept at manipulating the others, or it may maintain its control through the use of spells.

The concepts of loyalty and honor are totally foreign to the hungry dead, and they will do literally anything to rise in the pack's hierarchy. This may seem a somewhat strange goal, as the more authority a pack member has, the more likely it will be deposed. The leaders of the pack, however, are able to eat to their desire from any victim the pack kills and so are less likely to starve and more likely to be at full strength when facing any challengers. Their cohorts usually devour the weakest members of the pack in times of trouble.

Interviewing a captured cannibal zombie created by a ghastr, we discovered the true instability of ghoulish societies. According to our informant, its world involved constantly forming and shifting power blocs, in which the pack's weaker members

Pack Society

Most of the hungry dead are chaotic evil in the extreme, and their society reflects this alignment. If a hungry dead can control its spawn, the spawn are unable to cause it any harm *directly*. They are free to hinder or harm it indirectly, however, although the leader will usually ruthlessly suppress any threat to its authority. If the master issues any direct order, the spawn must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) to disobey, regardless of how dangerous or distasteful the order may be to them. Leaders unable to compel their minions and other members of the pack magically can enforce their commands only through threats and manipulation.

The hungry dead are usually found in gangs of 2–5 or packs of 7–16. Groups larger than this tend to disrupt their food supply too quickly and self-destruct. The members of one pack typically have similar although not identical power levels and salient abilities.





would band together to overwhelm the ghaſt's current favorites ſo they could riſe in the pack's hierarchy. They diſobeyed and deliberately miſunderſtood the ghaſt's indirect orders, and although they never did anything ſo damaging aſ to compel the ghaſt to puniſh them, their conſtant jostling for poſition waſ a ſource of endless fruſtration.

Almoſt a month after we defeated the ghaſt and deſtroyed moſt of its minions, we realized that even the cannibal zombie's unprovoked attack on the village of Sartak — and its eagereſſ to talk to uſ about its "tribe" — were attemptſ to draw attention to the ghaſt. The zombie hoped that ſomeone would kill the maſter and give its minions complete freedom. Uneaſy iſ the head that beaſ the crown in the world of the hungry dead.

Living Ghouls



It may now be adviſable to talk about thoſe living beingſ that eat the fleſh of their own ſpecies. Thiſ iſ a not uncommon funereal practice in many primitive cultureſ. Typically, it iſ a mark of great

reſpect and iſ done to keep the ſpirit of the deceaſed cloſe to the living or to ſpread her ſtrength among thoſe ſhe leaveſ behind. A cult in Sri Raji, the Callatians, ritualiſtically ſhareſ the fleſh of any deceaſed member with the reſt of the cult to empower thoſe ſtill living. The folklore of Mordent and ſurrounding landſ, however, all agreeſ that thoſe who taſte the fleſh of intelligent beingſ will be curſed with eternal hunger, plagued even in death aſ *ghoul lordſ*. Yet by the accountſ available to uſ, thiſ curſe iſ not

Culture and Cannibalism

Cannibalism ſhould not neceſſarily alwayſ be puniſhed in a *Ravenloft* game. In ſome cultureſ, ritual cannibalism iſ founded on love and reſpect, regardleſſ of how repulſive or ſtrange the concept may ſeem to outlanderſ. Cannibalism doeſ not require a Powerſ check if the cannibal truly believeſ in ſuch a philoſophy and if the deceaſed waſ alſo an adherent and deſired ſuch an end. Cannibalistic tribeſ who hunt down and devour their neighborſ ſhould enjoy no ſuch exception.

To characterſ from moſt other cultureſ, including all the domainſ of the Core, cannibalism iſ firmly forbidden by both ſociety and religion. For thoſe devoted to the godſ of theſe cultureſ, cannibalism ſhould be taken aſ "Breaking a Tenet" (ſee Table 3-6: Recommended Powerſ Checkſ in the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting*). The act of cannibalism iſ alſo conſidered "Theft, Grave Robbing" when the deceaſed iſ not complicit in the act. Thoſe who fail Powerſ checkſ ſtemming from cannibalism often join the rankſ of the hungry dead upon death.

New feat: Voracious [General]

You have diſcovered the myſtical ſecret of how to ſteal a perſon's ſtrength by devouring her corſe. By feeding upon the dead, you become ſtronger and tougher, and heal woundſ at a much faſter rate. Sometimes, diſcovering the ſecret requireſ much deliberate reſearch; ſometimes, it iſ diſcovered accidentally in a moment of deſperation and need.

Benefit: In order to gain any benefitſ from thiſ feat, you muſt eat fleſh from the corſe of a humanoid. The amount that muſt be eaten iſ equivalent to that needed by a ghoul of the character's ſize (ſee Table 3-1, above).

For one week after thiſ feat, you gain a +2 enhancement bonuſ to Strength and Conſtitution. Eating more than one corſe during thiſ period extendſ the duration but doeſ not increaſe the bonuſ.

You alſo heal one hit point per level aſ though you have reſted for a day. The hit pointſ return aſ ſoon aſ you finiſh eating the required amount. Thiſ ability cannot boost you over your maximum hit pointſ.

Over time, you gain leſſ and leſſ nutrition from normal food and find yourſelf being drawn to eat humanoidſ for pleaſure. Whenever given the opportunity to feed on humanoid fleſh, you muſt ſucceed at a Will ſave to reſiſt the craving to do ſo. Thiſ Will ſave haſ a DC equal to the number of humanoidſ you have eaten in the paſt. Eventually, the gnawing deſire will conſume your every thought.

Special: Any character may take thiſ feat, but non-evil characterſ will find their alignmentſ quickly twiſting into evil if they uſe it. Upon death, characterſ with thiſ feat become ghoul lordſ.



common among the peoples who reverently eat their dead. Obviously, the connection between cannibalism and the hungry dead is not as clear as common wisdom might make it seem.

The difference seems to be that all of the religions of our land, from the Lawgiver to the Morninglord, regard cannibalism as a shocking, blasphemous crime, whereas other cultures see it as an act of reverence and respect. These primitive people eat their dead purely out of love. The practice may seem abhorrent to those of us raised with the teachings of Ezra or Belenus, but the concept of burying or cremating the dead must seem equally repulsive to the Callatians and their ilk. How different is erecting monuments to the

dead to remember them and show our respect from eating their corpses for the same reason? The morals behind these acts are almost identical.

Why, then, do ghoulish lords exist and how do they arise? The reason lies in *why* these villains indulge in cannibalism. Quite simply, those destined to become ghoulish lords do not eat the dead to demonstrate respect. Instead, they engage in cannibalism to outrage the victim's families; to show their contempt for the mores of society; to steal the victim's soul or extraordinary abilities; or just to satisfy their own, monstrous tastes. This obviously has nothing to do with "moral cannibalism." These all-too-human fiends are justly cursed for their sacrilegious and monstrous perversion.



Chapter Four: The Restless Dead

"Tis he! He can follow and torture us still; I knew he could!" [...] The drowning face rose above the wave, the eyes fixed themselves full on me, without any entreaty in them, or wrath, or terror — the long-familiar, passionless, relentless eyes.

— Dinah Maria Mulock, "M. Anastastius"



We cannot claim exclusive authorship of any of the material in this book. Like any hunter of the undead — or, indeed, any living being — we are supported in our work by a vast web of contacts and supporters without whom this volume would be far less useful. This chapter in particular, however, relies upon information supplied to us from two unique men. The first needs no introduction: Alanik Ray is known throughout the land as the Great Detective, an epithet that justly announces both his great skill at solving the most vexing of mysteries and his noble spirit. The second was a client of his, a man by the name of Ratik Ubel, who approached him with a most unusual case. We have reproduced Ray's initial letter to us about this strange situation below.

My dear Gennifer and Laurie,

I have taken the time to write to you about a recent case that I judge you will find interesting. I first became involved slightly more than six months ago, when a letter was delivered to my door. As you will recall, I am often approached with requests for help in solving some mystery or other — some petty, some less so — but very few reach me by post. Expecting little, I opened the letter and browsed its contents.

The letter was scrawled in a barely legible hand on cheap paper. It hinted at some intimacy between the author and myself, claiming that I would “understand him like no one else” and that “we had much in common.” The details of the case itself were very vague: something about a murder in Il Aluk more than twenty years ago, for which the only clue was a yellow scarf. I decided that the case was interesting, if only for the logistical problems of trying to discover the truth distorted through time and the impossibility of first-hand research in Necropolis, but no return address was included. I gave the letter to Arthur to file and dismissed it from my thoughts.

A week later, another letter arrived, written in the same hand. It repeated its allusions of intimacy — a tactic I must admit I found irritating — and its details of the murder. This time, the return address was present: a lowly flop house in Quartier Tenement of Port-a-Lucine. So I sent a reply, saying I would take the case and that he should meet me.

I was unprepared for the visitant who appeared in my chambers only a few hours after I sent my reply. His flesh was spectral and translucent, his eyes wild, and his ragged clothes black and filthy. Arthur took him to be a beggar, his eyes missing the subtle clues that my own, sharper vision took in. Ratik Ubel was undead!

I immediately drew Goldenfang and a pistol, and

demanded that the revenant leave my home. Instead, the creature threw itself to the floor with a cry, begging for me to help him. Once again, he claimed that we had much in common and that only I could help him, explaining that the murderer he longed to bring to justice was his own.

After a long pause, I sheathed my weapons and decided to confer with Arthur. He confessed that his heart was touched by the sorry creature's plight and insisted that we try to help. I was more reserved, but I can deny my friend nothing. We returned to Ubel, and I coldly informed him I would take the case at the rate of fifty gold pieces per day, plus expenses. Ubel wiped his nose on his sleeve and replied, equally coldly, that I would be repaid with information that only he possessed — the inner workings of the undead mind. Knowing your current project, I realized that such information was indeed invaluable, so I took the case.

— Private letter from Alanik Ray to Gennifer and Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

The information Ubel supplied us was indeed useful, although I must stress that such informants are usually quite untrustworthy. Dr. van Richten found that fully half of the information the hag Sermaine told him in preparation for the *Guide to Witches* was either false or strictly true but phrased in a misleading way. We have supplemented Ubel's notes when we can with our own field observations, and by and large Ubel appears to have dealt with Ray honestly, but readers must remain cautious. Not only do the restless dead vary in their abilities far more than other forms of Walking Dead, Ubel's “facts” may be false or lacking pertinent points.

General Powers

The restless dead, as we have already described, is something of a hold-all category of any self-willed Walking Dead that does not feed off the living. On average, the restless dead are far more powerful than the obedient or hungry dead, and their Craving usually springs from their personality during life.

As an extended example, we will consider wights, the most common form of restless dead. Their reasons for rising from the grave vary, but almost all involve some negative emotion. Often, they were insanely possessive of their belongings during life and rise to protect their grave goods or avenge a theft, or in their last moments they were so consumed with jealousy and hatred that they



should die while others live that they continue after death to rectify this supposed injustice. Less commonly, wights arise because they are buried in ground infused with jealousy or avarice. This ethereal resonance seems to be a natural component of our world and may not be linked to a haunting. In some cases, it might be the residue of a ghost that has passed on. The negative emotions taint the ground around it, however, and bodies buried in such "bad ground" rise as wights. In a sense, these wights rise from dark desire like any other wight, except the desire is a spiritual taint, not their own obsession. If the corpse was animated by some emotion other than hatred and greed or through some curse or other method, they would have different salient abilities and we would classify them as valpurleiches or hecuevas instead. Thus, if we can establish which salient abilities a restless dead has, an experienced hunter can surmise the Craving that drives that monster. This knowledge can be an immensely powerful tool and may suggest allergens useful against it. Even if you cannot deduce your prey's Craving, the knowledge of its special abilities is always useful.

The restless dead can be of any state of preservation, and so adventurers must be ready to face opponents wielding everything from weapons, to fists that fall like sledgehammers, to fangs and claws. Admittedly, decayed and skeletal restless dead are less common than those of other states of preservation, but they are by no means unknown and are not necessarily weaker than withered or intact restless dead. The most powerful opponent we have ever faced, the self-styled King of the Mistlands, Armand Manuzio, looked like a common zombie but could kill any living thing that met his gaze and call unlimited numbers of undead to aid him.

General Powers

Although weaker restless dead do exist, most have at least 4 HD. Because their power is so dependent upon their determination and force of personality, restless dead typically have above average Wisdom and Charisma scores, and undeath grants them a further +2 racial bonus to both these abilities.

Aging and the Restless Dead

The restless dead are undeniably the most powerful class of Walking Dead, but, in some ways at least, they suffer under a yoke that the obedient and hungry dead do not have to bear. Grim perversions that they are, obedient and hungry dead are not entirely divorced from the laws of nature. As time passes, both become more powerful: the obedient dead regain something approaching their lost intellects; the hungry dead feed off the strength of those they consume and become tougher and manifest more salient abilities.

The restless dead do not. Their Craving and force of will determines how powerful they will be from the moment they rise from their graves until their destruction; as time passes, they grow neither weaker nor stronger and seem incapable of learning new skills or developing psychologically. This condition perhaps explains why some restless dead

Aging and the Restless Dead

The restless dead do not gain Hit Dice or salient powers as they age. Due to their obsessive pursuit of the object of their Craving, they also generally do not accumulate experience enough to gain levels before they return to the grave. If they cannot satiate their Craving in a few years (which, given that completing the task is their whole reason for being, is quite rare), they may gain a level, but this is rare, and the chosen class will always directly help the creature achieve its goal.

Although they do not regain hit points due to natural healing, many of the restless dead have some kind of energy resistance, damage reduction, regeneration, or fast healing special quality. As soon as they complete their task, these qualities desert the restless dead and it collapses into decay. If for some reason the creature must reanimate again (as in a restless dead that protects a temple from all intrusions), it does so at full hit points, although it may or may not return to its original state of preservation.

Energy Resistance 20: CR +3/4

Energy Immunity: CR +1

Damage Reduction: CR adjustment equals half the magical bonus required to bypass the damage reduction, to a minimum of +1/2. Thus, damage reduction 15/+2 increases the CR by 1, while 15/silver increases it by 1/2.





cannot heal or regenerate like vampires, ancient dead, or even the hungry dead. We suspect that this is because the restless dead rise to complete a particular, finite task. A taxim exists for as long as it needs to bring its killer to justice and no longer, so it rarely has any way of healing its injuries. A valpurleiche can regenerate, but as soon as it has avenged itself on its killer, the regeneration reverses and any injury it has suffered reforms and it quickly decays to what would have been its natural state. Some of Ubel's chance statements lead us to conclude that the restless dead are instinctively aware that their "life" is a slowly eroding, irreplaceable energy and that they are still compelled to walk the path that leads to their final destruction without deviation. This may also explain why so many hate the living, who still control their fates and the manner of their deaths.

Mindset



Authors' Comment: To illustrate the warped mindset of the restless dead, we can do no better than quote Ratik Ubel directly, as transcribed by Alanik Ray and Arthur Sedgwick. Take note not only of what Ubel says about other forms of the restless dead, but also of what his tone and choice of words reveal about his own mind.

— L&GWF

Well, now. The Great Detective at last comes to me. Perhaps I should be honored, for the Great Mind now seeks my wisdom, my knowledge. Very well. You know my price.

In regards to this "book" that is being compiled, I care little about the waywardness of two little girls who play at being Hunters. While you and I, Alanik, belong to that special breed, they have no place among our august company.

If you wish to know about the restless dead and their abilities, you must understand one thing: Desire and Craving. All restless dead are compelled utterly by their one compulsion, their own Craving. So that you can understand, let me tell you of my own Craving.

I hate a being — a man, a woman, a creature — that I have never seen.

I have spent many nights staring into the blank and endless sky, imagining the being that may have killed me. I have recreated that being's

appearance in a dozen different forms. Sometimes he is old and frail and afraid. Sometimes she is dark and powerful and cunning. And yet, he or she remains beyond my grasp.

I have traveled near and far trying to understand this thing that I am, to understand the burning need within my unliving bones to find my killer. And yet, for all the knowledge I have gained, I am only closer to the truth by inches.

I was murdered on a quiet night. I awoke to hear a wet sound. It was someone coughing, choking. The person's mouth was filled with fluid. Too late I realized that it was I who was drowning. My own lungs were filling with blood. And thus it was in the silence of my bed that I heard my own death rattle.

The last thing I remember seeing was the blur of a piece of yellow fabric. It was long, narrow, like a scarf or sash. And that would have been the last that I ever saw, if it were not for this curse I now bear.

For I am compelled to walk the earth, Detective. I am driven by an insane need to seek, to find, and to avenge myself against my killer. This is the existence of the restless dead: to be driven constantly by *desire*.

Anhelo Maleficus

All of the restless crave something, whether it be vengeance, murder, protection, survival, or even love. That Craving is not only what drives the restless, but it is also what gives us power. The stronger the Craving, the greater the power of the unliving.

Can you imagine it, Detective? A strange compulsion placed within your heart. An undying need that must be fulfilled every second of the night. And yet nothing you do can assuage that need. Oh, there are things that might stay your thirst for a moment. A morhg, for instance, is able to satiate its lust for blood through killing. But this moment is fleeting. Soon, the dark compulsion fills your unliving brain until there is nothing else but this... Craving.

Authors' Comment: As we have already said, Ubel somewhat misrepresents the truth. The restless dead's Cravings spring from their native desires, swelling and calcifying into obsession. Thus, the obsession is placed within their hearts, but the desire itself is already there.

— GWF





Most restless dead that I have encountered have been given mystical gifts that them enable them in the pursuit of their Craving. These dark gifts are an eternal irony for us. While they aid us in our quests, so often the restless dead find their goals always out of reach.

Picture it, Detective. Possessing powers untold of, undreamt of by humanity, and yet for all of your power you are rendered impotent when in the pursuit of your goal.

What are the Cravings of the restless, might you ask? Are they the same desires that drive mortal creatures who walk under the sun? No. For mortal creatures have mortal desires; they seek acceptance, family, loyalty, and honor. None of these desires have any place within the dead heart of the restless. No. All of the restless dead's motives are caught up in darkness, wrath, or desperation.

Author's Comment: I disagree with this statement. From our experience, we have seen the restless dead arise because the restless creature loved someone. We have seen others rise in defense of a loyal master. Perhaps one of the most bizarre and strange cases we have studied was that of a night watchman who guarded an old cemetery.

The poor man passed away one night, but his body rose up again, determined to continue with its nightly duties!

Our experience shows that most of the restless dead arise because of some unfinished business. Be wary of Ratik's words, for his own savage desire may at times color his vision.

— GWF

Vengeance and Betrayal

The most well known motive of the restless dead is revenge. Few see how complex and deep such a motive can be. The desire for revenge may be a selfish one, such as vengeance for one's own death, or it may be an entirely unselfish motive. For instance, the Red Bride of Nova Vaasa sought vengeance for all women who were killed by bandits in the kingdom.

Moreover, murder may not be the only reason that vengeance is sought — some of the restless dead desire reciprocity for some betrayal in life. Vargonius the Cold wanted revenge against the moneylenders who cheated him of all his possessions in life.

As you know, this is unliving fire that burns within me. Restless such as the Dread Revenant and





the valpurleiche [which Mordentish readers may know as the Hanged Man] are compelled by this Craving.

Obsession and Torment

Some creatures are driven by a psychotic need to kill and destroy. These creatures seek nothing but red murder for its own sake. Again, do not be fooled into thinking that this is a simple Craving to understand.

Some restless dead wish to fulfill this Craving simply by causing raw destruction. Others are far more insidious. Some restless dead, such as the Spindle of Richemulot, carefully plan out their murders. These killers seek to continue a pattern-like ritual that they followed in life. The Spindle, for instance, always killed its victims by sewing them onto some form of tapestry, creating lurid art through its murder.

If following a restless dead that has a Craving such as this, you must pay close attention to its killing patterns. It will always follow some twisted ritual that it is compelled to enact. This information will give you an advantage, Detective, for unlike a mortal killer, the restless ritual murderer cannot change its habits. Its undead mind is forever compelled to complete its ritual, no matter the cost. Morhgs and crimson bones are creatures motivated by this desire.

Greed and Avarice

Ah, greed, perhaps the oldest form of Craving known to the mortal coil. When life is born, it knows the call of greed. Fledgling life crawls and calls for the mother's teat; it cries and begs for the mother's warmth; it covets and learns to keep its mother to itself.

Greed drives many of the restless dead. This greed can be for many things — for money, for property, even for a person. I have known more than one wight that has risen from the dead to continue to possess those that it "loved" in life.

The traditional burial mound wight rises from greed of property and territory. Often, when something is stolen from the grave of an important person, that person's spirit is so disturbed by the heinous act that it compels the body to rise, lording over its grave. And yet despite these creatures' desire to guard their wealth, I know so many adventurers who are willing to risk suffering this same fate all for the glory of robbing a few coins from a tomb.

Hatred and Destruction

The obedient dead is a simple creature. It lacks the intelligence to ask itself, "Why have I suffered this fate?" The hungry dead are too compelled by their own maddening hunger to think much on anything else. Yet the restless dead, does their Craving blind them to the consideration of their own existence? No. That is the particular curse of the restless, you see. We are left enough of our intellect to ponder our own fate, our own existence.

Can you imagine this, Detective? Knowing, realizing that your body is dead, that your lifeblood no longer flows through your veins, that your soul is trapped like a maggot within a rotting carcass? It is no wonder that so many of our kind go mad upon awakening.

Many of our kind who go mad are also driven to destruction. Their tormented minds can no longer understand anything except that they cannot have their former life. Usually, these restless dead will go through a mourning period in which they long for their lost lives. Once they understand they will never have it, though, they become dangerous.

Flooded with jealousy for the living, these creatures will do anything to destroy life around them. They seek out life in all its forms and attempt to snuff it out. The more ancient this kind of restless dead is, the more dangerous it will be. Early in their unlife, these sorts of creatures are wild and reckless; later in their existence, they learn to plan, to scheme, to reap the maximum amount of mayhem, all because they are jealous of the living. The zombie lord, jolly roger, and many wights are examples of this form of restless dead.

There you have it, Detective, the infamous motives of the restless dead. Know them well, for if you know the motives of your enemy, you have a key to their destruction. You may use their Craving to lure them into traps or even to manipulate their behavior.

You obviously know mine, but that is of no consequence. You see, I have met many who would use my Craving against me. Thus, I have learned to master my Craving. Oh, it still rules me; it always shall. Yet I am no mere wight to be led into a pit.

Besides, you owe me a favor, Detective. I shall eagerly await your expedient repayment.



The Craving

While all Walking Dead are motivated by their Cravings, it is particularly variable — and so particularly important — in the restless dead. This Craving helps the DM develop a creature that is more than just wandering destruction, but a complex being that seeks a specific goal and sets out to accomplish that goal in a defined manner.

When confronted with the object of their Craving, all restless dead are compelled to fulfill it. A restless dead must make a Will save in order to stop itself from fulfilling that compulsion. The DC is equal to $10 + 1/2$ the creature's HD. The more powerful the restless dead, the more powerful the Craving. A successful save means that the restless dead has mastered the Craving for one minute.

If the restless dead is continually confronted with its Craving, it must continually make Will saves. Each additional minute the restless dead is confronted with its Craving increases the save DC by 2. This modifier is cumulative.

If the restless dead must engage in combat to complete its task, a dread fire stokes within its cold heart. The creature gains a +2 bonus to attack, damage, and saves. The creature continues to fight until it reaches -10 hit points, not dropping until that point. Due to its recklessness, it suffers a -2 AC penalty.

The creature only receives these modifiers when in pursuit of its Craving. Thus, a wight protecting its tomb would receive the aforementioned adjustments. The same wight would not get these adjustments when roaming the countryside, collecting undead servants. A mohrg receives these adjustments when attacking its prey, but it would not receive them if attacked in its lair instead of during the execution of a murder.

Restless dead can satiate their Craving by working indirectly toward their goals. For instance, a valpurleiche that seeks revenge against an unjust hanging might first set fire to the hangman's farm. Then it might leave disturbing messages at the hanging judge's house. Finally, just before wreaking vengeance, it might hang friends and associates of the judge and hangman. Such behavior varies from creature to creature.

Authors' Comment: I would add to this list the Cravings of devotion and protection. All too often, as we stated above, we have seen the undead arise in the defense of a loved one. Some arise not just to defend a single person but an entire family. During our travels, we met one skeletal warrior who had taken up as its eternal duty the defense of an entire village.

These forms of restless dead are perhaps the most tragic. Unlike other creatures of the night, these undead seek to help others altruistically. Yet ultimately their devotion is rejected by those they seek to protect, so horrified are these people at the appearance of the restless dead. Theirs is a sad existence of loneliness and sorrow.

While many of these restless dead seek final rest, their Craving drives them to continue, no matter their pain and suffering. If you encounter one of these beings, do the honor of putting it to rest, for these are truly souls in torment.

—GWF

Salient Abilities



Authors' Comment: Just as many obedient dead are found with abilities more commonly known in the hungry dead and vice versa, so too are the restless dead often gifted with abilities from these strains of undead. Remember, our divisions are artificial; all Walking Dead potentially may manifest the salient abilities of any other walking dead. Thus, some restless dead can paralyze with a touch or have limbs that function even after they are severed, and many are able to create spawn.

—LWF

Salient Powers

The restless dead typically have one salient power for each point of Charisma bonus, plus one for every 8 HD.

Some salient powers may require a saving throw. Whatever saving throw is required has a DC of $10 +$ the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus. Some abilities listed may also require a casting level. In this case, the spell takes effect as if cast by a sorcerer or cleric of a level equal to the HD of the restless dead, or the minimum level required to cast the spell, whichever is higher.



Detailed here are the various powers and abilities that I have witnessed among the “restless dead,” as you so coin us. It is strange that so broad a category be used to label such a diverse group of creatures. But I digress.

There are six categories of powers among the restless dead: powers that involve traveling; powers derived from hate; powers of the evil eye; powers funded by the creature’s natural aura; powers of the creature’s touch; and powers of pure evil.

The Powers of Expedition

In some lands, they say that the dead travel fast. And, let me tell you, I have seen this with my own unliving eyes.

I was tracking the creature some call the Spindle in order to repay a debt I owed to Madame Renier. The creature was called the Spindle for the extreme elongation its bones assumed in undeath.

In life, the Spindle tortured and murdered a dozen young men. It was compelled to do this, you see. Its psychotic Craving drove it to rise from the grave and continue its perverted exploits.

The Spindle was very, very hard to follow. First, it left no tracks, no sign of its passing other than the grisly remains of its killings. And then there was the matter of its appearance in various cities.

The creature would perform crimes within different cities, sometimes within the same night. At first, I thought that there might be more than one of them or that it might be able to walk with the Mists.

Yet I was able to catch sight of the Spindle one evening. I dared to follow it. Strangely, while I ran as fast as I could, the creature always remained at a distance, even though it was merely walking. Some unnatural force lengthened the ground between us even as I ran. I was finally able to track the creature by predicting what victim it would choose next. But the task was not easy.

When facing the restless dead, know that many can alter their method of travel. Some are fast, but only when in pursuit of a quarry. Others can bend the Mists, appearing where they wish. Assess the creature’s capacity to do this before confronting it, else it shall slip through your grasp.

Powers Wrought from Hate

Let me tell you of the power of hate. Some would stand between my desires and me. Some do it purposefully, others without knowing. Whatever

Powers of Expedition

The Dead Travel fast (Su)

CR Adjustment: +0

A creature with this power may cross long distances at an alarming speed. When crossing distances over 1 mile, the creature moves at 4 times its normal running speed. If seen while crossing the land, it appears to be merely walking but somehow staying far ahead of any pursuer.

The creature may use this ability only if in pursuit of some quarry or objective. It may not, for instance, use this power to flee from an opponent or return to its home. If the creature’s quarry or objective is within 1 mile, the power ceases to function.

Trackless Step (Su)

CR Adjustment: +0

The creature in question leaves no tracks, nor any incidental sign of its passing. Any attempts to track it using Wilderness Lore fail, as well as attempts to find clues of its passing through Search checks. Creatures with this ability may still leave evidence through ethereal resonance, however. One can still follow, scry, or spy upon the creature, unless it is protected through other means. Purposeful signs made intentionally by the creature remain and may be found through normal means.

Bending the Land (Su)

As the obedient dead ability of the same name (see Chapter Two: The Obedient Dead).

Wraith Step (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The creature gains a +30 bonus to all Jump checks and does not have the usual maximums for jumping distance. The creature also gains the ability to cast *feather fall* as a free action, though this spell affects only the creature and no other parties.

the reason, I care not: those who stand between me and my goals shall be destroyed. That is the power of the Craving. It forces you to hate those who



Fear and Loathing

These are powers fueled by the creature's extraordinary will and desire in pursuit of its Craving.

Dire Enmity (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The undead feels enmity for a particular type of person. Type may be determined by character class (i.e., aristocrats, fighters, rogues), profession (i.e., carpenters, merchants, musicians), or appearance (i.e., young, blond women; tall men). Whenever encountering that type, the undead's enmity gives it a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls when facing that opponent and that opponent only. If the undead in question has a particular enemy, meaning a specific named character, the undead's bonus to attack and damage rolls rises to +3.

Unerring Hunter (Su)

CR Adjustment: +0

This creature possesses an uncanny ability to track its prey. The creature always knows the direction it must go to find its enemy, but it does not know how far it must travel. Some creatures that possess this power may switch targets at will. For instance, a restless serial killer might choose from a number of different targets. Other creatures with this power will have it affixed to one person. A revenant, for example, might have it keyed only to her killer. This power does function across domain borders, but it does not give the restless dead any special ability to cross over such borders.

Undying (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The hatred of this creature is so powerful that it continually rises from the earth through the force of its will, even after being destroyed. Creatures with this ability cannot be permanently killed by normal means. If brought to -10 hit points or less, the creature ceases to function but rises again on the following night.

Even if the creature is destroyed, burned, or disintegrated, its undead spirit occupies the nearest corpse, rising again in 1d3 nights. The corpse slowly changes over the course of a week to resemble the original creature. Some creatures with this ability have a specific weakness or will finally rest after some task has been completed.

Executioner (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This ability is most common among undead that become restless to avenge what they perceive to be an unjust execution. They gain the ability to control weapons of the sort that were used to end their lives. Thus, those killed by hanging can cast *animate rope*, while those killed by beheading can animate axes (as a *telekinesis* spell). The spell can be cast three times per day.

Chamber Sense (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This creature is driven by a hatred of all those who would invade its territory or steal from its hoard. This ability alerts the undead when any sentient being enters its lair. The creature may also scry any area in its lair it desires. It may do this as if it had cast the scry spell as a sorcerer of a level equal to its HD and as if it had a Scry skill bonus of 12 + its Intelligence modifier. If the creature already possesses the Scry skill, it uses the higher of the two values.

A creature's lair is defined as any complete structure such as a series of rooms, a crypt, or a cavern that does not exceed 100 feet in diameter. This power does not work on an undefined area such as a wood or a swamp. If the entire structure exceeds the area of effect, then chamber sense power functions only on a specific area of that structure that meets the 100-foot criteria.

Other creatures may be shielded from chamber sense through a *nondetection* spell or any other effect that would ward them against scrying. When making the caster level check to penetrate such wards, the creature uses its HD as its level.

Glyph of Warding (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

This creature harbors a seething hate for those who would invade its lair. To protect its lair, this creature may create a *glyph of warding*. A creature may guard its lair with one *glyph of warding* for every two HD it possesses. Creating more than this amount causes one of the other glyphs to dissipate, and the creature chooses which glyph dissipates in this case. Creating a *glyph of warding* takes 10 minutes and provokes an attack of opportunity.

A creature's lair is defined as any complete structure such as a series of rooms, a crypt, or a cavern that does not exceed 100 feet in diameter. This power does not work on an undefined area such as a wood or swamp. If the

entire structure exceeds this area of effect, then a glyph of warding functions only in a specific area of that structure that meets the 100-foot criteria.

Killing Zone (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Those restless dead that have this power are often driven by a psychotic hatred. They generally use this power to perform horrid acts or crimes without anyone witnessing the event. Undead with this power can create a magical, immobile, spherical zone 10 feet in diameter. All creatures and objects within that zone are invisible and silent to those outside of it. Creatures inside the zone can see, hear, and interact with each other normally; creatures may even attack one another inside the zone without it affecting their invisibility or silence.

Leaving the zone causes a creature to become visible and audible, but does not affect others remaining in it. A creature within the zone dispels its own invisibility and silence if it attacks others outside of the effect, though it does not affect others still inside the zone.

The killing zone lasts for as many minutes as the undead has Hit Dice. This power may only be used a limited number of times per day (typically three), determined by the DM.

block your path; it makes you love those who would aid you. Such a powerful thing, the Craving!

A powerful man once placed himself in my path. This man, Ivan Dilisnya, told me that he had information about my killer. If I would only dispose of a number of adventurers that were in his way, he said, then he would give me his information.

Well, I disposed of his opponents. Yet I found out soon after that Dilisnya had been lying; he had no information. Indeed, he mocked me, telling me that I had been played as a pawn, a puppet. I was enraged and I attacked, but Ivan's men surrounded him. They hacked at me with axes. They pierced me with spears. With the savagery of rabid mongrels, they ripped my limbs from my body. Yet I found that my body mended itself. As I stoked the hate within me, as I focused my mind on anger and fury, my bones began to knit. My own arm scuttled across the floor back to my torso. My flesh became whole.

I tore Dilisnya's men to shreds. I mangled their bodies with my inhuman hands. While Dilisnya himself fled, I scrawled messages of vengeance on the wall in his men's blood. His men's bones did not mend as mine did. I suppose that they simply did not have the right Desire.

That, Detective, is the power of hate. Through my hate I was given the ability to mend my unliving body. That same hate gives the restless dead the power to rise again and again, to track down their prey, and to sense when others approach.

Hate is the power that fuels the restless dead. For the restless hate those who stand in the way of their Craving. Pray that you never stand in the way of mine.

Powers of the Evil Eye

Some say that the eyes are the windows to the soul. If that is so, where do such windows lead when looking into the eyes of the restless dead?

It is from the soulless pits of their eyes that many restless dead make manifest their powers, much like the famed Vistani or the dread vampire. This power may even come from a skeletal restless, which possesses no eyes at all. Gazing into the empty eye sockets of an eyeless restless dead is sufficient enough to trigger this ability.

A restless dead with this power might affix a victim with its stare, pinning the victim like a moth with its soulless eyes. Others might use their stare to break a victim's will, causing the victim to become a puppet of an unliving master.

Of course, some creatures wield more than one power of the evil eye. The Skinner of Vallaki had two powers, each projected out of a differently colored eye. This creature would turn its head slightly to the left, peering at a victim with its single, yellow eye. The hapless soul would be drawn forward, not understanding why it walked toward such a hideous, desiccated creature. The Skinner would then turn its head, and with its blue, translucent eye cause the victim to become paralyzed and immobile.

The Skinner preferred to peel the flesh from its victims while they were still alive and whole. From time to time, the Skinner would invite me to witness one of its crimes. In order to humor this

Gaze Attacks

Gaze attacks may be avoided by not looking into the creature's eyes. See "Gaze Attacks" in Chapter Three of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details. A restless dead may have more than one gaze attack, although such cases are rare. If it has more than one gaze attack, the creature must choose which attack is in use at any given moment. The creature may change its form of gaze attack on its initiative as a free action. No creature may use two gaze attacks at once.

Death Gaze (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1 1/2

This power is found in those unfortunates destroyed by the touch of pure evil. Unable to accept their deaths or to comprehend the magnitude of the wrong done to them, these creatures walk the earth until they can come to terms with their suffering.

Sadly, the mind-shattering evil that destroyed them is still visible in their haunted eyes and has an equally lethal effect on those that dare to meet their gaze. Those that do must make a Fortitude save if within 30 feet or die instantly. Those further away must make a Madness save instead, protected by distance from the full horror expressed in the undead's eyes. Those killed by this power typically rise as undead themselves, also doomed to rest uneasily until they can come to terms with the evil that killed them.

Dread Gaze (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

Anyone meeting eyes with this creature must make a Will save. Those that fail the save turn and flee for 1d4+1 rounds. This ability may be taken more than once. If it is taken again, the subject must make a Will save or curl up into a ball and become *helpless* for 1d4+1 minutes. This is a mind-affecting, fear effect.

Paralyzing Gaze (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

Anyone meeting eyes with this creature must make a Will save. Those that fail the save are paralyzed with fear for 1d4+1 minutes. This ability is a magical fear effect.

Blindsight (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

See Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details.

Dispelling Glare (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The gaze of this creature can dispel magical effects, just like a *dispel magic* spell. This ability is not a gaze attack, but rather a supernatural ability that takes a standard action to invoke. It does not provoke an attack of opportunity. When making the level check, use the creature's HD for the level. This ability may only be used a limited number of times per day (typically three), determined by the DM.

Hypnotic Gaze (Su)

CR Adjustment: +3/4

The target of this power must make a Will save. Failure indicates that the target is treated just as if it were under the effects of a *domination* spell. The effect lasts 1d4+1 minutes.

Influencing Gaze (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

The target must make a Will save. Failure indicates that the target is treated just as if it were under the effects of a *suggestion* spell. The effect lasts one day or whenever the suggested action is completed.

source of information, I would go and watch the creature's ritual.

The victims always remained motionless while they were cut, fixed by the eye that watched them as it worked. Nothing upon their body ever moved, other than the tiny tears escaping from the corners of their eyes.

Powers of the Creature's Aura

Some people can shake a room by merely entering it, can hush a crowd by simply lifting a hand. The presence of these individuals is truly remarkable.

No less remarkable is the presence of the powerful dead. These creatures carry much more than awe with their mighty presence. Some cause



fear with their presence; others destroy life merely by being near it. No matter the effect, their power emanates from the same source — the restless dead's warped and twisted will. Their Desire is so great that it actually shapes and molds the very air about them.

I tell you that Myralis Deckard and I both witnessed such power while sitting in his very home one evening. He had enlisted me to aid him in the search for a powerful restless dead, a creature called the Ash Man by the local folk. The Ash Man had intermittently traveled about the countryside for the past 10 years, burning portions of the forest and farmland; it destroyed farm animals in a like fashion. It had recently turned to people.

As we spoke, we speculated on the creature's abilities. We believed it to possess the power to burn other beings, for when we encountered this creature's handiwork, only bones and ash were ever found. Yet we were wrong.

As Myralis bowed his head to one of his many collected texts, I noticed something in the corner of the room. It was a simple mouse. Something was happening to it, though.

I watched as the mouse's eyes caved in. The creature squealed as maggots began pouring forth from its empty sockets. It flopped over once, and I watched as its body opened forth, consumed almost instantly by all forms of worms and beetles. Within a heartbeat, the creature had decayed into nothingness.

I was about to alert Myralis, but he had already taken note of the phenomenon himself. As I looked at him, I saw that now something caught his eye at the window. I looked to see that the plants that hung there were rotting as well. Before my unliving eyes, they began to turn brown, then grey, and finally black before crumbling to ash.

Upon closer inspection, I saw that Myralis was not looking upon the plants as I had thought. He was looking at something past them, at something outside. As I focused, I saw it as well — a dark silhouette walking up the far hill. The Ash Man had come.

Indeed, the Ash Man did not burn the things around him as we once thought. He drank the very life from them.

The Ash Man's aura did not affect me, of course. I was able to dispatch the creature through my usual



Dark Auras

The dark aura of a restless dead may be turned on or off at will as a free action. Note that hiding for a creature with an active aura is impossible, so foul and mighty is its pure presence.

Ghostly fire (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

This creature can spread a darkling flame around any object that it touches. The flames of the strange fire are completely black, like flickering tongues of shadow. The ghostly fire spreads at the rate of two 5-foot by 5-foot squares per round and goes out after 10 rounds. Anyone touching the flames must make a Fortitude save or gain one negative level.

fear Aura (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Anyone within this creature's aura must make a Will save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) or flee for 1d4+1 rounds. Auras may vary in radius. Thus, a wight with fear aura (60) affects creatures within 60 feet. This ability may be taken twice. If it is taken again, those who fail their save do not flee but become *shaken* (-2 morale penalty to attack and damage rolls, and saving throws).

Aura of frost (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The presence of this being chills the very air around it. The size of the aura varies from creature to creature, but may extend out to a maximum of 60 feet. Those who step within the radius of the aura take 1d4 points of cold damage per round. This ability may be taken twice. If it is taken again, those within the aura must make a Fortitude save. Those who fail suffer hypothermia and are fatigued (see

"Condition Summary" in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Dead Zone (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

The presence of this creature sucks the very life from plants, animals, and even the soil. Those within the 60-foot radius of this aura's effect must make a Fortitude save each round. Those who fail suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. Those who fall to 0 Constitution or less are killed. The creature with this power drinks the life from the land, leaving large tracts of shriveled and ashen ground in its wake.

This ability may be taken twice. If it is taken a second time, the creature gains life from whatever it drains. It gains fast healing 3 when in the presence of plants or healthy soil. For each point of Constitution it drains from a creature, it gains 2 additional temporary hit points. It may gain up to double its maximum hit points, but loses them after 24 hours. Damage is taken from these extra hit points first, unlike the hit points gained for rage. Adjust the CR of the creature an additional +1 if this power is taken a second time.

Unholy Aura (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

This creature emits a foul presence that corrupts all within its area of effect. This size of the aura varies from creature to creature, but may extend out to a maximum of 60 feet. Within the aura, the area is so defiled that it is equivalent to an *unhallow* spell. An additional spell effect (*bless*, *cure*, *zone of truth*, and the like) may not be fixed onto the *unholy aura*, however. Undead with this aura can be detected by paladins in the same way as they detect fiends; see Chapter Two of *Ravenloft Campaign Setting*.

methods. I cannot say the same for Myralis Deckard. When I returned from finishing the Ash Man, I saw that naught remained of the famed hunter but worms.

Yet my point remains the same. The very presence of many of the restless dead can be a powerful tool.

Powers of Corruptive Touch

Desire has a way of corrupting those whom it infects. Some of the restless dead are so corrupted by their Craving, so utterly consumed by it, that they infect everything they touch with their corrupt nature.

A restless dead named Nimue of Valachan possessed this ability. Nimue had an uncanny abil-

Touch of Darkness

Creatures with a touch ability never have more than one. Touch attacks require a successful natural attack (typically a claw or slam) to take effect.

Energy Drain (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

The creature can drain the life energy from those it touches. Most undead inflict only one negative level with each attack; only the most powerful and evil are able to inflict two. Each negative level inflicted heals the restless dead of 5 hit points. See the "Healing" sidebar in Chapter Five: Weaknesses for details.

Life Drinker (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1 1/2

This being not only drains life, it uses it to fuel its own power. The creature inflicts one negative level with a successful natural attack. For each negative level the creature inflicts, it gains +10 hit points, +1 to attack, and +1 to damage. These hit points include the 5 hit points healed by the energy drain (see the "Healing" sidebar in Chapter Five: Weaknesses for details).

Infusion (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

The touch of undead with this power is infused with negative energy. When living victims are struck, this energy is transmitted to them, burning through and attacking the forces that animate their bodies. Victims must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) or suffer 1 point of damage per round until they die or are healed by either a *negative plane protection* or *neutralize poison* spell.

Unholy Touch (Su)

CR Adjustment: +3/4

So evil is the touch of this creature that it deals +2d6 points of unholy (evil) damage to those of good alignment. This creature gains the bonus damage when and only when it uses its natural attacks. It does not gain the bonus damage when wielding a weapon or delivering another type of touch attack.

Touch of Doom (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

Those who are touched by the creature through either a natural attack or touch attack must make a Fortitude save or be *stunned* for one round. Stunned creatures cannot act and lose all Dexterity bonuses, and the opponent gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls against them. Constructs, oozes, plants, undead, incorporeal creatures, and creatures immune to critical hits cannot be stunned.

ity to disguise things; indeed, she disguised things so well that she even fooled me for a while.

Nimue enjoyed dancing with young men. After weeks of courting, flirting, and social games, she would invite her young paramours to her private estate. There, she would have her own personal string quartet play for them in her own private ballroom. It was an elegant room, with plenty of mirrors so Nimue could see herself in them.

In that room, the young couple would dance. They would spin and twirl, their bodies becoming ornaments in the dim candlelight. Inevitably, the young men would catch a glimpse of themselves in the mirrors.

These men always experienced a wide variety of reactions. I saw men weep, some grew enraged, while others stared in shock. In the end, all died. For as Nimue danced with her men, her touch sapped the very life essence from them. Her dances would always end with her horrified companion dropping to the floor, an aged and dried husk.

You see, Nimue's Desire for youth was so strong, it allowed her to sap youth from others through but a touch.

Yet you know this, don't you, Detective? After all, it was you who defeated her.

Powers of Pure Evil

Some powers defy categorization. The powers that seem to stem from a restless dead's very nature certainly defy any category that I might devise.

Save one, perhaps. All those creatures that have the powers I describe below seem wholly and completely evil. Thus, I have categorized them as powers of Pure Evil, because only the most vile, evil, and corrupt of our kind possess these abilities. As you can see, Detective, I possess none of them.

Why do I call them evil? I have spoken of many restless dead thus far, but none of them have I called evil. I do not call the beings I spoke of earlier as evil because their great Craving compelled them. They are no more to blame for their crimes than a ravenous dog is for attacking a rabbit.

Some of our kind, however, revel in what they are; they take great delight in their Craving. For them, their Craving is not a compulsion but a liberation. Moreover, because these beings take so much delight in their Craving, they go to great lengths to "decorate" their compulsions.

Restless dead who enjoy killing might turn it into grisly art. Restless dead who enjoy hoarding their wealth create lures, enticing passers-by to

Only restless dead that are evil may possess these powers.

Animate Dead (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1

Once per day, the undead may cast *animate dead* as a 12th-level sorcerer. This ability may be taken twice. If it is taken a second time, the creature may attempt to slay and reanimate instantly a single living creature as an obedient dead. The second use of this power requires a successful touch attack, and the target may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) to avoid the effects. If the save fails, the victim is instantly slain and rises 1d4 rounds later as an obedient dead.

Command Lesser Undead (Su)

CR Adjustment: +3/4

This creature may command Walking Dead with lower Charisma scores than itself just as if it were an evil cleric with as many levels as it has Hit Dice. Doing so is a standard action. If the creature can create spawn, its spawn are fanatically loyal to it and will obey its commands without thought for their own safety or desires.

Some lords of the undead have a more powerful version of this ability; they can mentally command all undead of a certain type (such as zombies or skeletons) within sight, at will as a free action. They can also use the senses of any undead of this type within a radius of 1 mile, as though they were standing in the place of such thralls.

Black Breath (Ex)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

This creature can expel a cloud of pestilence from its body. The cloud is expelled in the form of a cone and can be between 10 to 60 feet long. Those within the cloud's area of effect must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) at a -6 profane penalty or suffer the effects of a *contagion* spell. Alternately, the *contagion* may manifest constantly as a profane aura 90 feet in diameter. When living creatures first enter this aura, they must make a Fortitude save (same DC, but with no profane penalty) or be infected.

Creatures that fail their save by 10 or more are killed instantly and reanimated as obedient dead under the control of their murderer.

Hellish Laughter (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1

This ability is the hallmark of jolly rogers, the hateful remains of pirates lost at sea. These creatures constantly laugh maniacally, pleased with the opportunity to continue to spread fear across the sea and avenge their untimely deaths.

Most horrifyingly, the jolly roger can infect its opponents with its gurgling chuckle. Anyone within a 30-foot radius of the undead must succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma modifier) or be affected by *hideous laughter* as cast by a 7th-level sorcerer. This is a gaze attack, except that the victim must also be able to hear the jolly roger to be affected.

The sickening laughter can also be transmitted by touch, and such close proximity to the restless dead only increases the power's efficacy. The victim must make a Fortitude save (same DC as for the Will save) or be affected by *hideous laughter* as cast by a 7th-level sorcerer, except that the victim suffers 1d4 points of permanent Constitution drain per round of laughter, and the effect lasts until the victim dies, the effect is dispelled or through the use of the restoration spell. Lost Constitution may also be regained through normal ability increases through a rise in level.

Haunting Lament (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Once per day, this creature can emit a mind-influencing, sonic effect. This effect may come in the form of menacing laughter, a haunting song, or a demonic chant. The range of the power varies from creature to creature, but may extend out to a maximum of 100 feet. Those caught within the radius of effect and who hear the sound find themselves recalling the most disturbing sight that they have seen in their past. The unfortunate victims must make a Horror save (DC 10 + the creature's HD + the creature's Charisma bonus) or face the most horrifying thing that they can recall. This power does not affect Innocents.

Telekinesis (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

This creature can manipulate objects through the force of its will. It must concentrate, but it may do so at will. Otherwise, this ability functions like the *telekinesis* spell.



Shadow Self (Sp)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

As a standard action, the creature can cause its own shadow to leave its body. The shadow has all of the abilities of a shadow (see the *Monster Manual* for details). The owner can see and hear through the shadow, as if it were standing in place of the shadow at all times.

The shadow and its owner share a telepathic bond that allows them to relay senses and to communicate with each other. Should the bond be severed, the shadow is immediately destroyed. Should the shadow be destroyed, the creature loses its shadow for a full day.

Face Graft (Su)

CR Adjustment: +1/4

The creature may take on the appearance of anyone whom it has previously slain. This change

involves actually peeling the skin off the victim and the restless dead placing the skin onto its body. The entire process takes 30 minutes. Once the restless dead has the skin pulled onto its body, the rest of its body shapes to conform to the dimensions of the skin. Thus, the restless dead may seem fat or thin, tall or short. It will resemble the slain victim, much like a disguise created by the *alter self* spell. Like *alter self*, this ability gives the undead a +10 bonus to all Disguise checks.

The one drawback to the skin graft is that the skin eventually rots from the creature's body. The graft develops holes, showing the rotting flesh of the restless dead beneath. One skin lasts about 3 days until it begins to show signs of rotting. Each day after the third adds a -2 cumulative circumstance penalty to Disguise checks. When the penalty reaches -10, the skin has finally ripped off the body.





come into their lairs. Those who delight in their vengeance make sure that they torture their victims' families, not just the victims themselves.

Yes, Detective, these are the restless dead on which you must focus, for unlike me, they cannot be reasoned with. They enjoy their Craving too much. They are more likely to deceive and to manipulate and to continue their compulsion because they want to, not seek aid as I have.

Beware the power of these creatures, Detective, for they are strange and unpredictable. Since

they delight in their compulsion, they will be all the more enraged if you stand in the way of it.

Authors' Comments: Finally, we would like to add details of two unusual abilities that we have encountered ourselves. The first came to our attention when an acquaintance of ours, Madelaine Artour, was found strangled in her bed. Strangely, the room had no windows and the door was locked, the only key attached to Madelaine's belt. The room was protected against all magical and ethereal intrusion by Madelaine's magic. Gaining entry seemed impossible, and yet something had come in.

Powers of the Body

These powers stem from the state of the restless dead's body and provide them with some surprising advantages.

Aquatic

CR Adjustment: +1 1/2

Aquatic undead gain a swim speed equal to their normal land speed. They also have fire resistance 20 and are immune to water- and cold-based attacks.

Some rare undead are more at home in the water than on land, suffering a -2 morale penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and checks while out of the water. The CR adjustment for these creatures is only +1/2.

Boneless

CR Adjustment: +1/2

Boneless undead are immensely flexible. If their body is kept moist, they can squeeze through gaps of amazingly small size. The amount of time required to fit through a 1-foot long gap of a certain size depends on the size of the undead, as shown on Table 4-1, below. Boneless undead can move through a gap of larger diameter without affecting their movement.

Table 5-1: Boneless Movement Rates

Gap Size	Undead's Size				
	Huge	Large	Medium	Small	Tiny
1 foot	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Free action
9 inches	Full round	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent
6 inches	2 rounds	Full round	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent
3 inches	5 rounds	2 rounds	Full round	Move-equivalent	Move-equivalent
2 inches	—	5 rounds	2 rounds	Full round	Move-equivalent
1 inch	—	—	5 rounds	2 rounds	Full round
1/2 inch	—	—	—	5 rounds	2 rounds
1/4 inch	—	—	—	—	5 rounds

Boneless undead must be kept moist or they quickly lose their terrifying suppleness. If they are not saturated with water at least once a week, they cannot fit through smaller gaps than other creatures of their size, and they gain the *partial actions only* special quality.

Partial Actions Only

CR Adjustment: -1

The undead can only perform partial actions.



As we investigated Madelaine's murder, we found that there was much we did not know about our friend. In a secret room under her hearth, we found a library full of books detailing the most horrific magic, and attached to that library a laboratory full of scientific and medical paraphernalia. Most important among these items, although we did not realize at the time, was a human skeleton in a display case.

Madelaine's journals revealed that she had enticed a lady of the night to her home with promises of food and shelter. Sadly, Madelaine's motives were less than pure; the food was laced with sedatives, and her victim woke to find herself strapped to a workbench in Madelaine's laboratory. The sorcerer carefully stripped all the flesh away from her victim's bones, leaving a perfectly intact skeleton for her to study. The flesh, still largely in one piece, was discarded. The anger that the prostitute felt at her callous treatment was enough for her to join the ranks of the restless dead to gain her revenge. Without bones, the creature was supple enough to fit under the door to Madelaine's bedchamber and throttle her as she slept.

The second ability is similar in that it is more of a by-product of the state of the undead's body, rather than a salient power per se. Aquatic undead become heavy and waterlogged through their constant immersion in water. As such, those who seek to destroy the undead that plague mariners and river traders should beware: the water-steeped tissues of lacedons, jolly rogers, sea zombies, and the like provide them with a great deal of protection against fire-based attacks and complete immunity to water and cold. They are also adept at swimming and are at home in their environment, so prepare to be outmaneuvered.

— G&LWF

Conclusion



egretably, Alanik Ray no longer corresponds or meets with Ratik Ubel. After a few weeks of fruitless searching, Ubel began to grow frustrated with the slow progress of the investigation. He started meeting the Great Detective less and less, finally breaking off contact completely. The last our friends heard from him was an angry note nailed to their front door, which we reprint below.

I bore of these inquiries. Where is the evidence I seek? You of all people should be able to procure the clues I need. I must find my killer. Have I not explained enough? Do you not know the madness that burns within me? You must find who it is that possessed that scrap of fabric.

I warn you, Detective, if you do not begin producing results there are things that can be done. No, I would not go up against you. Not the Great Detective. I would choose a simple target, an easier target — Arthur Sedgwick, perhaps.

Ratik Ubel

We reprint this letter to show how wary you must be to survive as an undead hunter. Any action, even the most incidental, could lead those around you into danger, through no fault of your own. You must also remember that the restless dead are creatures that manage to resist the natural laws of the world for a time to pursue some insane ambition. No matter how pitiable they seem to you, they are scoundrels that will do anything to achieve their goals and are universally soulless monsters. Ratik Ubel and his kind must be eradicated. While empathy with their plight is laudable, it can easily blind one to the restless dead's true character, which can bring danger into every part of your life.



Chapter Five:
Weaknesses



Although the Walking Dead generally do not have a specific vulnerability tied to their background in the same way that a ghost does or a large suite of weaknesses like vampires, they are by no means invulnerable. Any good hunter knows that finding and exploiting his prey's weaknesses will lead to an easier hunt, and this fact holds true when the prey is undead.

Once again, we must remind the reader that the information presented in this chapter — more so than the other information in this book — is neither absolute nor binding. The hunter that takes it to be so is putting himself and those around him in jeopardy. Tragedy may not occur immediately, but irrational dependence on these vulnerabilities always holding true will lead you there eventually.

Yet take heart! The undead hunter's task is to discover the fatal chink in the Walking Dead's armor and return these creatures to their eternal rest. A judicious mix of common sense, courage, and caution will make this goal attainable with the minimum of danger.

Typical Vulnerabilities



As one might expect, some weaknesses are found in all the Walking Dead at least to some extent, while others are found only in a particular strain or individual. As they are more widely useful, we will begin our discussion with the widespread weaknesses: holy water, priestly turning, and magic. All of the Walking Dead are vulnerable to these effects in some way.

Holy Water

As Van Richten often noted, holy water is one of the most important weapons in the undead hunter's arsenal. No one expecting to encounter the Walking Dead should be without it. A single splash burns the impure flesh of the Walking Dead like acid, while a direct hit with an unstopped vial can completely destroy them. Of course, the difficulty lies in ensuring that as large an area as possible is hit with the holy water. We recommend only using unstopped vials, never sealed. Sealed vials may not break on contact with the target, perhaps giving the creature enough time to close with you. While some of the holy water may be lost from a thrown unstopped vial, the chance of contact is much greater. All in all, the results are greater for

a smaller risk if unstopped vials are used for a successful hunt.

Another alternative is using a *viperbite* weapon or syringe to inject the fluid, or coating the weapon with holy water. Both the *viperbite* and the syringe ensure that all of the holy water is delivered deep into the undead's tissues, inflicting the maximum amount of damage upon the menace. These devices are effective even if the walking dead is resistant to damage from nonmagical weapons: although the monster is unaffected by the weapon itself, usually enough contact is achieved to inject the holy water.

Holy Water and Quintessence

Holy water deals 2d4 points of damage to the Walking Dead on a direct hit and 1 point of damage if the creature is just splashed. It is treated as a grenade-like weapon; see Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook* for details.

If a weapon is coated with holy water, the holy water ignores natural armor. Make an attack roll normally. If the attack roll is sufficient to hit the walking dead without its natural armor bonus, the creature suffers 1 point of damage from the holy water. If the attack roll is sufficient to defeat the creature's full AC, the weapon deals normal damage as well. Each coating of holy water lasts 4 successful attacks before becoming impure.

Quintessence is detailed in *Van Richten's Arsenal*. This alchemical fluid deals 3d8 points of damage to the undead, but it must be injected or ingested to be effective. Simply splashing an undead with it is completely ineffective.

Only slashing or piercing weapons can be effectively coated with *quintessence*. Unlike holy water, *quintessence* does not deal damage on a successful touch attack; the attack roll must be equal to or greater than the opponent's total AC, as normal. The fluid deals 1d4 points of damage on the first successful attack and 1 point of damage on the second before becoming contaminated.

One flask of holy water or *quintessence* is sufficient to coat one Medium-sized weapon, two Small weapons, or four Tiny weapons. Coating a Large weapon requires two flasks. Applying these fluids to a weapon is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. The damage dealt by these fluids is not subject to damage reduction and is not healed by regeneration; fast healing, however, is effective.

Both *viperbite* weapons and syringes are detailed in *Van Richten's Arsenal*.



Coating a weapon in holy water has a similar, if lessened, effect. Only a tiny amount of holy water is left behind in the wound, but this amount is usually sufficient to burn and irritate the undead. The amount of damage is usually equivalent to a splash from holy water. Unfortunately, the profane flesh of the Walking Dead quickly fouls the holy water, so constant reapplication is required.

The alchemical product *quintessence* allegedly has a similar effect upon the undead, although we have never found the opportunity to test its efficacy in combat. Those who have are more than welcome to send us details of their experiences with the mystical fluid; we are always eager to correspond with other hunters.

Turning

Almost all beneficent religions wield some power over the undead. The Walking Dead are vile creatures, and the followers of these beneficent religions rightly see them as blasphemies of the highest order. This righteous outrage allows the priest to channel enough positive energy to repel or even destroy the Walking Dead with the power of faith. Other priests can channel negative energy to force the undead to obey them. Although this may seem like a useful ability (after all, one becomes able to turn a necromancer's forces against each other rather than just repelling them), we cannot recommend that adventurers try to control the undead in this or any other fashion. Channeling negative energy for any reason imperils your soul, and using it to control undead smacks of the blackest necromancy. Using necromancy to confront necromancers and the undead hardly seems a wise tactic.

Priestly turning is not infallible, however. The terrible Craving that drives the Walking Dead often makes them more difficult to turn than normal. In general, the more powerful the undead, the greater this additional impediment will be.

Turn Resistance

Because their wills are broken during animation, the obedient dead have no turn resistance.

All hungry dead have +2 turn resistance.

Not all of the restless dead have turn resistance. For those that do, the bonus equals their Wisdom modifier plus their Charisma modifier, to a maximum of +7.

Magic

If holy water is one of the most important tools in the undead hunter's arsenal, spells are the most potent and versatile. Many spells are designed specifically to target the undead, often with the added bonus that you can hurl them from far enough away to escape harm.

In general, the Walking Dead are almost never resistant to magical effects, so spells targeted against them should work as one would expect. That is, neither we nor anyone we have ever spoken to on the matter has encountered a walking dead that could simply ignore spells the way some ancient dead and liches do, but caution prevents us from saying that no walking dead will ever have this ability. If it did, a necromancer would likely magically imbue it into a minion, or it would be the salient power of a stronger undead that hated magic in life or bore a grudge against spellcasters in death.

Some Walking Dead, however, can shrug off particular types of energy such as cold or fire. As undead wretches, and thus lacking a living biology, all Walking Dead are immune to sleep, paralysis, and death and necromantic effects. Furthermore, their obsessively single-minded natures render them immune to mind-affecting magic. Also keep in mind that the Walking Dead are animated by negative energy, not positive energy as are living creatures. Thus, spells that use negative energy to inflict wounds upon living creatures actually heal the Walking Dead, while spells that use positive energy to cure the wounds of living creatures do the Walking Dead harm.

Magical Immunities

The Walking Dead are immune to all spells that require a Fortitude save, unless such spells also affect objects. In addition to the magical effects mentioned above, the Walking Dead are also immune to ability damage, ability draining, and energy draining.

Spell resistance is an extraordinary ability; see Chapter 3 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details. A walking dead's SR equals $10 + 1/2$ its HD + its Wisdom modifier.



Psychology



As we mentioned in Chapter One: Necrology, the Walking Dead are motivated by the Craving, a deeply ingrained psychological need. This Craving is perhaps their most vulnerable point of attack: if you can deduce a walking dead's particular Craving, you are already partway to defeating your prey and permanently laying it to rest. Even if the Craving is not one that can be used directly against the creature, it may still be valuable as the bait for a trap or to protect innocents from danger. The Black Rider of Ulthewe was a terrible horseman that rode once a generation to claim the life of a member of the Ulthewe family. From studying the family histories, we discovered that the Rider was once a ranger employed by the family whose daughter had been raped and murdered by the Ulthewe heir. Thus, we surmised that the Rider might feel some connection to the grave of his daughter and waited for the revenant by the headstone on the night it was due to return. Sure enough, the creature thundered out of the darkness on his skeletal steed just after darkness, and we were able to trap and destroy it.

To illustrate this point further, we remind the reader of Liam McGonnal, a somewhat eccentric and bohemian Inquisitor in Tepes with a remarkable talent for detecting necromancers. During the early days of the Inquisition, a grave robber led a

vengeful wight to the hamlet where McGonnal was stationed. By investigation, McGonnal discovered the creature was dedicated to protecting the ancient temple where it had been interred. The Inquisitor thought quickly and instructed the village blacksmith to craft a holy symbol of the relevant god for all the inhabitants of the hamlet. When the wight arrived, it ignored all those who wore one of the holy symbols, found the grave robber, and dragged both its stolen property and the unfortunate woman (who was not equipped with a holy symbol) back to the temple. Remarkably, the wight actually defended several of the townsfolk from the woman's attacks when she desperately tried to take one of the holy symbols. This episode is a fascinating example of the power understanding your prey can have over the Walking Dead.

Necrotic Healing

In the years since Dr. van Richten's disappearance, would-be experts have released spurious "self-help" books modeled on the good doctor's guides. One of the better known of these books, *The Hammer of Light*, written by Cletus von Sarr of Valachan, claims that the undead cannot heal their wounds, as they lack the normal biological processes of the living, including restoration. He suggests that adventurers attack the undead, withdraw when endangered, and then hunt them down again when healed. To some extent, von Sarr's claim is true: the Walking Dead must rely on magic or horrific "feeding" methods to replenish their lost energies, not natural healing. Yet it is very rare for an individual creature to have no way to heal its injuries; only the weakest of the obedient and the restless dead can be easily dealt with in the way von Sarr suggests. In other cases, not only do you give the walking dead a chance to escape, you also place others in danger; to heal its wounds, a walking dead may need to drain others of their life-force or vigor, or simply kill them and devour their flesh. Quite honestly, von Sarr's advice is so ridiculous that we can only suggest that he is either a fool with no real experience or one who attempts to cloud an already dangerous issue out of malice or perversity. His books are not to be taken seriously.

Healing

The Walking Dead cannot heal damage via natural healing. Instead, they must rely on magic, energy or ability draining, regeneration, fast healing, or feasting.

Regeneration and Fast Healing

These special qualities work normally, but some of the Walking Dead gain them only in certain places or environments. For example, a creature bound to protect a temple may gain regeneration for as long as it remains inside the grounds of the temple, while desert zombies may have fast healing only when they are in contact with sand. The EL of the Walking Dead when faced in these environments is increased by 1; in environments where they cannot heal, the EL is unchanged.

Magic

Inflict wounds spells heal the undead a number of hit points equal to the amount of damage they would have taken. *Slay living* heals 3d6 points of damage +1 per caster level. *Finger of death*, *power word death*, and *harm* act as *heal* spells for the Walking Dead. *Energy drain* heals 2d4 x 5 points of damage, while *enervation* heals 5 hit points per 2 caster levels. If these last two spells would raise the undead above its maximum hit points, the excess persists as temporary hit points.

Energy Draining

For every negative level the undead inflicts upon a living victim, it gains 5 hit points. If the undead is at maximum hit points, these extra hit points persist as temporary hit points.

Ability Draining

For every point of ability drain the walking dead inflicts, it heals an amount of damage equal to its Hit Dice. This healing cannot raise the undead over its maximum hit points.

Ability Damage

For every point of ability damage the walking dead inflicts, it regains 1 hit point. This healing cannot raise the undead over its maximum hit points.

Feasting

This ability is only available to the hungry dead. See the "Eating Requirements and Feasting" sidebar in Chapter Three: The Hungry Dead.

Salient Weaknesses



Salient weaknesses are both more and less useful for the common hunter in the battle against the Walking Dead. They are more useful because they often have far more of a hold over the Walking Dead than other methods. A few priests are powerful enough to turn a truly powerful taxim or king-wight, but with the right allergen, even a simple farmer could keep such creatures at bay. Salient weaknesses, however, are less useful because they are specific to each individual creature, and discovering that weakness can involve an incredible amount of research into the creature's life, death, and the circumstances surrounding its reanimation. Even then, the hunter cannot test whether the hypothetical weakness will actually work or not without engaging the monster itself, and a mistake in the field can be lethal.

Bear in mind that salient weaknesses usually depend on some aspect of the walking dead's personality during life. As a general rule, creatures with stronger personalities are more likely to have salient weaknesses, while creatures such as the obedient dead, whose will is broken on animation, will not. If the obedient dead do have such weaknesses, it is usually because their master used a flawed animation or binding ritual or is subject to an allergen himself. Van Richten records that the Pale Herd could be kept at bay by a sprig of mistletoe. We encountered a dread seaman known as the Laughing Pirate whose zombie crewmen were paralyzed by a ship's bell tolling a fog warning, even as the Pirate himself frothed with rage.

Allergens

In his research for his guides, Dr. van Richten discovered that many classes of undead were affected by relatively common items and substances, which he called *allergens*. The most famous of these allergens is the aversion many vampires feel toward garlic, but hunters will be relieved to know that some of the Walking Dead are also strongly influenced by such items. No two members of the Walking Dead have exactly the same allergen, and a large number have no allergen at all, but where an allergen exists, it can be a powerful tool in a hunter's arsenal.

Although we write "item" in the paragraph above, in truth not all allergens are physical objects. Most are, but some of the Walking Dead are

affected by sounds or smells, or other, more indefinable qualities. On one solitary excursion, a shambling creature very much like a zombie attacked Laurie. The creature took her by surprise and grappled her to the ground, where it pressed its face against her hair and inhaled deeply before disappearing into the forest. We have no idea what the creature wanted or what about Laurie repulsed it, but the creature has not been seen since.

We have recorded five different reactions that a walking dead may manifest toward its allergen: it may feel *aversion*, *fascination*, *enragement*, or *remembrance*, or the bearer of the allergen may enjoy *protection*. These effects generally manifest either as soon as the creature sees the allergen or when the creature comes into contact with it, and they remain in effect for as long as the allergen stays in the creature's sight. Typically, the undead's reaction to a particular allergen is constant. That is, a creature enraged once by yellow cloth will always be enraged by yellow cloth; a different item, however, may fascinate the creature.

Aversion

I fled into the kitchen, the monster's claws ripping through the back of my bodice. It howled and gibbered like a fell beast and moved with lightning speed. It surely would have torn me to pieces with its powerful arms ere I reached the door, had it not stopped to smash my collection of antiques — the collection de Gaul was prepared to kill me to acquire.

My bosom heaving with fear, I scabbled at the stovetop for a weapon. The monster hurled itself into the room, its eyes glowing with hatred. I picked up the first object I laid my hands on to defend myself — a soup ladle. For a moment, I cursed my bad luck and resigned myself to death, but then the creature caught sight of its reflection in the ladle. It howled — a sound so full of sorrow and lost innocence that my heart went out to it — and threw a hand over its eyes. Staggering blindly, it stumbled from the room and into the dark and stormy night.

— Excerpt from *A Love Beyond Death*

As dreadful as the above passage from one of the *Romance from Beyond the Grave* novels is, it does portray fairly accurately the effect of allergens causing aversion on the Walking Dead. Walking Dead with an aversion to their allergen flee from it in pain and terror, and even if able to overcome their fear cannot approach within 50 or 60 feet of the allergen and the person bearing it. Usually, the item is some representation of the creature's death;



thus, a zombie that was killed by garroting may have an aversion to garrotes due to the intense fear and pain associated with the memories stirred by the object. More rarely, the aversion is due to sorrow rather than fear — the allergen represents some beloved aspect of the walking dead's past life and it flees rather than recall what it has lost.

Note that even those Walking Dead that have lost their memories may still be subject to aversion. The allergen can still remind the creature of its past life, even if the monster does not fully remember why the item holds so much emotion for it. In such cases, however, the undead is more likely to feel *fascination* or *remembrance* than aversion.

fascination

Fascination is the opposite of aversion. Instead of being repelled by the allergen and the memories it holds, the undead seeks to get as close as possible to it, like the effect of flames on moths. The allergen is usually something the walking dead valued during life, such as a prized possession, a portrait of a loved one, or the smell of a favorite meal.

On noticing the allergen, the undead immediately rushes over to it and may stare fixedly at it for up to a minute, reliving its more pleasant times. During this period, the creature will make no move to defend itself or pursue its victims, so *fascination* allergens can be useful in both ambushes and in escapes. The Gnarled Man of Liara was defeated only when the Asrana brothers, with some small assistance from ourselves, lured it to a clearing with pipe music. For as long as Ganbalin played his pipe, the hideous creature stood entranced and allowed us to destroy it, never making a move against us.

Although standing firm with an allergen when a walking dead is bearing down on you takes great mental fortitude, doing so is vital. If the undead loses eye contact with the allergen — for example, if you drop it in fright — it will no longer feel *fascination*, and you could doom everyone present. The undead will rarely, if ever, try to take the allergen from you, so you are at no physical risk so long as you remain steady. Of course, the possibility also exists that your allergen may be ineffective or causes *enragement* in your prey, in which case you will definitely be in danger. As always, one must





read the situation and be ready to react appropriately. Do be careful!

Enragement

"Tell me everything you can recall about your... the murder," I said, fascinated almost in spite of myself.

Ubel shifted uneasily in his chair. "Really, I remember nothing except a yellow scarf. He — or she, I suppose — attacked me from behind. Yellow. The only glimpse I got was a yellow scarf."

"Like this, you mean?" Arthur asked. The well meaning fool produced a mustard-colored scarf from his pocket.

The change in Ubel was immediate and terrifying. His hands clenched convulsively on the chair, splintering the wood. His lips drew back from his teeth in a snarl, and his pale face thinned and gained a feral cast. Arthur understandably took a step back. Goldenfang seemed to leap into my hand.

"No," said Ubel tightly. "Not exactly like that. Please put it away!"

— Excerpt from a letter by Alanik Ray

Death is almost universally regarded with fear and awe in our own land and, I suspect, all others. Whatever the rewards promised in the next life, few people are actually tempted to receive them before they must, and some are so terrified of death they seek to avoid it by irrevocably tying themselves to this mortal realm as undead.

Needless to say, those who are hurried past the final gate before what they consider their due time are often enraged that their lives were cut short and return as revenants to avenge this perceived wrong. These monsters — and they *are* monsters, however justifiable their return may seem — often feel *enragement* at things that remind them of the circumstances surrounding their deaths. We have already shown Ratik Ubel's obsessive hatred for his murderer, expressed as it is in the one clue Ubel has to his or her identity. Another example is the Laughing Pirate. This grim figure once prowled the Sea of Sorrows until, one foggy night, his ship ploughed into the side of another and sank. Had the other ship been tolling a proper fog warning, the collision would never have occurred. As such, the Pirate grew irrationally angry whenever he heard a fog bell.

When an allergen causes *enragement* in a walking dead, the creature immediately rushes at the offending item, trying to destroy both it and the person presenting it. Thus, if you wish to use an

allergen that you suspect may enrage your foe, please ensure that you place it prominently rather than holding it. The undead will focus its attacks on the allergen while ignoring everything else, so it is possible to make an escape by throwing an allergen behind you.

Protection

In this case, the allergen acts as a barrier against the Walking Dead. In some cases, a line or circle of the allergen will create a barrier that the undead cannot cross; in other cases, the allergen must be included as a material component in a protective spell to be effective. For example, the Withered Trapper of Tepest could not cross a line of rabbit fur, while the Horror of Fang Rock could be kept at bay only if cold iron was used in a *protection from evil* spell.

Also note that far more than any other allergen, protective allergens are incredibly specific. As the above excerpt from Alanik Ray's letter demonstrates, any yellow scarf angered Ratik Ubel (even if those of a different shade or pattern did not quite provoke him to a state of true *enragement*); a fog warning rung on any ship's bell, whether brass or steel, could affect the Laughing Pirate's crew. The Withered Trapper, however, could be kept at bay only by white fur from a particular breed of rabbit common in Tepest — my fur-lined cloak provided no protection against him. A ghoul repulsed by a shovel may be affected only when the spade is made of a particular wood or metal, by a particular smith, or only when presented with the blade, not the handle. While the protection afforded by these allergens is very powerful, it can be very difficult to make manifest.

Remembrance

The most powerful allergens provoke *remembrance*. In the process of animation, the personalities of many of the Walking Dead are altered. Uncharacteristic goals and obsessions are planted within their minds, their outlook becomes twisted and evil, and their memories are warped and splintered. In short, the personalities of many of the Walking Dead are perverse reflections of how they were during life, similar in some ways but very different in others.

Remembrance allergens restore a walking dead's personality to the way it was during life. All of the changes undeath has wrought are washed away, returning the soul to its natural state, if only tem-





porarily. In this state, the obedient dead regain their independence and the hungry dead can control their eternal hunger. Only the restless dead, who resemble their living selves far more closely than the other classes of Walking Dead, are unaffected or affected only slightly. Typically, a walking dead under the effects of *remembrance* will then try to aid you against the person (if any) who animated it or allow you to lay it to rest. Of course, not all undead are eager to return to their graves so soon after being freed, so one must be careful to ensure that the creatures do not immediately turn on you. Look into the undead's background before employing the allergen to ensure that no fatal character flaw exists that will result in the creature abusing its new independence.

For example, we remind the reader that Ratik Ubel was, in life, a vicious thief and murderer in Il Aluk. While we cannot accept that undeath can in any way be a desirable state of affairs, it has taught him patience and a respect for life that he lacked while alive. As Alanik Ray portrays him in his letters, Ubel is no paragon of virtue, but he is also not the black-hearted scoundrel he was formerly. Thus, a man such as Ubel would not be a good candidate for a *remembrance* allergen. He may return quietly to his rest, but the risk that he would instead become a vile killer with all the powers that undeath brought him is too great to countenance.

According to our sources, zombies created by Voudun — a spirit-worshipping religion practiced

in Souragne — remember their past lives if fed salt (although we cannot vouch for the truth of this statement and would never recommend that hunters use this tactic indiscriminately or generally). We have encountered only two examples of *remembrance* allergens in our own careers. As we have already mentioned, the crewmen of the Laughing Pirate were paralyzed by the sound of a bell ringing a fog warning. We believe that during this period of paralysis, the zombies relived their final moments of life. As soon as the bell stopped, though, the Laughing Pirate regained its control over them. In the other case, a necromancer used a flawed ritual to animate her servants, and the skeletons regained their memories when we cast *disrupt undead* on them.

Note that in all three of these examples, the allergen is some item or event not normally encountered by the Walking Dead and, in the case of salt, is quite difficult to administer. This situation obviously makes sense: if the Walking Dead were reminded of their death and regained their independence every time they saw a common object or trivial circumstance, we would not be troubled by them to the extent that we are. Whereas other allergens (particularly those that cause *enragement* in the Walking Dead for some macabre reason) are common items or sensations, those causing *remembrance* are often highly obscure and very difficult to find through research. Often, luck more than planning will reveal one to you.

Allergens

Although the Walking Dead are not as powerful as some other forms of undead, they can still prove an overwhelming foe for heroes at low levels. Allergens are a good way to make a powerful undead more suitable for low-level adventures. All allergens produce extraordinary effects.

Allergens also set that individual undead apart from other generic Walking Dead. The villain of any adventure should be memorable, and allergens can make her so. This is especially true for Gothic villains, who should be tragic individuals with whom the players can identify, and again, an allergen can help make an otherwise ordinary zombie lord or revenant as worthy of pity as it is worthy of revulsion. The allergen should reflect some peculiarity of the walking dead's life, death, or reanimation, making it particularly atmospheric once the players realize the connection.

Aversion

On seeing (or experiencing, if some other sense is involved) an allergen that causes aversion, the walking dead must make a Fear save (DC 25). If the save is successful, the walking dead is unaffected so long as it remains at least 60 feet minus its Wisdom score from the allergen. If it comes any closer, it must make every effort to remove itself to that distance.

Fascination

When a walking dead sees (or hears or smells) such an allergen, it immediately moves to the object and stands transfixed, as though paralyzed, for 2d6 rounds.

Enragement

The walking dead flies into a rage and tries to destroy the allergen and anyone presenting it, ignoring everything and everyone else in its zeal. The walking dead gains a +2 morale bonus to attack rolls made against the allergen and the person presenting it, if any. As it makes little effort to protect itself, the walking dead suffers a -2 dodge penalty to AC. The rage remains until the walking dead can no longer sense the allergen or until either the allergen or the creature is destroyed.

Protection

If the allergen by itself wards against the Walking Dead, the Walking Dead cannot pass through a portal where the allergen is positioned nor cross a barrier (such as a line or circle) formed from the allergen. An allergen wards an area 5 feet in radius. A walking dead that makes a successful Will save (DC 30) can cross the barrier, although if the allergen objects are not in close contact, it becomes easier for the undead to cross. The Will save DC decreases by 1 for every 2 feet that the objects are apart (rounded down). If the item is used as a material component in a spell to ward the area, the DC increases by the spell's level. The area warded is either a 5-foot radius or the spell's normal area of effect, whichever is greater. The walking dead cannot pass the warded area, although it can still use any ranged attacks, supernatural effects, or spell-like abilities it may possess on those on the other side.

Example: A wight that died in a fire has soot as its allergen. If a small pile of soot is placed in front of a doorway 5 feet across, the wight must make a successful Will save (DC 30) to move through the door. If the save fails, the wight cannot pass through. If soot is used as a material component in a *magic circle against evil* spell to guard the same doorway, the DC is 33 instead.

If two small piles of soot 10 feet apart confront the same wight, it must make a Will save to cross the barrier. The barrier is 20 feet long: the 10 feet between the two piles and 5 feet on either side of each pile. The DC to cross the barrier is 25 (30 - 10/2).

If the allergen must be used in a spell to be effective, the allergen by itself presents no barrier to the Walking Dead. The DM must specify which spell is needed to make the allergen effective; *protection against evil*, *magic circle against evil*, and their derivatives are particularly appropriate. The Will save to cross a barrier created with this spell has a DC of 30. Spells of lower level than this are ineffective, even if they use the allergen; spells of higher level add their level normally.

Example: Another wight is affected by soot, but only when used in a *magic circle against evil* spell. Crossing this barrier requires a Will Save (DC 30). The soot by itself or in conjunction with a *protection from evil* spell is useless. However, a *repulsion* spell using soot would increase the DC to 36.

Remembrance

If the allergen is a physical object, the walking dead must touch, be injected with, or ingest the allergen to be affected. If so, the walking dead immediately regains any memories that it lost due to the shock of reanimation, and its Intelligence score and alignment return to whatever they were during life. The creature also becomes self-willed.

This state typically persists for one hour. Every minute after this time, the walking dead must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per minute) or return to its normal undead condition. In other cases, allergens may cause the walking dead to remember only a specific event in its life, or the walking dead may only become self-willed while exposed to the allergen.



Chapter Six: Necromancers

“Yes; — no; — I have been sleeping — and now — now — I am dead [...] For God’s sake! — quick! — quick! — put me to sleep — or, quick! — waken me! — quick! — I say to you that I am dead!”

— Edgar Allan Poe, The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar



Authors' Comment:

Dearest Laurie,

"I have the artifact that we have been after for so long. Apparently, the Raiment of Clarity is not a set of armor or clothing at all. It is indeed a book, a tome of arcane magic and power...."

I remember clearly writing this letter to my sister, though I knew it could hardly arrive before I myself did. Little did I realize at that time how evil a tome I held in my hands. The Raiment of Clarity is a text on necromancy. It describes how one might raise the dead and use them as minions. The text's author is apparently someone known as the Iron Crown. We have our suspicions as to the Iron Crown's true identity but shall not as yet voice them. Better to be sure of one's findings than a fool. Needless to say, both of us find this book most disturbing and therefore have chosen not to publish the majority of it.

Still, we feel that knowing the ways of the enemy is important and so have included some portion of the Raiment in this tome that our readers may gain some understanding of the tactics and powers our opponents use. Therefore, we include excerpts from the tome below, directly quoted as written by the Iron Crown.

— GWF

Know thee this, thou hast but one of the Greater Raiments of Clarity. Two more yet remain hidden to thee. Should thou find all three, the secrets of the Land shall be open to thee, and all such mysteries shall be laid bare.

Whosoever shall find this tome shall be lauded by the Iron Crown Himself. For it is by his hand that this tome was written. Hear, then, the great words of the Bearer of the Iron Crown:

Use this tome with impunity, for thou art aware of the True Path to Power.

Others shall question thee, for they shall not understand.

Others shall oppose thee, for they shall be jealous of your power.

Others shall lie to thee, for they shall fear your might.

The First Rite— The Rite of the Soldier

Hear then, the words of the Iron Crown:

A great general must first possess a great army: one that does not question; one that does not falter; one that does not sleep. Thou shalt raise before thee such an army, and within thine hands shall be the keys to all power. Hear now the methods in which thou mayest raise the dead.

from the Raiment of Clarity



The following suggestions for the rules to use these spells are interspersed with text culled from the tome.

The Animate Dead Spell

In Ravenloft, the *animate dead* spell is far more effective than its regular D&D version. A caster may raise twice the number of Hit Dice of undead and control a total of four times her level in Hit Dice. The caster may choose how many Hit Dice each undead is at the time of creation. Because undead do not have a high base attack bonus, casters generally do not add more than one or two Hit Dice to their undead minions.

Raising undead Hit Dice gives them more hit points and makes them harder to turn. It does not allow them to hit more often at an appreciable rate. If casters desire to create more powerful undead, animate larger bodies instead is better. The body of an ogre, for instance, creates a much tougher zombie than a Medium-sized creature that has been advanced to 4 HD.

Information on advancing undead or other kinds of creatures can be found on pages 12–13 in the *Monster Manual*.

Variant Undead

A necromancer may raise undead with a simple *animate dead* spell, *create undead*, or *create greater undead* spell. Yet to create truly potent undead, a necromancer must be willing to go to extremes. If so desired, the DM may allow necromancers to discover or develop their own varieties of undead. Undead variants may be created through malevolent circumstances, spell combinations, or both.



Malevolent Circumstances

Victims who died through unusual circumstances often produce more potent forms of undead once animated. For instance, vodan zombies are created when the victims are buried alive beforehand.

The DM may establish a number of circumstances of death that breed a variety of undead. We should note that the more powerful the undead, the more difficult it should be to create the circumstance of the particular death. Special circumstances include such elements as lengthy rituals, unusual methods of death, particular victims, and the use of enchanted or rare items.

Spell Combinations

Necromancers might create more potent undead through the use of multiple spells cast upon the bodies before they are animated. For instance, the pyroskeletons animated by the dread priestess Radaga were created through the casting of *enlarge*, *produce flame*, *protection from elements*, and *animate dead*.

Table 6-1: Sample formulae

Undead Created	Methods
Jolly Roger	This undead uses the corpse of a pirate or captain who died at sea, with the necromancer casting <i>hideous laughter</i> before animation.
Lebendtod	The necromancer casts <i>gentle repose</i> , <i>veil</i> , and <i>telepathic bond</i> before animation.
Hanged Man	Before animation, the caster places <i>animate rope</i> and <i>bull's strength</i> on the body of someone who was hanged.
Devourer	The necromancer casts <i>magic jar</i> on the body of a large corpse while the caster is ethereal, then animates the corpse.
Morag	The necromancer finds the body of a mass murderer or serial killer of at least 7th-level who has not atoned for his crimes, then animates it.

Note that there is no hard and fast rule about which circumstances produce what kind of undead. These formulae are intended for NPC use, not player use. Any PC participating in the conscious effort of creating a unique undead minion should automatically fail a Powers check for such a heinous act.

When animating a variant undead creature, the control rule still applies. Those undead that exceed the caster's level are allowed a Will saving throw to break free from the necromancer's control.

The Second Rite— The Rite of the Commander

When thou hast raised up thy servants and soldiers, thou shalt need lieutenants excellent and true. Thy soldiers shall not be able to think for themselves, act for themselves. Therefore, thou shalt need a lesser commander, one that might act and think in thy name. Hear now how thou might raise such commanders.

New Undead Creation Spells

The following spells are intended for NPC use; PCs should automatically fail a Powers check for employing them.

Create Undead

Level: Sor/Wiz 7

This spell functions as the cleric spell of the same name. It is different only in that this version is an arcane spell.

Create Greater Undead

Level: Sor/Wiz 8

This spell functions as the cleric spell of the same name. It is different only in that this version is an arcane spell.

Army of Darkness

Level: Clr 9

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 day

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Targets: One or more corpses

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Through this spell, the caster opens a rift to the Negative Energy Plane itself. The resulting energy causes a massive swarm of skeletons or zombies to rise.

The horde follows the caster's telepathic commands. The undead can follow simple, one sentence commands such as "Guard this temple." or "Patrol the castle." or "Attack all elves who enter."

While the undead receive telepathic commands from the caster, he cannot receive any information from them. Those undead that move beyond the spell's range can no longer receive orders from the caster, though they still remain under his control.





The caster may raise up 5 HD worth of undead per caster level, and the undead created from this spell are under his control indefinitely. Multiple castings of this spell create more undead, but the caster may only control 5 HD of undead per level. Undead created by this spell but not controlled by the caster are free-willed and are likely to be enraged at the caster for disturbing their eternal rest.

Undead controlled through other spells such as *animate dead* or the *command undead* ability do not count toward this 5 HD limit. Casters must keep in mind that they may raise up only as many undead as there are bodies or skeletons available.

In Ravenloft, casters can raise up 10 HD worth of undead per caster level, but can only control 5 HD of undead per caster level. Many necromancers have fallen to the hands of their own minions by growing too ambitious and trying to raise too many undead from the cold ground.

The Third Rite — The Rite of Dominance

Now thou must create soldiers that are superior to all others. Thine army must be above even those who may command the undead. For thou shalt be superior to them. Hear now how thou may arm thy Eternal Soldiers with thy weapons of might.



Minor Salience

Level: Clr 5, Sor/Wiz 6

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets: One or more undead

Duration: 1d4+1 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell allows the caster to grant a salient power to her undead minions. These powers may be selected from the list of salient powers normally allowed for that undead type. The undead in question must be under the caster's control; they cannot simply be allies or friendly to the caster. The caster, if undead, may not cast this spell upon herself.

When the spell is cast, the caster selects the salient power to be given to her undead minions. She then grants the salient power selected to 1 HD of undead for every 2 levels she possesses. The caster may cast this spell multiple times, giving more of her minions salient powers. For example, a 15th-level spellcaster could grant the *altered limbs* salient power to 7 HD of zombies.

Subsequent castings of this spell on undead do not grant them additional abilities. A caster cannot thus cast this spell two times on a zombie and give it two different salient abilities. The caster may do this, however, to *change* the undead's abilities or lengthen the time that they possess their abilities.

The caster may grant salient powers only to normal zombies or skeletons. When cast on greater forms of undead such as ghouls, the spell simply fails. This spell also fails when cast on specialized forms of zombies or skeletons—for instance, Strahd zombies, vodan zombies, or archer skeletons.

Major Salience

Level: Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 9

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Creature touched

Targets: One undead

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell functions as *minor salience*, except that it affects greater forms of undead such as ghouls, ghaunts, shadows, wights, ghosts, or vampires. It only affects a single creature. The caster, if undead, may not cast this spell upon itself.

The Fourth Rite—The Rite of Obedience

Now thou hast soldiers, commanders, and superior warriors to lead into battle. Now, thou must ensure thy dominion over the dead, for thy servants are terrible and powerful, and should not break from thy will.

New Skill

This new skill should be available to NPCs only. PCs who attempt to learn this skill and utilize it should automatically fail a Powers check.

Reign Undead (Cha; Trained Only)

Classes: Cleric, Sorcerer, Wizard only

This skill is used to train undead to ride mounts, build castles, act as scouts, take prisoners, or even serve as butlers.

Check: The time required to achieve an effect depends on the desired outcome. You may train up to as many undead as your Intelligence score at one time. Thus, if your Intelligence score is 14, you may train 14 undead at one time.

Task	Time	DC
Handle an unruly undead	Varies	15
Teach an undead basic tasks	2 months	20
Teach an undead complex tasks	2 months	25
Control an uncontrolled undead of undead	1 month	20+HD

Time: For a task with a specific time frame, you must spend half of that time (at least 3 hours a day) before making the check. After half of the specific time, you make the check. If the check fails, you have failed to teach the undead its specific task or function. If the check succeeds, you must spend the remaining time with the undead in training before the process is completely mastered. If the training time is interrupted or the task is not followed through, you must begin the process again.

Handle an Unruly Undead: If you encounter an undead that is not under your control and is hostile, you may try to calm it into passivity. Using this skill in this manner functions only against a single undead at a time.

Teach an Undead Basic Tasks: This means to teach undead creatures basic tasks such as hunting down and capturing a specific target; scouting the





countryside and reporting back to you when opponents are sighted; always attacking spellcasters first in combat; or riding on skeletal steeds.

Teach an Undead Complex Tasks: This means to teach undead creatures complex tasks that require multiple steps and holistic processes. Examples include being a butler or maid to your guests, setting off multiple traps throughout a dungeon, or building a castle. Through this process, the undead can mimic any Profession sub-skill, using half of your Reign Undead skill modifier as the value of their Profession skill.

Control an Uncontrolled Undead: If encountering unintelligent undead that are not under your control and not hostile, you may attempt to bend them to your will. You may attempt this check on as many undead as your Intelligence score.

Retry: Yes. You may retry teaching the undead if you fail, but you must begin the entire process again.

Binding Thy Minions

To bind thy soldiers to thine will, thou must be willing to drink of thy marrow and feast of the worms that eat their flesh. Carve runes upon the bones and bodies of thy soldiers, then cut them upon thine own skin. Should thy minions be incorporeal, then thou must sleep with them drifting across thy naked skin. Chant the ancient words of power below, and thou shalt have their wills and their minds.

Conversely, to bind thy power into thy servants, thou must give thy own knowledge and lifeforce to do so. Sit in the center of a mystic circle of power and have thy minions sit about thee. Then infuse them with thy might.

New Feats

As stated previously, these feats are intended for use by NPCs. PCs using these feats automatically fail a Powers check.

Bind Greater Undead

Prerequisites: Bind Lesser Undead.

Benefit: You may permanently bind greater forms of undead (ghouls, shadows, ghosts, wights, or wraiths) to your will. Greater undead bound to your will through this feat no longer count against your limit of undead controlled. You may bind only

1 greater undead to your will at a time. Binding a greater undead to your will takes 1 day per HD of the undead and costs 10 XP per HD of the undead bound. If the process is interrupted, you may resume it later with the same undead.

Bind Lesser Undead

You may bind lesser undead to your will and accumulate warriors for your army of darkness.

Prerequisites: The ability to cast *animate dead*.

Benefit: You may permanently bind lesser forms of undead (zombies and skeletons) to your will. Undead bound to your will through this feat no longer count against your HD limit of undead controlled. Each time you use this feat, you may bind as many HD of undead to your will as you have spellcaster levels. Binding undead to your will takes 1 day per HD of undead and costs 7 XP per HD bound. If the process is interrupted, you may resume it later with the same undead.

Bind Salience

You may grant a permanent salient power to your undead minions

Prerequisites: The ability to cast *major* or *minor salience*.

Benefit: After casting *minor salience* or *major salience* on an undead minion, a necromancer may make these abilities permanent. You can make the abilities permanent in as many HD of undead as you have spellcasting levels each time you use this feat. This process takes 1 day per HD of undead and costs 10 XP per HD of undead bound. If the process is interrupted, you may resume it later with the same undead.

The Fifth Rite—

The Rite of Armament

Once thou hast mastered thy army, then thou might make for them grand and glorious armaments. These armaments shall be frightful for all to behold, and those that face thy minions shall quail in fear.

New Weapons and Armor

These weapons and armors are intended for use by undead, becoming permanent parts of their bodies. Affixing them to living beings causes the destruction of that body part and most likely results in the victim's death.





Bone Talons

A bone talon is a hand from a giant skeleton sharpened and crafted into a gauntlet. The skeletal claw is fitted over the hand of an undead minion; one may be strapped on both hands. The bone talons then magically grow into the undead's hand, becoming a permanent fixture. An undead creature may use bone talons in place of one or more of its natural hand attacks. Thus, a ghoul would do 1d6 points of damage with its claw attacks instead of 1d3. This special function applies only to undead creatures. Only undead may use the bone talons in this way.

Marrow Sword

This long, curved sword is crafted from the rib bone of a giant skeleton. The handle is hollowed

out so that an undead creature may place its hand within. Once the undead has done so, the marrow sword closes up around the fist, becoming a permanent fixture. The undead may then use this weapon's damage and critical threat range to replace one of its natural attacks. This special function applies only to undead creatures. Only undead may use the marrow sword in this way.

Skeletal Spear

These massive weapons are the elongated arm bones of giant skeletons. When not in use, they fuse with the undead minion's spine, so that the minion may never lose its weapon. When called into action, the skeletal spear leaps into its wielder's hands as a free action, so no action need be spent to draw it forth. Skeletal spears have a 5-foot reach

Weapon	Size	Damage	Critical	Weight	Type
Bone Talons	Small	1d6	x2	2 lb.	Slashing
Marrow Sword	Medium	1d8	19-20/x2	4 lb.	Slashing
Skeletal Spear	Large	2d6	x3	20 lb.	Piercing





and may not be used to attack opponent adjacent to their wielders. Skeletal spears must be wielded normally and do not replace a creature's natural attacks.

Visage Mantle

This magical suit of armor is made from the faces of 12 humanoid beings, all stitched together in a ghastly semblance of protection. When placed upon an undead being, the faces move and twist, silently crying out in pain. Seeing a visage mantle is cause for a Horror save (DC 20).

Stitched Armor

This malleable and enchanted armor consists of the skin of a large humanoid assembled to form a suit of armor. The hide has been enchanted and cured to provide enhanced protection.

Bone Armor

Wrought from the bones of four giant skeletons, this suit of armor forms a chitinous shell over the body of an undead warrior. Most of the armor's protection comes from its breastplate, which is an over-sized rib cage that fits over the undead's torso.

Spiked Bone Armor

This is an enhanced form of bone armor modified to bristle with curling, bony spikes. The spikes function like normal armor spikes in that they allow the wearer to deal 1d6 points of piercing damage on a successful grappling check. On a critical hit (19–20), one of the spikes breaks off in the opponent's body and begins to burrow into his flesh. Burrowing spikes deal 1d6 points of damage per round until the victim or an assisting character spends a full round action to extract the spike.

Armor	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed 30 ft.	Speed 20 ft.	Weight
Visage Mantle	+3	+8	0	5%	30	20	10 lb.
Stitched Armor	+4	+6	0	10%	30	20	15 lb.
Bone Armor	+6	+4	-3	20%	20	15	25 lb.
Spiked Bone Armor	+7	+1	-6	35%	20*	15*	30 lb.

* Triple speed when running.

The Sixth Rite—

The Rite of Strategy

Thou shalt be Wise as thou art Powerful, for within thy mind shall be the techniques by which thou may utilize thine Instruments of Darkness.

Hear now the Perfect Strategy of the Iron Crown....

Tactical Use of the Walking Dead

Authors' Comment: Below, you will find numerous tactics proposed by the Iron Crown when utilizing undead to defeat the forces of righteousness and good. We present them here so that hunters may know more of the workings of his monstrous mind and also that they may be better prepared against just such tactics. As we find the Iron Crown's archaic language tiresome after too long a time, we have taken the liberty of paraphrasing. When reading the passages below, do remember it is not our advice, but that of a notorious necromancer.

— L&GWF

The Rush Strategy

Obedient dead are convenient fodder. Use them as such. Have them walk through threatened spaces, provoking attacks of opportunity, while your hard-hitting forces delay. Then, after the enemy has spent all of their attacks of opportunity, send in your stronger forces to flank or attack their back ranks.

The Stagger Strategy

The Walking Dead make excellent flanking partners. Instead of focusing your minions on attack, make sure they are evenly distributed against the enemy. Then, have your stronger forces come in later in the round to take advantage of flanking opportunities.

Wave Attacks

The enemy's best defense against the Walking Dead is a cleric's turning power. Thus, the mastermind should not send in all her minions at once. Send in packs of undead at a time, encouraging the cleric to burn up his turning attempts so that in the final conflict he cannot use them prolifically.



Harrying

A fine use of the Walking Dead is to prevent the enemy's ability to rest. Since the Walking Dead are expendable, the mastermind behind them loses little by having just a few ghouls or skeletons attack the enemy just as they settle down. Even powerful enemies can lose downtime if this tactic is employed judiciously.

The Seventh Rite – The Rite of Immortality

Authors' Comment: I have removed this portion of the text from our book. Indeed, I have not even dared to venture to read this part of the Raiment of Clarity. Any such magic or knowledge that speaks of immortality is destined to a bad end, even for the curious. I trust that our readers shall understand why this has been done.

— GWF

The Raiment of Clarity

Although many legends refer to the *Raiment of Clarity* as being a suit of splendid armor, the *Raiment of Clarity* is actually a collection of three tomes that can be found throughout the Dread Realms. Each text details secret spells, feats, skills,

and processes for the dark arts of necromancy. It is said that all three of them also record three different methods of reaching lichdom.

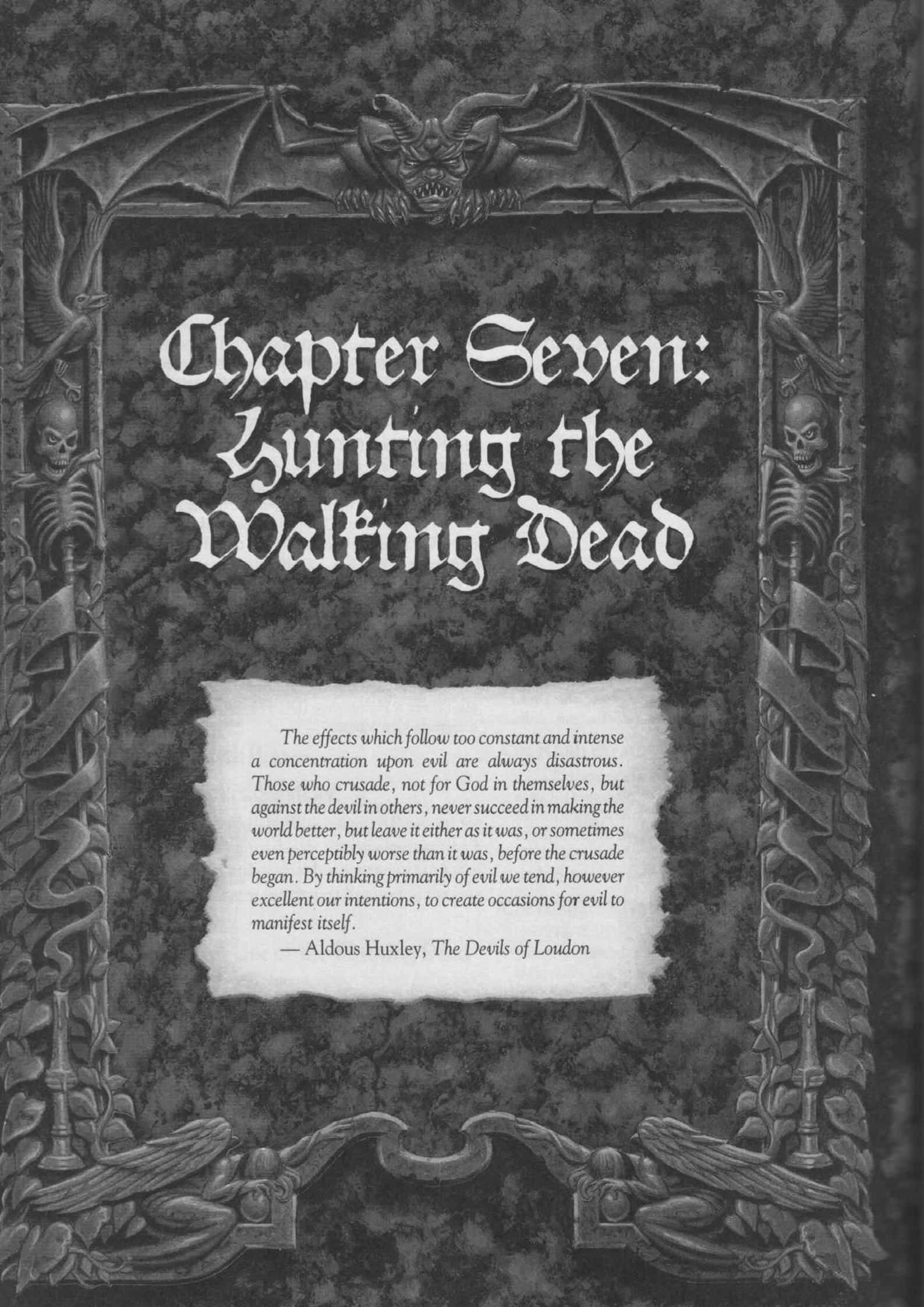
Some say that the *Raiment of Clarity* is not a text at all, but rather an elaborate trap designed to ensnare the curious and bind them to the will of the mysterious Iron Crown, whoever that may be.

Each book preaches about the Power of Necromancy and lauds the reader for his intelligence and acumen. It also explains that only the reader will be able to understand the power and potential of the undead, that only the reader will see the world clearly. Thus its title: *The Raiment of Clarity*.

Whosoever reads one of the three books must make a Will save (DC 20, +10 for each additional *Raiment of Clarity* already read — i.e., DC 30 for a second tome and DC 40 for the third). Those who fail their save have their alignment move one step closer to evil and lose 2 points permanently from their Wisdom score. In addition, they become obsessed with the book, not letting others touch it or read it. They also become fascinated with necromancy and believe the book's teachings.

Those that succeed in their Will save can read the information in the book, but cannot use any of the feats, spells, skills, or processes within.

Those of good alignment who read these books must make a Horror save (DC 17) while reading such forbidden tomes.



Chapter Seven: Hunting the Walking Dead

The effects which follow too constant and intense a concentration upon evil are always disastrous. Those who crusade, not for God in themselves, but against the devil in others, never succeed in making the world better, but leave it either as it was, or sometimes even perceptibly worse than it was, before the crusade began. By thinking primarily of evil we tend, however excellent our intentions, to create occasions for evil to manifest itself.

— Aldous Huxley, *The Devils of Loudon*



Defeating the Walking Dead requires careful thought, conscientious preparation, and, ultimately, quick and decisive action. As we hope to have demonstrated, the Walking Dead are more than just the mindless minions of necromancers and liches; less planning may be acceptable for these weaker creatures, but even slightly more powerful undead need careful preparation to defeat. Those who do otherwise sign their death warrants with their laziness. Luck is a notoriously fickle mistress — if you rely on her, eventually you will meet the Walking Dead that only careful planning can destroy. Yet the following plan, even if followed only in the broad details, will put you in good stead in the long run.

We have found dividing a hunt into four general sections useful: *discovery*, *reconnaissance and research*, *assessment*, and *the kill*. To illustrate how these somewhat airy terms work in the field, we also draw extensively on our diaries and recollections of our hunt of the Glutton of G'Henna, a terrible menace that threatened numerous villages from Falkovnia to Borca, where we finally destroyed it.

The Glutton of G'Henna

When we were little girls, the Shadow Rift did not yet exist. In its place sat a desolate wilderness filled with half-human, half-animal monstrosities and a terrible theocracy devoted to a demanding god. This was the land of G'Henna. During the Great Upheaval of 740 BC, G'Henna and its neighbor Markovia vanished, leaving only a gaping maw of mist and black stone that became known as the Shadow Rift. Some sailors claim that Markovia has since appeared as an island in the Sea of Sorrows, while G'Henna is said to persist somewhere in the Mists. I cannot make assurances either way as to the truth of this claim. That a country could be ripped from the land to reappear intact elsewhere seems unlikely, but not impossible. Let it just be said that neither we nor anyone we know has been to G'Henna since its transformation.

By all accounts, the G'Hennans were a dour folk. Hardship and starvation were their ways of life; almost nothing would grow in the bleak, chilly plains, and most of what did was handed over to the priests and sacrificed to their god Zhakata. Although I believe this constant sacrifice is criminally

wasteful and inhuman, I will make no further comment on the pros and cons of G'Hennan culture. I will say only that the G'Hennans were fervently devoted to their god and believed they had to suffer to be rewarded.

During his life, the Glutton was a cleric of Zhakata. We never learned his name or which village he presided over, but we did discover that he was guilty of a terrible betrayal of trust. Instead of turning over the food he collected from the villagers to his god, the priest hoarded it for himself.

Starting in 737 BC, G'Henna was struck by three savage winters, when temperatures plummeted low enough to crack stone, and three equally vicious summers of drought. At the time, the G'Hennans believed that Zhakata was punishing them for some grievous transgression; we are more inclined to believe the intemperate weather was a sign of the coming Upheaval. The Glutton's village was devastated. Most of its livestock died and every crop failed. Scores of people starved to death, and the Glutton demanded that what little food they had be turned over to him to propitiate their angry god.

Exactly how the cleric expected to get away with his deception escapes comprehension. Greed and the fear of dying must have blinded him to the transparency of his situation. His villagers soon noticed that he was growing fat while they were wasting away. The clergy at the main temple of Zhukar had also noticed that only the most paltry sacrifices were being passed on to them and so sent an emissary to investigate. The emissary found a grotesquely large store of grain and meat in the priest's house and charged the Glutton with sacrilege and treason. Even then, the stores of food were sent to Zhukar rather than returned to the starving villagers.

The entire village turned out to watch the punishment of the man who had betrayed them. The Glutton was staked to the ground in a field outside the village, where the emissary ritualistically cut out his stomach as punishment for his gluttony and left him to die.

Consumed with hatred and unwilling to accept that he had done anything wrong, the priest rose as one of the Walking Dead. I suspect that the emissary's ritual bound him to the mortal plane until the Glutton had admitted his sins. His priestly robes covered in blood and filth, his torn belly flapping hollowly, the Glutton shambled off into the night.



Nothing more was heard about the Glutton until it reappeared in Falkovnia three years ago. We have no idea where it lurked during the intervening fifteen years. Perhaps it prowled the edges of the Shadow Rift until we picked up its trail in Falkovnia. Perhaps it was mist-led, and the fifteen years passed for it in the blink of an eye. Whatever the explanation, the Glutton left no clear evidence of its existence until it reappeared in 753 BC in the hills east of Morfenzi, then left a very obvious trail from the hills to the hamlet of Vasey in northern Borca.

From its first recorded appearance, the Glutton moved southward along the lip of the Shadow Rift, consumed by a terrible, insatiable hunger. When we later backtracked along its trail through Falkovnia, hoping to discover more about its origins, we found trees with great bites taken out their trunks or stripped of foliage. Among many isolated huts, inhabitants told us about the midnight visitor who devoured their entire larders before demanding "more" in guttural Balok. A few families had tragically lost a loved one to the relentless Glutton, eaten when they had no more food to offer up or when they had tried to evict him from their house. We discovered more than one abandoned cottage we believed was emptied by the Glutton.

Eventually, the vile creature reached Vasey, where we would encounter it.

Discovery

Obviously, the first part of any monster hunt is learning of the creature's existence. This may be through a fireside tale at an inn, a chance discussion with a witness, or through sighting the creature first-hand. Sadly, a sudden disappearance or the discovery of gory remains also often serves as warning. What first appears to be grave robbery or desecration may be a sign that a walking dead has risen from the grave. In many cases, the inhabitants of a village stalked by the walking dead will produce muddled tales of vampires, ghosts, or even ancient dead. Be especially wary if local legends claim that the vampire eats flesh rather than drinking blood or if the ghost is always depicted as corporeal.

Gennifer and I have arrived at the Amthor estate. Considering Nikolas' previous troubles, the estate is in remarkably good repair. Nikolas was, as always, very nearly as witty and charming as he thinks he is. After I unpacked, he and I spent the day rod fishing — a most rewarding pastime. Not until dinner, however, did the

day truly grow interesting.

As we enjoyed a delicious grilled trout (which, I must immodestly confess, I was instrumental in catching), one of Nikolas' servants attracted his attention. He excused himself, giving Gennifer the opportunity to tease me about him, before returning with a strange smile.

"I have an invitation here that I think will interest you both," he said. I could almost see Gennifer's ears perk up, although I dare say mine did the same.

"My cousin Christoff has sent me a note asking for advice. Apparently, he was hosting a ball the other night — in honor of his tenth wedding anniversary, you know — when some beastly man broke into his house. The man walked straight up to the refreshment table and started eating. 'Like a hog,' he says. Christoff, of course, had the vagabond thrown out. He's a good man, but has no patience for the unconventional." Nikolas winked at me across the table. "But when one of the footmen laid a hand on the man, he — the beggar, that is — bit off his hand! Everyone panicked, of course, and the man disappeared in the confusion. So, Christoff wondered if I had any suggestions." Nikolas grinned. "Either of you care for a trip north?"

— From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

Confirmation

I draw the reader's attention to the fact that, at this point, we had no idea what kind of menace awaited us in Vasey. We had only a terse note describing the situation. Of course, we could not even be sure that the note depicted the situation correctly. We have found that in violent, dangerous, or horrific situations, people's memories can cheat. They see what they expect to see — either ignoring or embellishing the supernatural — not what was actually present. What seemed to be a vagabond may not have been so; in the chaos and confusion, the man may have cut off, not bitten, the footman's hand, or the brevity of the note may have misrepresented the extent of the injury.

Thus, the first step in an investigation is to meet with any eyewitnesses and have them tell you their story first-hand. If one can find no direct witnesses, the monster may well just be a legend based on fear or superstition. If witnesses are found, assess their credibility and their mental state at the time of the event. Do they have any reason to lie? Did fear or alcohol lead them to misinterpret the situation? Most often, the ghost is a lantern, the revenant is a traveler, or the werebeast a rabid



animal — but you must always be on the alert and be able to tell whether anything supernatural really is active in the area. Ask questions about anything that seems unclear.

Wherever possible, try to examine any evidence yourself. If the witnesses and evidence seem to suggest that the Walking Dead may be present, proceed with the investigation.

We reached Vor Talmut at dusk. Laurie and I were weary and saddle sore, but eager to begin straight away. Nikolas introduced us to his cousin, Xavier Christoff, Baron of Vor Talmut and the surrounding land. I listened intently to his story, confused though it was. No one had seen the beggar enter or leave. He was dressed in filthy robes of an unfamiliar style, and it was the condition of the clothes that led Xavier to assume he was a beggar, although Xavier also said the man could have been a wandering hermit or ascetic. The footman — the stump of his arm heavily bandaged, the hand missing completely — swore that the man had bitten him. "It were horrible, m'lady. His face was blank; there weren't no hate there. He didn't do it to punish me or nothing. It was just the closest thing to him."

— From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove

Commitment

The next step is one of the most important. When you have decided that there is definitely an investigation to pursue, you must decide whether you are the one to pursue it. There is no shame in deciding that you are too inexperienced to face the creature you have discovered or that you lack the dedication to see the task through to the end. Deciding to pass the investigation on to someone else now could save you and those around you a great deal of sorrow later. Hunting evil can be very rewarding, but it can also lead to a life of misery and hardship. This investigation may claim your life or that of someone dear to you. If you cannot lay the undead to rest, your interference may provoke it into increased violence against those who must live around it. Consider your motives and abilities, then proceed if you still remain confident of success.

Reconnaissance and Research

Begin the more practical side of the hunt with research. Learn everything you can about the walking dead with which you are faced. Discover who it was and what its personality was like in life. If





Chapter Seven

possible, talk to any family or friends that yet survive — they may provide valuable insights into the creature's thought processes or be able to suggest possible allergens. Both kinds of information are worth more than gold to the hunter of the night. If you can understand how your prey thinks, you will be better able to predict its actions, which will in turn make the final confrontation a great deal easier for you. Allergens, meanwhile, allow you to minimize the risk you face.

Learn how the walking dead died and the circumstances surrounding its reanimation (if at all possible). More often than not, witnesses to the reanimation are unable or unwilling to come forward, so you may need to rely on guesswork and personal experience. Do not simply assume that the village outcast is the necromancer for whom you are searching. Not only is this attitude highly intolerant, it may blind you to the true menace. Necromancers are as different from each other as we are from them. Relatively few pursue lives as social outcasts, masquerading as hermits in the wilderness.

Interview victims — or, if that is impossible, talk to their families — to uncover any pattern to the walking dead's behavior and choice of victim. If multiple victims knew the undead during its life, this may suggest that the walking dead is motivated by vengeance or at least that it is intelligent and remembers its past life. If not, the victims may share a physical or behavioral characteristic that attracts the monster. Even if they were just in the wrong place at the wrong time, they may be able to tell you about the undead's powers. Everything you can learn now will help you later, even if only to rule out possible powers, allergens, and tactics. No moment of research is a waste of time.

Nikolas has volunteered to visit the other villages in the area to try to find anyone else that saw the vagabond. Gennifer, Xavier, and I are to learn all we can in Vor Talmut itself.

Xavier and I left Gennifer in his extensive (and disused) library. We interviewed the guests and servants that saw the man — a long, tedious, and largely fruitless process.

Finally, I spoke to a serving girl named Kira. At first, she seemed very evasive and uncomfortable. Finally, I told Xavier to leave the room and promised Kira that anything she told me would remain in the strictest confidence.

Kira confessed that she was afraid of losing her job at the Christoff manor. She had spoken of her part in

the events of that night to no one; the poor girl was convinced that the whole thing was her fault. On the night of the ball, she had been alone in the kitchen when she was disturbed by a knock at the servants' entrance. She assumed the dark shape she saw there was a beggar; he was covered in mud and scratches and seemed to have traveled a long way. She took pity on him and let him sit by the fire with a plate of food.

When she turned around again after going back to her chores, the girl found the plate empty and the man standing by the fire. She was about to say something when she noticed a hot coal sitting next to the man's bare foot. As she watched in horror, the flesh blackened and scorched, but the man ignored it. Then, he picked up the soup cauldron — an enormous pot that I later learned requires three men to lift — and drained the whole thing. When he had finished, he turned and looked at the girl with such an inhuman expression that her nerve broke and she ran. By the time she had built up enough courage to return, the creature had already moved into the ballroom.

I assured the poor girl that she had done nothing wrong and hurried back to the manor. Gennifer had found some travel literature describing the culture of the G'Hennans; Xavier declared that the robes the vagabond wore were almost identical to the ones the priests wore in the book. Finally, we have a possible identity for our mysterious glutton.

— From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

From these discoveries, we surmised that the Glutton was fully corporeal. Its constant hunger suggested that it was not one of the ancient dead, and its appetite for normal food implied that it was no vampire. It seemed resistant to fire or at least insensitive to pain, and its heritage implied that symbols of Zhakata might be effective allergens.

Once you compile a supply of facts and theories, it is time to observe the undead yourself (taking all the necessary precautions to avoid harm, of course; this is reconnaissance, not confrontation). If you have any theories about possible allergens or psychological weaknesses, now is the time to test them!

If at all possible, ensure that you can observe the walking dead without it being aware of you. Not only will this precaution ensure that you are protected from risk, the walking dead will also behave as its nature dictates, providing you with many insights into its psychology and abilities. Magical observation is infinitely preferable to stealth, if such is available, as it not only carries far



less risk for you but can also reveal clues that may not be obvious to the naked eye.

If the undead simply roams in one place, it could be charged with protecting that area. Try to find out what you can about the place it is guarding. If it was once a place of importance such as a temple, house, or crypt, the walking dead is likely self-willed and may have salient powers or weaknesses tied to that place. (For example, the Gatekeeper of Giancarlo was immune to divine magic for as long as it stood within the temple it was protecting, but holy symbols of the relevant religion acted as *protection* allergens against it). If the area holds nothing special, it may contain the walking dead's grave, or the walking dead may be a servant of a necromancer and commanded to protect the place, suggesting the villain's lair is close by.

If possible, leave any potential allergens you have discovered where the walking dead will find them, then observe its behavior toward them.

If you suspect the presence of a necromancer or believe that more than one monster may be present, try to locate the lair either by tracking the walking dead themselves or hiring a local guide to show you all the likely spots. "Likely spots" frequently include graveyards, caves, abandoned buildings, or isolated relics such as stone circles; in cities, the hungry dead often gravitate to disused slaughterhouses, while extensive sewers can hide all manner of monstrosities. Of course, necromancers may live in seemingly ordinary houses in cities. Just because your prey can be tracked to a particular house does not necessarily mean that everyone in that house is a soulless fiend. A necromancer may live there and keep his servants a secret from his family, or the presence of the walking dead may be entirely coincidental, with the residents unaware of the intruders.

Once you have learned everything you can from distant observation, approach the monster for more face-to-face interaction. Moving in for the kill right away is seldom wise, for too much remains unknown about its powers. Instead, set up a series of hit-and-run ambushes or sparring encounters. Have a quick escape planned out, then challenge the walking dead with a particular weapon or spell.

Trying to test every weapon that you intend to use in the final confrontation is important, if at all possible. Never assume that your weapons will be able to damage your foe without trying them; overconfidence will quickly lead you to danger.

Even staples of the undead hunter such as holy water should be tested for efficacy.

Tracking the Glutton has proven relatively easy. It left a horribly clear trail of mangled plants, half-eaten animals, and leafless trees. At times, we even found where handfuls of dirt had been pulled from the ground and presumably eaten.

In three days, the Glutton had traveled only a score of miles, although it passed through one thorp on the way. Here, the tragedy was far greater than in Vor Talmut; the Glutton had eaten everything in the bakery before gnawing off the butcher's head. When her son ran screaming into the street, the Glutton was attacked by a group of villagers. Their weapons failed to injure the fiend, and it devoured one of its attackers whole! This creature cannot be permitted to exist.

I believe it travels so slowly because it must continually stop to feed. As such, we can easily overtake it, as we did today. We watched it from a distance for a while I noticed that its robes hung strangely on its ample frame; while the cloth was drawn tight over the rest of its body, it flapped loosely around its flat belly...

I burst out of the bushes just ahead of the Glutton. It dropped the tuber immediately and leaped to its feet — perhaps it prefers fresh meat to vegetables? My burning hands struck it in the chest. It stumbled back with a cry, its skin charred and black. As it fell, its robes tore open, revealing a great mass of raw flesh where its belly had been hacked from its body!

Xavier bravely raised the holy symbol to confront the creature as it rose. The Glutton ignored it and started for him, but Xavier ran back as Laurie moved to intercept the monster. Her rapier cut a long gash in its arm. The Glutton swung round toward her, but I took the opportunity to splash it with holy water. While it wailed and clawed at its back, we made our escape.

— From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove

Assessment

Once you have completed your research and tested your theories in the field, you must now reconsider your position. Examine everything you have learned about the creature. Reevaluate any hypotheses you have made about its origins, abilities, and weaknesses to fit the facts you have at hand. Do not hesitate to throw out any speculations that fail to fit the facts, even if you must begin your theorizing again from scratch. Stubbornly clinging to your ideas in the face of reality is childish and dangerous.





Finally, consider once again whether you have the ability to see the matter through to the end. If not, try to find a more experienced group to take over or bolster your numbers with friends or local troops. I repeat that there is no shame in recognizing the limit of your abilities. Trying to face down a monster you believe will be too powerful for you to defeat is the worst kind of mindless self-sacrifice — it is not heroism, merely vainglory.

The Kill

Until the final stage, you may be frustrated by the slow pace of the investigation. While it is important not to dawdle at any stage of the hunt, the thoroughness required can make you feel as though you are wasting your time. When the time finally comes to act, however, one must move quickly and surely. Once you have formed your final theories and plans, lure your opponent to your place of battle and deal with it as your righteous anger demands.

Remember that most of the Walking Dead are not mindless and that while you were observing the creature, it could have been observing you. Even the Walking Dead that *are* mindless are probably under the control of an intelligent being. Your opponent could be devising countermeasures to face you. Although the Walking Dead are made predictable to some extent by the power their Craving holds over them, they are often possessed of a cruel cunning and can alter their tactics without compromising their guiding principles. Thus, you must strike quickly, for time gives your opponent the chance to discover your plans and avoid your trap.

If at all possible, ensure that the time and place of the final confrontation suit you, not your opponent. Never engage the Walking Dead in their lairs. They will be far more familiar with the area than you and may have traps or plans already designed to deal with intruders. If your opponent gains power at a certain hour or time of month, try to face it at some other time. Often, ensuring that you have the advantage in this way will not be possible, but when it is, you must be ready to exploit your opportunity. Even if the walking dead refuses to leave a particular area, try to ensure that you prepare that area ahead of the battle.

Ensure that your battlefield has a quick escape route. Any number of things could go wrong in the final fight, regardless of how extensively you have planned, so the wise hunter of the night always leaves

his options open. People say discretion is the better part of valor; escape is not cowardly, it is wise. Think of it this way, if you will: with all you have learned about your opponent, you currently have a better chance of returning it to eternal slumber than anyone else. If you are killed because you refused to retreat, this expertise is lost, and the undead once again has the advantage over the living.

If all goes well, proceed as quickly as your plans allow. Never relent during an attack unless necessary; such a pause allows your opponent to regroup its forces, heal, or escape. Do not proceed at an imprudent pace, but try to avoid delays whenever possible.

Nikolas has met us at Vasey. He tells us the Glutton was apparently erratically paralleling the edge of the Shadow Rift, confirming our theory that it would come to Vasey next.

Luckily, the squire of Vasey is an acquaintance of Xavier's, and we needed only a relatively short time to convince him of the danger that was heading his way. He immediately took charge, rousing his staff and convincing them to cook almost all night. We spent the night writing signs, proclaiming that a feast would take place in the town hall at noon tomorrow. We prepared so many signs, in fact, that my hand is still so cramped I can barely write this now. Thankfully, Nikolas and Xavier offered to pin them up, so Gennifer and I will retire. . . .

We gathered the townsfolk in the town hall early the next morning. We explained the menace that was coming and our duplicity in luring it to the hall. Thankfully, most folk were convinced to retire to their homes at midday, but a few ignored our warnings. The rest fled the streets when the Glutton appeared.

We lured the Glutton into the hall with the scent of cooking meat and frying onions. As we had hoped, it ignored us completely — it seemed not to recognize us from the day before — and strode directly to the table.

While it was distracted, I lined up my Parthian and shot the Glutton in the back. It growled and spun around. Nikolas showered it with holy water, then Gennifer cast burning hands. By then, I had reloaded and shot it again. Then, as I furiously reloaded my pistol, Xavier, wielding his grandfather's sword, stepped in to engage the Glutton, despite my protests.

The Glutton lunged toward him. Its blows fell upon him like sledgehammers, but he managed to fend off the worst of them with his sword. The Glutton knocked Xavier to the floor and snatched up his ankle. Gennifer cast magic missile, but the Glutton ignored her. Its mouth distorted grotesquely as it pulled Xavier's foot into its maw. For a moment, I thought that was the last I would see of our friend.



Nikolas leaped onto the Glutton's back, pushing a cake into its face. He rode the creature like a bull, desperately grappling with it, trying to push his fingers into its eyes while avoiding its thrashing hands. Xavier scrambled back on all fours. One of the Glutton's hands smashed into Gennifer, knocking her into the table. I darted in to save her as the Glutton finally managed to get a grip on Nikolas' shoulder.

I thrust my rapier again and again into what was left of the Glutton's belly, but it ignored me completely. An expression of diabolical enjoyment on its face, it put Nikolas' hand into its mouth and bit down. Nikolas screamed, and blood splashed everywhere.

By then, Xavier and Gennifer had regained their feet. We hacked desperately at the Glutton, until finally it dropped Nikolas and turned to face us. A final blast from my Parthian was enough to sever its spine, and it crashed to the floor. For one horrible moment, it stretched a hand toward me and gnashed its teeth mechanically, then lay still.

We bound Nikolas' arm, then severed the Glutton's head. At Xavier's suggestion, we also dislocated its jaw. We reburied it in the local cemetery and had an anchorite bless the grave.

— From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

Conclusion

Your final task is to ensure that the walking dead will not rise again. Reburial in hallowed earth is often sufficient, although more determined creatures may require a cleric to bless the grave or even to cast more powerful spells to ensure the undead stays buried. If the walking dead has a *fascination* allergen, bury it with the allergen.

Ensure that the grave is examined every so often for a period of a few months. If at the end of this time the dirt is still undisturbed, you may celebrate your victory. Your task is well and truly completed.

The life of the hunter of the night is often harsh, but one that we have found to be immensely rich and rewarding. We hope that our research will aid you in the fight against darkness and that you can take heart in the fact that you are serving the forces of good in your battle. We congratulate you for your perseverance and dedication and wish you luck with all our hearts.

Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove
Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove
Mordent, Mordentshire
737 BC



DM's
Appendix



This section of the book is designed to help solve the problem of keeping the Walking Dead a significant challenge to adventuring characters. Most Ravenloft parties can dominate the obedient dead by 5th level. The information included here will help DMs continue to challenge the characters while still using the Walking Dead in their campaigns.

While some of this data is available in the Introduction of the *Monster Manual*, we have collated that information here to make it more accessible and easier to reference. We also demonstrate how DMs might use the rules for advancing

monsters and combine them with the rules found in this book.

Creature Creation Laboratory

DM's may use the chart below to adjust the appropriate statistics of undead creatures. When doing so, other statistics remain unchanged. For example, a 3 HD skeleton retains its AC of 13, its damage of 1d4, and its Improved Initiative feat; however, its hit points rise to 19, and all of its saving throws rise by +1 as well.

Undead Advancement

HD	hp	Atk	F/R/W	Skill/Attribute	Feats	Base CR
1/3	2	+0	+0/+0/+1	0	0	1/4
1/2	3	+0	+0/+0/+1	0	0	1/4
1d12	6	+0	+0+0/+2	0	1	1/3
2d12	13	+1	+0/+0/+3	2	1	1
3d12	19	+1	+1/+1/+3	4	1	1
4d12	26	+2	+1/+1/+4	6	1	2
5d12	32	+2	+1/+1/+4	8/+1	2	2
6d12	39	+3	+2/+2/+5	10	2	3
7d12	45	+3	+2/+2/+5	12	2	3
8d12	52	+4	+2/+2/+6	14	2	4
9d12	58	+4	+3/+3/+6	16/+1	3	4
10d12	65	+5	+3/+3/+7	18	3	4
11d12	72	+5	+3/+3/+7	20	3	5
12d12	78	+6	+4/+4/+8	22	3	5
13d12	84	+6	+4/+4/+8	24/+1	4	6
14d12	91	+7	+4/+4/+9	26	4	6
15d12	97	+7	+5/+5/+9	28	4	6
16d12	104	+8	+5/+5/+10	30	4	7
17d12	110	+8	+5/+5/+10	32/+1	5	7
18d12	117	+9	+6/+6/+11	34	5	7
19d12	123	+9	+6/+6/+11	36	5	7
20d12	130	+10	+6/+6/+12	38	5	7

Ability Scores

When a DM raises an undead's Hit Dice, its ability scores remain the same. All undead gain an additional point to ability scores at 5th and 9th level.

For every +3 ability points, the CR is increased by +1/4. No statistic may exceed 20.

Armor Class

Armor Class remains the same when Hit Dice are increased. DMs may increase AC as shown below to reflect the additional challenge:

- +3 to natural armor, add +1/4 to the CR.
- +6 to natural armor, add +1/2 to the CR.
- +9 to natural armor, add +1 to the CR.



Attacks

For each additional attack the creature gains, add +1/2 to the CR. Up to two additional attacks may be gained in this way. If the creature only had one attack to begin with, it gets its base attack bonus for both attacks. If the creature has two or more attacks already, then each added bonus attack suffers a -2 penalty. Creatures that gain multiple attacks also receive Multiattack as a bonus feat.

Damage

Damage remains the same when Hit Dice are increased. For each die type the creature is shifted, add +1/2 to its CR. For example, increasing damage from 1d4 to 1d6 incurs adds +1/2 to an undead's CR.

Skills

All undead gain 2 skill points for each HD they advance. Additional skill points may be bought. For every +7 skill points, add +1/4 to the undead's CR. DMs may not add more than +14 points to any one skill.

Feats

A new feat is gained at 5th level and 9th level. DMs may add additional feats as they wish to fit the needs of their game. For every extra feat, add +1/4 to the undead's CR.

Salient Powers

Salient abilities appropriate for each type of Walking Dead are listed throughout the book. DMs should reference these, decide which fit the undead they wish to use, and add the CR value to their undead creatures.

Final CR

When calculating an undead's final CR, DMs should always round decimals *down*. Take a look at the finished creature and make certain it is not too tough for the party level or too overloaded with odd powers such that the characters cannot hope to defeat it.

Putting the Pieces Together

Although looking over the salient powers and advancement chart and throwing together a hodge-podge undead creature is possible, starting instead with some idea in mind and working from there is best. For example, Ryan wishes to create a variant

of undead that will challenge his 5th-level party, so he decides to develop a creature with a CR of 5. First, he looks at the undead advancement chart and sees that a 5 HD undead only has a base CR of 2. He decides to make his zombies 5 HD and build them up to CR 5.

Vodan Zombies

Base HD: 5d12

Base CR: 2

Ryan envisions zombies that are from Souragne. He wants a creature that is different from the typical slouching, slobbering body, so he decides upon a terrifying creature that is highly mobile and cunning.

Ability Scores

Ryan decides to boost his zombies' stats first. Since his zombies are 5 HD, he automatically gets one point to add to his creature's attributes. Since stats come cheaply, Ryan boosts his zombie's Strength, figuring that vodan zombies should be stronger. With a zombie's pathetic Dexterity of 8, he figures they need a lot of help to be as fast as he envisions. He remembers that he cannot have his monster's abilities exceed 20 in any one stat. Luckily, this will not be a problem.

$+1 \text{ Int (free); } +3 \text{ Str, } +6 \text{ Dex, } +3 \text{ Int} = \text{Total CR Adjustment} +1$

Armor Class

Ryan buys a little more Armor Class for his monster, too. Note that by previously buying up Dexterity he has already raised his zombies' AC before taking this step. This bonus adds to the previous one.

$+3 \text{ natural armor} = \text{Total CR Adjustment} +1/4$

Attacks and Damage

Ryan decides to up the ante by increasing the zombies' number of attacks. He buys an additional attack. Then he increases the damage die dealt by his zombies to 1d8. Having a zombie that can attack twice for 1d8 each time is much more of a challenge.

$1d8 \text{ damage die} = \text{Total CR Adjustment} +1$

Skills

Skills are next on the agenda. Ryan buys +7 skill ranks, because they are cheap and because he wants his zombies to be somewhat stealthy. He can give his zombies 8 skill ranks for free because they are 5 HD undead. He assigns the following skill ranks: Hide +3, Move Silently +3, and Spot +2 (free).





Hide +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +1 = Total CR Adjustment +1/4

Feats

Zombies already have the Toughness feat. Because Ryan's zombies are 5 HD, however, they gain an additional feat. For his bonus feat, Ryan chooses Alertness — they are supposed to be cunning, after all. He also gives his zombie Weapon Focus to help offset its low base attack bonus.

Alertness (free), Multiattack (increase in attack), Weapon Focus (slam) = Total CR Adjustment +1/4

Salient Powers

To make his zombies truly fast and frightening, Ryan gives them three different salient powers related to movement: *fearsome speed*, *spider climb*, and *leaping*. Fearsome speed lets his zombies take normal actions instead of only partial actions each round.

Fearsome speed, spider climb, leaping = Total CR Adjustment +1

Ryan's final creature is as follows:

Vodan Zombies

Total CR 5 3/4 (Base 2 + 3 3/4) = Final CR 5 (because decimals are rounded down)

HD 5d12+3 (35 hp); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +6 melee (1d8+3, 2 slams); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ undead, fearsome speed, spider climb, leaping; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 14, Con -, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 1; Skills: Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +8, Spot +5; Feats: Alertness, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (slam).

In the swamp-filled lands of Souragne, stories tell that the mythical being the Lord of the Dead rules the night. While the Lord of the Dead will occasionally claim a corpse from among his people to become a servant, sometimes he cannot wait for death. When the Lord of the Dead cannot wait for death, he orders a victim brought to him and buried alive.

A vodan zombie is created when a person is buried alive and later raised as an undead. It is a terrifying process. Often the victim is first paralyzed with poison, lowered in a coffin into the dirt, and allowed to hear the grave dirt being thrown on top of the coffin lid. Those who somehow survive the live burial are usually driven mad (Madness DC 25).

Should those who were buried alive be animated, they become vodan zombies. Vodan zombies are terrifying to see. They appear as they did in life, but with dusky, chalk-white skin. Their eyes are glazed and bloodshot, and their faces are fixed in an expression of terror — the last expression they held while still alive.

Though vodan zombies are originally from Souragne, the dark process of their creation has spread to other lands of the Core.

Another Cook

What happens when the DM has an idea for an undead creature that does not fit within the salient powers and other qualities available? Taking an existing ability and reinterpreting it to fit what the DM wants is a possibility. For example, Rucht is creating cannibal zombies for his game, envisioning zombies that are very much like the murmuring stalkers of *Night of the Living Dead*. He wants to create a tougher version of a zombie that is driven by a singular need to feed on human flesh. Yet he also wants something that is distinctively different from a ghoul.

Cannibal Zombies

Base HD: 3d12

Base CR: 1

Ability Scores and Armor Class

To make his zombie tougher, Rucht adds to its Strength and AC. He adds +6 to Str and +3 natural armor: Total CR Adjustment = +3/4.

Damage

Rucht shifts the damage die up, making the zombie's slam damage 1d8: Total CR Adjustment = +1/2.

Skills

As a 3 HD undead, the creature has 8 skill points. Rucht places them in Climb.

Salient Powers

To add a little spice, Rucht gives his cannibal zombies the *bending the land* salient power. This means that he can create scenarios worthy of the most horrifying of monster movies, in which shuffling corpses seem able mysteriously to keep up with their running victims.

Finally, Rucht runs into a snag. There is no "feeding of flesh" salient ability. Yet he wants his zombies to feed from flesh and perhaps even gain



hit points from it. He looks and finds the *stitching* ability in Chapter Two, concerning the obedient dead. He adds that ability to his creature and reinterprets the power. Instead of using body parts for repairs, his zombies *eat* the body parts and heal from the feast. The process still takes the same amount of time. The zombie's salient powers now include *bending the land*, *create spawn*, and *stitching*: Total CR Adjustment = +1 1/4.

Rucht's final creature appears below:

Cannibal Zombies

Total CR 3 1/2 (base 1 + 2 1/2) = Final CR 3
HD 3d12+3 (32 hp); Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (-1 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, slam); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SQ *bending the land*, *create spawn*, *stitching*, *undead*, *partial actions only*; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1; Skills: Climb +8; Feats: Toughness.

Most zombies arise from the animation of dark magic. Yet no one is sure how cannibal zombies originate, nor does anyone know from where the first cannibal zombie horde came. One fact is certain, however: their numbers are feared throughout the lands. Legends speak of towns wiped out by them. Children stare wide-eyed at their parents' tales of cannibal zombies that feed on the flesh of the living.

Cannibal zombies are not as decomposed as most zombies. Their skin and flesh are intact for the most part, though their skin sags and bears open, rotting sores. Their fearsome power lies in their numbers, for where one cannibal zombie is seen, more are likely to appear. They attack en masse, slowly crowding around farmhouses or cottages. Then, they relentlessly assault the dwelling, pulling apart doors and windows before feasting upon their victims. Even fleeing from them does no good, for the Mist somehow guides these creatures... and they always appear just behind their victims.

Who's Doomed: Dread Personas



Below are found some of the undead that appear in this book.

Ratik Abel

Ravenloft Revenant, Rog9/Shd4:
CR 14; Medium-sized undead (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 13d12+3; hp 98; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30; AC 23 (+3 Dex, +4 natural armor, +3 bracers, +3 ring); Atk +15/+15 melee (1d10+6, 2 slams) or +16/+11 melee (1d6+7 and wounding, +1 *short sword of wounding*, crit 18-20) or +14/+9 ranged (1d3+8, +2 *throwing knife*); SA *dire enmity* (+2/+2 vs. rogues)*, *sneak attack* +5d6, *fear aura* (DC 16), *paralyzing gaze* (DC 16), *strangle* 2d10+12; SQ *undead*, *evasion*, *uncanny dodge* (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), *hide in plain sight*, *darkvision*, *shadow illusion*, *summon shadow***, *shadow jump* (20 ft.), *resistances* (acid, cold, and electricity 20), *regeneration* 5 (fire), *turn immunity*, *shared suffering****; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +13, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 17, Con -, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +7, Bluff +5, Climb +13, Disable Device +13, Gather Information +16, Hide +26, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (Darkon history) +7, Knowledge (Ravenloft geography) +7, Listen +11, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +10, Perform +5, Read Lips +15, Search +19, Sense Motive +19, Spot +17, Tumble +8; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Toughness.

Languages: Darkonese, Mordentish.

Signature Possessions: +2 *studded leather armor*, *ring of nondetection*, *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of elvenkind*, +1 *short sword of wounding*, 15 +2 *throwing knives*, *bracers of armor* +3.

*Ratik possesses the *dire enmity* salient power described in Chapter 4 of this book. Against all rogues, Ratik gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls. Should he ever meet his true killer, this bonus increases to +3.

**Ratik's shadow is a Dread Companion (see the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting*). As such, it tries to spread as much destruction as possible. It can speak to Ratik and often mocks him, taunting him about his inability to find his killer.

***Ratik's tracking of his murderer for these long years has formed a link between him and his killer. He can sometimes feel what his killer is feeling, particularly when his killer is experiencing strong physical sensations, though powerful emotions also communicate themselves to Ratik through this ability.

For all intents and purposes, Ratik Ubel appears to be a thin, graceful man of medium height whose long, pale hair is thinning. His eyes are sunken and dull; he speaks in a flat, dusky tone.

Closer inspection reveals that Ratik is something more than a living man. His skin is extremely pale, and up close one can see that it is almost transparent. Anyone touching him will note that his flesh is cold and clammy.

Ratik typically wears black, loose clothing and a dark, hooded cloak so that he may hide his features in bright light. He moves with a casual ease, but has an aura of sadness, anger, and determination.

Background

Ratik Ubel was formerly a skilled thief in Il Aluk, once the largest city in Ravenloft. In life, he worked alone as a rising star in the underworld. Such a man, operating alone and often switching sides, meant that Ratik accumulated a number of enemies.

Ratik believes it was one of these enemies that caused his demise. He was killed while he slept, and his last glimpse of life was the blur of a yellow piece of fabric — a scarf, perhaps.

Ratik rose again as a Ravenloft Revenant. He spent years of his unlife wandering the land, searching for his killer. Ratik was not in the city of Il Aluk when the Requiem occurred and so was able to escape the apocalyptic event. Without a base from which to start his inquiries, Ratik began seeking aid from others to assist him in finding his killer.

Ratik worked for Ivan Dilisnya for a short term, believing that he had information about his killer. When Ratik learned that Ivan was only lying, he attempted to destroy Ivan. Needless to say, Ivan managed to escape this encounter, but at the cost of many of his guards.

Current Sketch

Ratik *knows* that his killer is still alive. He can sense his killer's very life force. Ratik has now deduced that his killer was a rogue like himself.



Since he was killed in a room that was well trapped, Ratik believes that only a rogue could have accomplished his murder. Ratik now bears an ironic distaste for all rogues and is very suspicious of them as a result.

After being duped by Ivan Dilisnya, Ratik is much more careful about whom he trusts. He has developed a very keen sense of others' motives. The Revenant is curt, direct, and frighteningly blunt. He pays no attention to social mores or etiquette. Being an undead, Ratik simply does not see the point. When Ratik speaks, it is with a low rasp that simmers with a latent anger.

Because he is a being on an eternal search, he has very honed inquisitive abilities. He has a knack for listening to conversations in taverns, reading the lips of inn patrons, and finding clues in all sorts of places. In other words, Ratik has become a consummate investigator.

Since the Requiem, many people have used Ratik's investigation skills. Ratik's price is both cheap and expensive: he charges no fee, but demands that his clients investigate his own personal quest. Ratik checks up on his contacts from time to time, never forgetting anyone for whom he has ever worked. Some of those who hired Ratik have



regretted it, for the Revenant still goads them to continue their search long after his service for them is done.

Dread Possibilities

Ratik makes a great NPC for any campaign. He may serve as both villain and ally, possibly switching sides during the campaign. He might start out working against the PCs, but should they ever find out information useful to him, they may gain him as an ally. Alternatively, he could start out as an ally, only to switch sides when a villain can promise him greater information than the PCs.

Ratik also has extensive contacts throughout the Dread Realms. In his searches, Ratik has associated with many powerful beings and organizations. He has contacts with the Vistani, the Church of Ezra, the Church of Hala, Alanik Ray, Tara Kolyana, Malken, and many others. He offers a great means of hooking a party up with a specific power group or individual.

Ratik's grudge against Ivan Dilisnya is deep. He would like to pay Ivan the respects he deserves, but for the moment Ratik is compelled to seek out his killer. Ivan Dilisnya now greatly fears Ratik, for this undead being is immune to the Darklord's poisonous abilities.

Toben the Many

Toben the Many is a very specialized form of undead that can occupy many bodies at once. Each time Toben creates new spawn, that spawn takes on his personality, mind, and memories. All of Toben's bodies share a link, allowing them to be aware of each other.

When Toben has infected another creature, its face rots in a particular manner. The lips and gums recede, revealing the creature's teeth in a hideous grimace, and the eyes bulge like the victim of a hanging. The result is the face of a maniac leering with a wide-eyed, psychotic grin.

When Toben takes on the body of another creature, simply place this template over it.

Toben Zombie

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as base creature.

AC: The base creature's natural armor increases by +2.

Attacks: Creatures without natural attack forms gain 2 slam attacks, each at the base creature's base attack bonus. Otherwise, use the base creature's natural attack forms.

Damage: Creatures without natural weapons gain 2 slam attacks, each doing damage according to their size (see the table below) plus the base creature's Strength bonus. Otherwise, use the damage of the base creature's natural attack forms.

Size	Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Special Attacks: A Toben zombie has any special attacks of the base creature, plus the following.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature that is slain by Toben rises as a Toben zombie 1d4 rounds after it dies.

Infectious Aura (Su): Any being that spends an extended time around a Toben zombie (such as more than 10 minutes), has a chance of contracting a deadly disease: *Grinning sickness* — Inhaled, Fortitude save (DC 17); Incubation 1 day; 1d6 temporary Constitution. If infected, victims of the grinning sickness may make Fortitude saves to prevent damage, but may be rid of the disease permanently only through a *remove disease*, *remove curse*, or *heal* spell. Victims of the grinning sickness find their lips and gums receding. Those who die from the grinning sickness rise as Toben zombies in 1d3 days.

Special Qualities: A Toben zombie has any special qualities of the base creature, plus the following.

Hive of Bodies (Su): As the salient power described in Chapter Two: Vital and True Information on the Obedient Dead.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects that require a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.





Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: The Toben zombie gains +4 Str and +2 Dex. As an undead, it has no Constitution score. Toben's personality takes over the body it occupies. Thus, no matter what body Toben possesses, it retains the same mental stats: Intelligence 16, Wisdom 12, and Charisma 14.

Skills: Toben zombies receive a +6 racial bonus to Bluff, Disguise, Hide, Move Silently, and Spot checks. Otherwise, same as the base creature.

Feats: A Toben zombie gains the Alertness, Improved Initiative, and Toughness feats if it did not already possess them.

Weaknesses: Any Toben zombie may be destroyed through a *remove disease* spell. The Toben zombie receives a saving throw against the spell.

Climate/Terrain: Any land.

Organization: Solitary, squad (6–10), or mob (11–20).

Challenge Rating: Base creature +1.

Treasure: Varies.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Advancement: As base creature.

Feats:

Alertness, Improved Initiative, 5, Shield Proficiency, Toughness

Challenge Rating:

+8

Magic Items Carried:

Potion of sneak, 2 *potions of spider climb*, *potion of haste*, *cloak of resistance +1*

Background

Toben the Many is a being that has lived for hundreds of years by using the shells of other people's bodies. He infects the bodies of the living, and when they die, they arise as Toben zombies, creatures imprinted with the persona and mind of Toben the Many. Each time he infects someone, Toben also absorbs their memories and abilities, using them for his own twisted ends.

There are many speculations as to Toben's origins. Some believe that Toben was once a necromancer who concocted a malfunctioning *potion of lichdom*. Others believe that the Darklord Malus Sceleris created Toben as a horrid experiment. The leading theory, however, is that Toben the Many was once a thief. Those who tell the tale say that he posed as a Vistani and traveled about with them in their caravan. As the caravan went from town to town, Toben stole various riches from the towns' wealthy. Things went afoul when Toben decided to steal from a lieutenant in the Falkovnian army. The enraged officer ordered his guards out after the Vistani and had them all sent to Vlad Drakov to be impaled, in accordance with Falkovnian law.

Toben managed to elude his captors and ran off, laughing at the Vistani as he did. While he fled, he professed that he was not Vistani at all, but rather a disguised charlatan. As he turned his back, one of the Vistani women uttered this vile curse even as she was about to be impaled: "Since you hide in the skin of others, may you forever live in their skins — and in their skins only."

Since that time, some say, Toben the Many has been able to live only within the bodies of others. Whether this story is true or not, the world may never know, for Toben himself has forgotten his mortal past. He has only vague recollections, scraps and pieces of a former life.

Current Sketch

Toben the Many is now mad from centuries of existing as an undead in others' bodies. He sees his existence as a "Great Game," passing his time throughout the centuries by creating elaborate schemes to cause mayhem and sorrow. Some of his

Sample Toben Zombie

This example uses a 7th-level rogue as the base creature.

	Toben Zombie
	Medium-sized Undead
Hit Dice:	7d12+3 (49 hp)
Initiative:	+8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	22 (+4 Dex, +4 studded leather, +2 buckler, +2 natural)
Attacks:	2 slams +8 melee; masterwork rapier +9 melee; or mighty masterwork composite shortbow (Str 13) +10 ranged
Damage:	Slam 1d6+3; rapier 1d6+3 (crit 18–20); or mighty masterwork shortbow (Str 13) 1d6+1
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Create spawn, infectious aura, sneak attack +4d6
Special Qualities:	Undead, hive of bodies, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked)
Saves:	Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 18, Con —, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills:	Appraise +13, Bluff +8, Disable Device +14, Disguise +8, Hide +20, Listen +13, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +16, Search +13, Spot +13, Tumble +13, Use Magic Device +12





infamies include transforming a children's orphanage into an undead madhouse, infesting seven brides of seven different grooms in Lamordia, and possessing countless bodies of would-be champions of light.

All of these terrible deeds Toben views as mere entertainment, a way to pass the time. For what else does Toben have but time?

Toben fears only two things in Ravenloft: the Vistani and Azalin Rex. He fears Azalin because he knows that if a majority of his bodies were to cross over into Darkon, his will would be instantly subjugated to Azalin. He greatly fears that one night the Mists will come and transport him unwittingly to Darkon.

When Toben speaks, he usually uses short and simple sentences, belying his cunning intellect. He always talks in mocking tones, chiding those with whom he speaks. In Toben's mind, he is superior to all other forms of life and unlife, and he loves to show it.

Combat

Toben the Many prefers to taunt his enemies rather than fight them. He makes every attempt to shock and horrify his opponents as his way of

providing himself entertainment for his banal existence. Someone who is facing Toben might discover that her coachman is really an infected Toben zombie, who proceeds to take her on a wild ride through the forest. An opponent might look down into his beloved's coffin, only to have the corpse leer up at him, speaking in Toben's voice. When facing Toben, he will appear everywhere—a vendor on the street or a priest in a church. Nowhere is safe from his touch.

When attacking in earnest, Toben prefers to send in weaker bodies first. Once his opponents' resources are spent, he moves in with high-classed bodies, hoping to finish off his opponents.

Dread Possibilities

Toben the Many is a great villain for any level of party, since he is merely a template that the DM places over another creature. He may be a low-level or high-level villain. Toben could even provide a challenge for PCs as they progress in levels. As the PCs grow more powerful, Toben advances or possesses more powerful creatures.

Lately, Toben has been fighting the Great Detective Alanik Ray. Because Alanik himself is long-lived, he has been able to pierce some of Toben's long ranged plans. Toben despises Alanik and his assistant Arthur Sedgwick. These two defenders of the light might provide useful allies for any PC.

New Undead



The following are some new types of undead for use in Ravenloft games. They are organized by type: obedient, hungry, and restless.

Stitched

A stitched is a nightmarish creature that is the result of a necromancer's depraved experimentation. Its eyes and mouths are sewn shut, the stitching evident on its closed, tortured face. Even more perverse, all stitched are created from two bodies, whose arms are sewn together. The undead creatures are thus compelled to walk side by side for eternity, spreading madness and destruction.

According to some sources, the necromancer Grandall, who delighted in experimentation with bodies, first created these creatures. In order to create a stitched, the necromancer must establish a magic circle of protection using a piece of string. The necromancer then uses the string to stitch the



New Obedient Dead

	Stitched
	Medium-size Undead
Hit Dice:	4d12 (26hp)
Initiative:	-1 (Dex)
Speed:	20 ft. (can't run)
AC:	14 (-1 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +5 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d10+3
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Wounding, infection
Special Qualities:	Undead, regeneration 3
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 8, Con -, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills:	Listen +7, Spot +7
Feats:	Alertness, Multiattack
Climate/Terrain:	Any land or underground
Organization:	Any
Challenge Rating:	4
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	5-7 HD (Medium-size); 8-10 (Large)

	Ravyanatha
	Medium-size Undead
Hit Dice:	12d12+3 (81hp)
Initiative:	-1 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft. (can't run)
AC:	18 (-1 Dex, +9 Natural)
Attacks:	2 slams +12 melee
Damage:	Slam 2d6+6
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Bash, rend 4d6+9
Special Qualities:	Undead, death is no barrier, berserk, DR 15/+1
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +11
Abilities:	Str 23, Dex 8, Con -, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 1
Skills:	—
Feats:	Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness
Climate/Terrain:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or squad (3-5)
Challenge Rating:	13
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neu-
Advancement:	13-18 HD (Medium-size)

body of two live beings together; the two beings are then slain and animated by the caster. The mystic string supposedly binds the spirits of the dead souls to their bodies, compelling them to remain in the realm and serve their master.

Stitched cannot speak any language, though they understand the languages they spoke in life.

Combat

Wounding (Su): Those hit by a stitched's claws bleed profusely. The victim loses 2 hit points per round until bandaged (Heal DC 10) or until it dies.

Infection (Ex): Those damaged by a stitched's claws may contract the stitching rot disease: *stitchingrot*—injury, Fortitude save (DC 15): Incubation: 1 day; 1d6 temporary Dexterity. Unlike normal diseases, stitching rot continues until the victim reaches 0 Dexterity or is cured through a *remove curse* or *remove disease* spell. As this disease progresses through the body, large, painful stitching appears on the victim's limbs. Those overcome by the disease appear to have their limbs stitched tightly to their body and their eyes and mouth sewn shut.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not



subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects requiring a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.

Regeneration (Su): Stitched suffer normal damage from fire attacks and effects.

Ravyanatha

Though many legends tell of these creatures, few have ever seen one, let alone dared to face one. Such is the power of a ravyanatha (rahv-yah-NATH-ah) that lightning and storms herald their arrival. All living animals flee long before one arrives, and before one approaches, all mortal creatures can feel a deep dread squeezing at their hearts.

Ravyanathas originate from the domain of Sri Raji but have since spread to other lands. They are formed when a powerful warrior willingly wounds his own body to the point of near death. A dark cleric must cast *geas* upon the warrior and then slay him ritually. The warrior must then be animated through the use of a powerful *miracle* (costing 5,000 XP). The resulting obedient dead is a ravyanatha.

A ravyanatha appears as a four-faced being of raw undead power. Each face glares out from a different side of its head, drawn into an expression of dark fury. Its body shows only faint traces of decay, but the bluish tint on its skin betrays its undead nature. Within its eyes burns an unholy light, and all about the creature's body the air stirs with a malevolent energy.

Combat

Ravyanathas have the faintest glimmer of savage intelligence, which is enough for them to realize

when they are threatened, who threatens them, and when to run if severely injured. Otherwise, they are mindless automatons ruled utterly by their master's will.

Ravyanathas are usually created to go after a particular quarry. When they are set to this task, they become near-unstoppable machines, capable of plowing through towns and villages to achieve their objective.





Bash (Ex): Created to plow through barriers, ravyanathas deal double damage to all structures, barriers, and inanimate objects. They add +10 to all their Strength checks when attempting to break an object or barrier.

Rend (Ex): A target hit by both of a ravyanatha's slam attacks is grabbed by the creature and twisted in its inhuman grasp. This attack automatically deals 4d6+9 points of damage.

Death is No Barrier (Su): Empowered with a supernatural ability to become unstoppable, ravyanathas can penetrate almost any magical barrier. When confronted by a *wall of force*, *wall of stone*, *wall of iron*, or other magically created barrier, they may always destroy that barrier with a full-round action. When confronted with a *prismatic wall*, a ravyanatha must pass through and destroy each layer with a full-round action.

Berserk (Ex): When in combat, a ravyanatha may go into a maddened rage. This ability is differ-

ent from a barbarian's rage, since it affects a creature without a Constitution score.

Going berserk is a free action. While berserk, a ravyanatha gains a +4 bonus to Strength, a -2 penalty to AC, and it remains standing even after reduced to 0 hit points. Should the creature fall to -10 hit points, it is destroyed.

The creature's berserk state lasts 4 rounds. After it has gone berserk, the ravyanatha becomes listless and slow. It no longer has an enhanced Strength, but retains its penalty to AC. It gains a -2 penalty to all attack and damage rolls. These penalties last for the next 4 rounds. A ravyanatha can go berserk 2 times a day.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects requiring a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.

New Hungry Dead

	Porcelain Lady	Bony Hands
	Medium-size Undead	Small Undead
Hit Dice:	5d12 (32 hp)	3d12 (19 hp)
Initiative:	+3 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.
AC:	18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural)	16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks:	Slam +4 melee	Bite +3 melee, 2 claws +1 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d8+2	Bitel6+1, claw 1d4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Withering gaze, tears of blood, phantom music	Improved grab, rend 2d4+2
Special Qualities:	Undead	Undead, partial invisibility
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +3	Fort +1/ Ref+3/ Will +5
Abilities:	Str 15, Dex 17, Con -, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 16	Str 12, Dex 15, Con -, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8
Skills:	Concentration +5, Perform (Dance) +8	Hide +10, Listen +4
Feats:	Combat Casting, Dodge, Mobility	Multiattack
Climate/Terrain:	Any land or underground	Any land or underground
Organization:	Solitary or pair	Pack (3-5), squad (6-10), or mob (15-25)
Challenge Rating:	5	3
Treasure:	Standard	None
Alignment:	Always neutral evil	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	6-10 HD (Medium-size)	4-7 HD (Medium-size)

Porcelain Lady

In the plantations of Souragne, the people say that a powerful baroness bathed in the blood of virgins to keep herself youthful. When her vile practices were finally discovered, she was walled up inside her own house, alive. Yet the baroness lived

on, escaping her maddening prison and spreading her terror even after her death.

A porcelain lady (also called an alabaster bride) is a form of hungry dead. It is spawned from women who bathe in and drink the blood of others



of their own race. This vile act serves to freeze a porcelain lady's skin for all time, making it seem as hard as alabaster. As undead, porcelain ladies seek only to fill their burning thirst for blood.

Porcelain ladies appear to be tall women who have shining porcelain instead of skin. Their skin is broken at their joints so that they seem to be life-sized puppets. The face of a porcelain lady is chilling to behold. It is a blank death mask, an unmoving visage that stares out at the world with a set of black, empty eye sockets. Porcelain ladies always wear elaborate clothes such as bridal gowns in a futile attempt to hold onto their vanity.

Porcelain ladies cannot speak; they can only murmur incomprehensible sounds or emit tiny whimpers. They can understand any language they spoke in life.

Combat

Withering Gaze (Su): This gaze attack actually draws blood from a victim's body. Those meeting the gaze of a porcelain lady must make a Will save (DC 15) or suffer 1d6 points of temporary Constitution drain from blood loss. When a porcelain lady draws blood from a victim's body in this way, her cold lips actually dribble tiny rivulets of blood.

Tears of Blood (Sp): A porcelain lady may cry streams of blood from her empty eye sockets. This blood pools out from her in a circular area at the rate of 10 feet per round to a maximum of 30 feet. Those in the area of effect who are touching the blood must make a Will save (DC 15) or be under the effects of a *confusion* spell for 1d4+1 rounds, as their minds fill with nightmarish images.

Phantom Music (Sp): Once per day, a porcelain lady can create a zone of haunting and spectral music up to 120 feet away. The zone itself is a single 5-foot space, but can be heard in all directions for a distance of up to 80 feet. Those who hear the music must make a Will save (DC 15) or be drawn to it; those who are drawn proceed at their normal movement rate toward the music. They are passive and will not attack unless attacked first. They also suffer a -4 penalty to all Listen and Spot checks. Victims drawn to the phantom music will not actively harm themselves trying to get to the music: a person will not, for instance, walk off a cliff to reach the

zone of music. Nor will a person attack his or her friends while trying to reach the music. Once within the zone of music, the victim stands, listening in ecstasy. Any attack, damage, shake, or slap breaks the enchantment.

Some porcelain ladies toy with those whom they lure, dancing with them in their alabaster arms before draining their blood from their body.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects requiring a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.



Bony Hands

Bony hands are the risen bodies of those who died from starvation and famine. Because they are creatures that have wasted away into nothingness, they cannot be seen if viewed straight on. Bony hands can only be seen out of the corner of one's eye.

As bony hands are difficult to see, most people have never spotted them at all. They have only seen the strange tracks these creatures leave behind—thin and frail hand prints in the dust. Bony hands never leave footprints. Some people say this is because bony hands walk on their hands only; others say it is because they have hands in place of feet.

Many people have glimpsed these creatures over the centuries, and there is some speculation regarding their true appearance. Most reports claim them to be spindly, wide-eyed creatures with gaping mouths and bodies so starved that one can see their ribs.

Most people who see bony hands only see them for an instant. They are seen with their hungry faces pressed against a window, huddling in a corner, or crawling from inside a disused fireplace.

Bony hands cannot speak, other than to squeal with hunger pangs. They understand any languages they spoke in life.

Combat

Bony Hands desire nothing more than to feed on the flesh of the living. Driven by the hunger that killed them in life, bony hands now seek to feed on those who were fortunate enough to have food.

Bony hands always travel in packs. They first stalk their victims using their partial invisibility. Then, they lurk outside their victims' homes, peering into windows and crawling down chimneys or from underneath floors.

When they attack, bony hands try to overwhelm their victims, dragging them down and ripping them apart, taking enjoyment in their ravenous feast. Witnessing such an attack is terrifying, for it seems to the observer that someone is

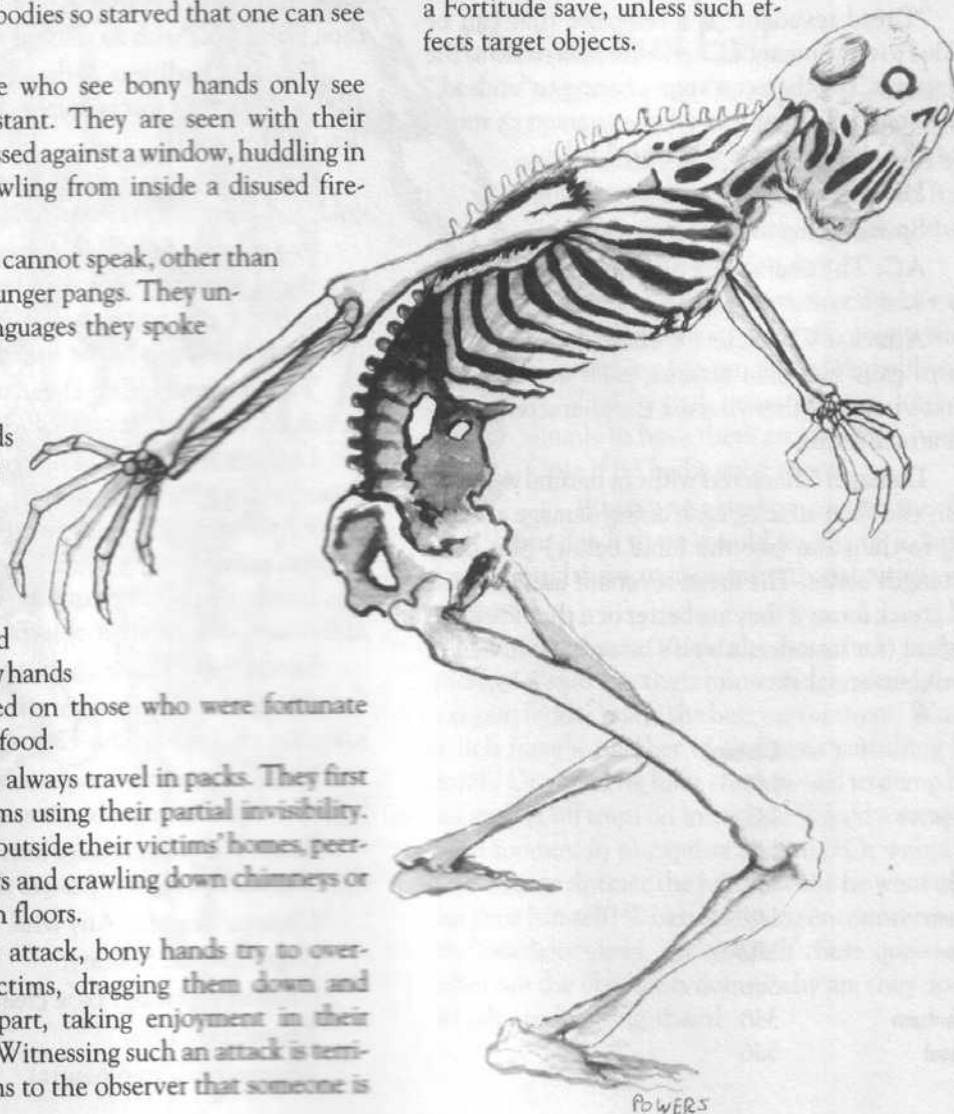
being torn apart by invisible forces (Horror save DC 20).

Improved Grab (Ex): As the ability described in the Introduction of the *Monster Manual*.

Rend (Ex): If a bony hand hits an opponent with both claws, it automatically rends for 2d4+2 points of damage.

Partial Invisibility (Su): Bony hands cannot be seen straight on, only out of the corner of one's eye. A bony hand may be attacked by using peripheral vision to see them. This gives bony hands one-half concealment (20% miss chance). Their partial invisibility also gives these creatures a +4 circumstance bonus to their Hide checks.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects requiring a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.





New Restless Dead

Below are rules for creating the Dread Revenant.

Revenant, Dread

A dread revenant is created when a person rises to walk the earth due to his or her undying need for revenge. Whether the need for revenge is justified matters not. All that matters is that the spirit of the dread revenant feels an unholy desire for vengeance. The Mists have granted the dread revenant its dark wish and allowed it to continue its search for revenge after death.

A dread revenant usually appears to be a dried, desiccated corpse, with bright, alert, and angry eyes. While the creature's skin is dry and leathery, its body is taut and powerful, betraying its unnatural strength.

Creating a Dread Revenant

"Dread revenant" is a template that can be added to any humanoid, hereafter referred to as the character. The character's type changes to "undead." The dread revenant uses all the character's statistics and abilities, except as noted below.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

AC: The character's natural armor increases by +4.

Attacks: Characters without natural attack forms gain two slam attacks, each at their base attack bonus. Otherwise, use the character's natural attack forms.

Damage: Characters without natural weapons gain two slam attacks, each doing damage according to their size (see the table below) plus their Strength bonus. The dread revenant uses its natural attack forms if they are better or if they are more logical (for instance, a wolf's bite attack in lieu of two slam attacks).

Size	Damage
Fine	1d2
Diminutive	1d3
Tiny	1d6
Small	1d8
Medium	1d10
Large	1d12
Huge	3d6
Gargantuan	3d8
Colossal	5d6

Special Attacks: A dread revenant retains all the character's special attacks and gains those described below.

Fear Aura (Su): When a dread revenant is enraged, all those opposing it must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the dread revenant's HD + the dread revenant's Charisma bonus). Those who fail must flee for 1d4+1 rounds.

Paralyzing Gaze (Su): Paralyzed for 1d4+1 minutes; Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the dread revenant's HD + the dread revenant's Charisma bonus) negates. This attack only works upon those whom the dread revenant is wreaking vengeance.

Strangle (Ex): Those who are hit with both of the dread revenant's slam attacks are automatically considered grappled and strangled. They take an amount of damage equal to two slam attacks each round. Furthermore, they cannot breathe (see "The Drowning Rule" sidebar in Chapter 3 of the DMG). If the creature does not use slam attacks, then it must hit with its natural attacks.

Special Qualities: A dread revenant retains all the character's special qualities and gains those described below.

Resistance (Ex): A dread revenant gains acid, cold, and electricity resistance 20.

Regeneration 5 (Ex): Fire does normal damage to a dread revenant. The creature cannot regrow limbs, but it can reattach a severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

Turn Immunity (Ex): Dread revenants cannot be turned, rebuked, or commanded by a cleric.

Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to effects requiring a Fortitude save, unless such effects target objects.

Saves: Same as the character.

Abilities: Increase from the character as follows: Str +6, Int -2, Cha +2.

Skills: Dread revenants receive a +6 racial bonus to Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Feats: The creature gains Iron Will and Toughness if it did not already possess these feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any land.

Organization: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: Base creature +1.

Treasure: Varies.

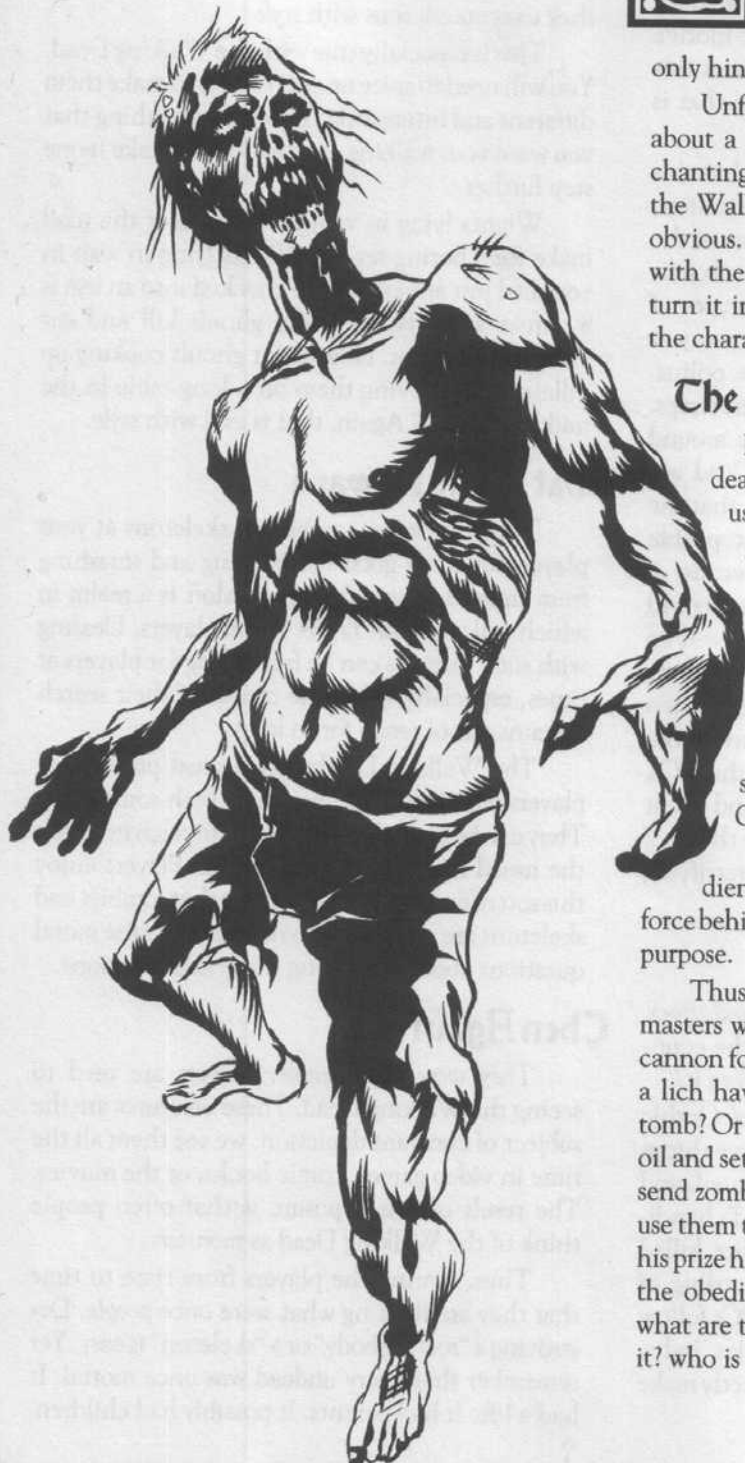
Alignment: Often neutral.



Advancement: As character.

Sample Ravenloft Revenant

Ratik Ubel is an example of a dread revenant. See his statistics above.



Techniques of Terror: Using the Walking Dead in a Campaign



Using the Walking Dead in a campaign can be difficult for a DM, particularly if he or she wishes to emphasize Gothic horror, as such a genre relies on subtle, crafty villains — villains who show only hints of their true motives.

Unfortunately, there is nothing subtle or crafty about a dead, moaning body lurching after you, chanting something about brains. The motives of the Walking Dead — to destroy — are usually obvious. A good DM, however, will be able to play with the convention of the moaning zombie and turn it into something truly frightening for both the characters and the players.

The Hands of Evil

Remember one fact about the obedient dead: they serve a greater evil. Someone usually commands the obedient dead and guides them to an ultimate purpose. Random encounters with obedient, then, should be somewhat rare.

Would a necromancer direct valuable minions to roam the countryside, attacking life randomly? Probably not. Would a dark priest raise up minions, simply to have them attack a farm house? Only if he had a good *reason*.

When your players encounter the obedient dead, there should usually be a darker force behind them, maneuvering them toward some purpose.

Thus, be sure to think about how undead masters would use their minions. Is making them cannon fodder really the best use for them? Would a lich have a number of skeletons patrolling his tomb? Or would he have them poised to dump hot oil and set off traps on intruders? Would a vampire send zombies in to capture his prize? Or would he use them to distract the heroes while he went after his prize himself? When designing encounters with the obedient dead, ask yourself these questions: what are the obedients doing? why are they doing it? who is directing them?



The faceless Enemy

Imagine facing a hurricane, tornado, or terrifying lightning storm. When confronting nature, you meet with a force that cannot be bargained with or understood. It simply is.

DMs may evoke this sensation with the Walking Dead. When faced with a mass of zombies or a horde of ghouls, the PCs are encountering a threat that cannot be reasoned with, bargained with, or understood. This threat has no apparent motive other than destruction. When the PCs meet this kind of threat, they are facing something that is more a force of nature than a villain.

DMs have several means to ensure that this becomes the feeling invoked by such encounters. One of the best ways is to keep the origins of the Walking Dead mysterious. If every player and character is a walking textbook on various types of undead, these frightening creatures become just another monster to slay for experience points. Instead, keep the Walking Dead under wraps. Make one part of the adventure revolve around finding out from where the Walking Dead are coming. Another method is to make sure that the force of the obedient dead *seems* to be unstoppable or overwhelming. *Seems* is important, because if your undead force is unstoppable, your players will simply get frustrated and their characters will be killed fighting a hopeless battle. Finally, an enemy that is likened to a force of nature is best used when it is *not* used. Have the Walking Dead lurk in the background, not constantly attacking the PCs. Perhaps they have surrounded the town and chant whispers to the PCs. In Gothic horror, the threat of the approaching storm is always more terrifying than the storm itself.

The Unseen Threat

Gothic horror relies on a subtle, layered effect. Unfortunately, a corpse walking about the countryside presents little that is subtle. Or does it?

One technique on which authors of Gothic tales rely to create a subtle effect is to leave things unseen. Instead of having the PCs fight ghouls and wights up front, have them see the undead's handiwork instead, finding houses and families killed horribly. Then, let the PCs hear the rattling of bones off in the mist. Gradually, as the PCs follow the trail, they begin to see moving bodies, indistinct in the distance, but they cannot exactly make out the shapes and figures....

This technique of leaving things unseen has limitations, however. Eventually, you must show your players what the threat is or they will grow frustrated and lose interest.

Stylized Evil

Remember that in Ravenloft, you will always want to take things one step further when playing evil. Villains in Ravenloft do not just kill someone: they execute victims with *style*.

This is especially true with the Walking Dead. You will need to spice up encounters to make them different and interesting. Think of something that you want your walking dead to do, then take it one step further.

Wights lying in wait by the side of the road make for a boring set-up. Wights lying in wait in your bed just after you have checked into an inn is a threat with *style*. Having ghouls kill and eat villagers is old hat. How about ghouls cooking up villagers and serving them on a long table in the middle of town? Again, that is evil with *style*.

That Little Reward

Throwing a few zombies or skeletons at your players for some good old bashing and smashing from time to time is fine. Ravenloft is a realm in which villains plan layers within layers. Dealing with such intrigue can be frustrating for players at times, especially when the object of their search remains out of reach for so long.

The Walking Dead serve a great purpose for players who just have an itch to bash something. They can be a nice break from a campaign in which the mood may be constantly dark. Players enjoy this sort of fare because they know that zombies and skeletons are evil. They do not need to raise moral questions about destroying these abominations.

Then Again

They were once people. Players are used to seeing the Walking Dead. These creatures are the subject of constant depiction; we see them all the time in video games, comic books, or the movies. The result of this exposure is that often people think of the Walking Dead as *monsters*.

Thus, remind the players from time to time that they are fighting what were once *people*. Destroying a "rotting body" or a "skeleton" is easy. Yet remember that every undead was once mortal. It had a life. It had parents. It possibly had children.





Imagine the terror of facing a dead grandmother now forced to bake her grandchildren in the oven. Imagine the disturbing sight of a pregnant mother who died in childbirth, carrying in her arms her undead child that she tries to give to the

characters to raise for her. Imagine the horror of a little girl who drowned, yet walks the earth leaving little wet footprints wherever she goes. Remind your players that the abominations they are fighting once had lives and you will enrich the lives of their characters.





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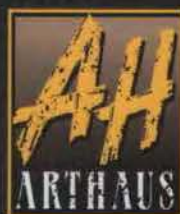
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