

Secret College of Necromancy



By David "Zeb" Cook
and Wolfgang Baur

Requires the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook for Use



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Design: David "Zeb" Cook & Wolfgang Baur

Development, Additional Design, Editing: John D. Rateliff

Additional Development: Chris Pramas

Proofreading: Chris Pramas and Evan Sass

Additional Design: Bill 'Urklore' Schwartz

Cover Illustration: rk post

Illustration: Anthony Waters, Mike Vilardi,
Andrew Baker & Mike May

Graphic Design: Hal Mangold

Cartography: Rob Lee

Product Management: Wolfgang Baur

Green Ronin Staff: Nicole Lindroos, Hal
Mangold, Chris Pramas, and Evan Sass

Playtesters: James "SPARKY" Sparling, Shannon "Cheesy Cow"
Sparling, Jimi Braun, Michelle Braun, Jason Thornton, Bill
'Urklore' Schwartz, William Adley, William Buckley, Tim
Elkins, Ken Mills, Allan Seyberth, Evan Prieskop, Andrew
Romine, Bob Wilson, Morgan Davey, Ted Helmers, Tom
Helmers, Jesse James Dean, Aaron Sands, Paul Boudreaux,
Mary Noel Ciccarone, Ben Van Atta.

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A TEUTONIC PRODUCTION

Introduction

Necromancer. What is it about this word, above so many others, that the merest whisper, a voice on the wind, can so completely inspire terror and revulsion in even the strongest of men? Given the hatred it inspires, what sort of person chooses this dark path? Who among us chooses to be an outcast, a pariah, even a target of the Inquisition? With its dabbings in blood and corrupted flesh, graveyards and abattoirs, unclean spirits and immoral scoundrels, what is the appeal of this dark art?

In short, what makes someone choose necromancy, drives her to master its sinister secrets, and sustains her on her secret path? Deeper still, how do these secretive spellcasters recognize their fellows, gain fame amongst themselves, and spread their dark knowledge? For make no mistake—necromancers are more than just solitary madmen or pliant servants of some evil lord. They have orders and chapters that meet in secrecy in cities great and small. Among their hidden guilds, necromancers share spells, conduct experiments, show off their creations, create magical items, and even maintain whole scriptoriums devoted to copying and disseminating training manuals and books of dark lore.

Who are they? What are their motives? Where are they found? How are they organized? These and other questions will be asked, and answered, within these very pages.

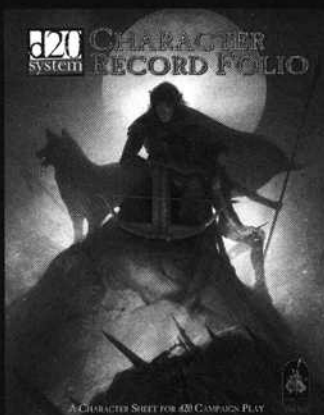
The Horror Within

Secret College of Necromancy is divided into two sections. The first five chapters are largely given over to rules for the d20 System. Here you will find new classes, spells, feats, creatures, equipment, magic items, and more. This material is primarily intended for the Game Master, though players may enjoy the new spells in particular. The two new classes presented, the necromancer and the death knight, are both quite potent and so are best suited for villains under the Game Master's control. It's natural enough for some players to want to use these classes as well. Game Masters should ensure, however, that player character necromancers and death knights pay the price for treading such forbidden paths. They are unlikely to know much peace, and it is recommended that they receive regular visits from righteous paladins, vengeful inquisitors, and crusading clerics.

The second part of the book presents the Secret College itself. This is an entire necromantic organization that can be used in any campaign. It is centered in a nameless city, which can be identified with any appropriate city in your favored campaign setting. A history of the Secret College is presented, along with current members, goals, and details on several locations.

Welcome to Arcana

Secret College of Necromancy is the second in Green Ronin's Arcana series (the first was *Arcana: Societies of Magic*). Future installments will explore other aspects of magical lore. But first, the secrets of life and death await.



The d20 Character Folio

On page 111 of this book you'll find a "Necromantic Addendum" page for our popular *d20 System Character Record Folio*. This 16 page accessory is an expansive character sheet for campaign play. It includes handy elements like the advancement tracker, mini-record sheets for familiars and animal companions, contact lists, adventure records, and even a page for psionic powers. The Necromantic Addendum can be photocopied and used in conjunction with the folio, or on its own. It provides you with mini-record sheets for a necromantic familiar and an unholy steed, a spot for the new skills introduced here, and a place to record your spells per day. You'll also find such addendums in our Master Class series of d20 sourcebooks, like the *Shaman's Handbook* and the upcoming *Assassin's Handbook*.

Chapter One: The Paths of Death



MSW 02

Chapter One: The Paths of Death

When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

—Deuteronomy 18: 9–12

Some wizards are led to necromancy by slow degrees, acquiring skill in the dark arts only late in life, as a prestige class. Others are born rotten to the core. This class is for those who have walked the road to hell from birth.

The Necromancer

Restoring a semblance of life to the discarded husks of flesh and bone, the necromancer doesn't walk the fine line between life and death so much as rape and manipulate it. Able to send creatures to their deaths and then cheerfully bring them back, she has power over life and death—and the magic that can sustain them.

Necromancers depend on a deep knowledge of anatomy and the dark powers to fuel their creations; they channel and control life force, able to restore life or snuff it out. Their tools include electricity, blood, and clay, but most of their magic resides in creatures and spirits raised from the dead rather than in showy spells or illusions. The art of scrying and divination is entirely lost to them. When they want answers, they call up the souls of the departed and question them about the secrets of the past. When they want servants, they dig up bodies, dissect them, and pry the secrets of animation from the remains. For a necromancer, magic is not merely a source of personal power but the way to unlock the secrets of life and death, perhaps even to achieve immortality.

Adventures

Necromancers rarely seek adventure openly. Like rogues, they prefer to operate from the shadows, with forethought and careful planning. While their powers can be used to serve noble ends, more often they are used to increase the caster's personal power, to unlock the arcane secrets she covets, or to fulfill a vendetta.

Characteristics

The necromancer's strength is in her creations and her link to the afterlife. The ability to manipulate both bodies and souls is everything; material wealth, charisma, and even family and social standing are nothing. Anyone willing to become a necromancer must break taboos to begin with, so all other concerns are secondary.

Alignment

Few necromancers are good, and most show a marked disregard for others. Most (not all) favor evil but show no preference for chaos over law. Those who favor chaos flout convention and ignore the laws of morality and ethical behavior. Those who favor law pursue their studies as legally as possible, always striving to learn the higher laws of nature and the supernatural.

Necromancers may be found of any alignment, but the most common necromancer alignment is neutral evil.

Religion

Necromancers commonly revere the god(s) of death in their campaign world. This includes gods such as Anubis of the Egyptian pantheon, Hades from the Greek pantheon, Hel from the Norse pantheon, and Arawn from the Celtic pantheon. In the Freeport setting, they worship the God of Death and the Goddess of Death, Love, and Magic.

Background

Necromancers are part of a secret brotherhood that fosters both co-operation against outsiders and intense rivalry among its members. The respect of their fellows is important since, unlike wizards or sorcerers, the magical powers of necromancers are rarely respected by society as a whole. Some necromancers maintain a low profile to avoid trouble, while others strive to outdo each other in order to create respect through fear. Since most societies do fear them, necromancers are unable to create a formal guild structure, but they often follow rigid codes and rules to protect themselves against others (whether rival necromancers, unruly undead, or judgmental outsiders).

Races

Humans and half-orcs take to necromancy because they fear death and seek to conquer it by embracing it. Humans must be furtive about acquiring bodies, but the sheer size of human settlements makes the practice of necromancy possible. Half-orc culture is the only one among the humanoid player character races that ennobles death, according to necromancers' great respect and even veneration.

Elves and half-elves are repulsed by necromancy, but a few find it intellectually stimulating to play with life forces and dark powers. Drow elves and a few renegades take to necromancy with cold relish.

Dwarves treat necromancy as simply another form of engineering, seeking to understand how to make bones and flesh serve their needs beyond death itself.

Gnome and halfling necromancers are rare because these races are in tune with the natural world and its rhythms; few of them want to pervert the natural processes of life and death or tamper with the undead. Those few gnomes and halflings who become necromancers usually strive to lay undead to rest, rather than create new ones.

Other Classes

Necromancers often work with rogues to acquire bodies and so on. Their relationships with priests are complicated by the "desecration" of the dead required by their work; few priests accept this as a worthy end for a creature's remains.

Game Rule Information

Necromancers have the following game statistics.

Abilities

Intelligence determines how quickly a necromancer learns to unlock magic spells, how many spells she can cast, and how effective those spells are. To cast a spell, a necromancer must have an Intelligence score of 10 + the spell's level.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d4.

Class Skills

The necromancer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (3 + Int modifier) × 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the necromancer.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

A necromancer is rarely a skilled warrior; she knows only simple weapons and has no skill with armor or shields. Armor interferes with her ability to gesture and manipulate magical power, so

wearing it can cause spells with somatic components to fail.

Spells

A necromancer casts arcane spells, the same kind available to sorcerers and wizards. Their magic is innately narrow and specialized; not all arcane spells are available to them, but they have access to some divine spells normally off-limits to arcane casters. The spells they can choose to learn are listed in the spells section of this book (page 18). They cast spells as wizards, and must maintain spellbooks as normal.

Create Familiars

A necromancer may create an undead familiar to serve her. This familiar is unswervingly loyal to its creator and can be a conduit for the necromancer's spells and senses at higher levels. Creating a familiar takes a week and costs 100 gp per level of the necromancer. The

resulting construct or undead is unusually tough and intelligent. The necromancer chooses what form of familiar to create (see Table 1-3). A necromancer may only have one familiar at a time.

If her familiar is slain or destroyed, the necromancer must attempt a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15). If the saving throw fails, the necromancer loses 200 XP per class level; a successful save cuts the loss in half. This loss is permanent unless the necromancer restores the familiar to life (see the "Rebirth" special ability description on page 8). See **Table 1-3: Necromantic Familiars** for details.

Control Undead

Beginning at 5th level, a necromancer may rebuke or command undead as if she were a cleric of the same level.

Bonus Feats

At 4th, 8th, 12th, and 16th level, a necromancer gains a bonus feat. This bonus feat must either be one of the feats listed in this book, a metamagic feat, an item creation feat, or Extra Turning (see *PH* page 32).



Table 1-1: The Necromancer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day												
						0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Create familiar	3	1											
2	+1	+1	+0	+3	Scribe scroll	4	2	0										
3	+2	+1	+1	+3		4	2	1										
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	4	3	2	0									
5	+3	+2	+1	+4	Control undead	4	3	2	1									
6	+4	+2	+2	+5		4	4	2	2	0								
7	+4	+2	+2	+5	Touch of death	5	5	3	2	1								
8	+5	+3	+2	+6	Bonus feat	5	5	4	3	2	0							
9	+5	+3	+3	+6		5	5	5	4	2	1							
10	+6/+1	+3	+3	+7	Imp. Ghoul touch	5	5	5	5	3	2	0						
11	+7/+2	+4	+3	+7		6	6	6	5	4	2	1						
12	+7/+2	+4	+4	+8	Bonus feat	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	0					
13	+8/+3	+4	+4	+8	Grave touch	6	6	6	5	5	4	2	1					
14	+8/+3	+5	+4	+9		6	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	0				
15	+9/+4	+5	+5	+9	Energy drain	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2	1				
16	+10/+5	+5	+5	+10	Bonus feat	7	7	7	6	6	6	4	3	2	0			
17	+10/+5	+6	+5	+11		7	7	7	7	6	6	5	4	2	1			
18	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+12	Touch of undeath	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	3	2			
19	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+13		7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	4	2			
20	+12/+7/+2	+7	+6	+14	Lich	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	3			

Touch of Death

A necromancer with this power, gained at 7th level, can channel negative planar energy directly, by burning a spell slot. Using this power channels damaging energies through the caster into a melee touch attack, inflicting 1d8 damage per level of the spell slot. Thus, a 3rd-level spell slot can be converted into a 3d8 touch of death. This is a supernatural ability.

Improved Ghoul Touch

Starting at 10th level, a necromancer may paralyze an opponent with a melee touch attack unless a successful Fortitude save is made (DC is equal to 15 plus the necromancer's Charisma modifier, if any). The paralysis lasts 3d4 rounds. This is a supernatural ability and can be used three times per day.

Grave Touch

At 13th level, a necromancer gains the supernatural ability to raise corpses as undead with a single touch. This requires burning a spell slot equal to the HD of the undead created and does not guarantee control over the newly created undead. Thus, to create a zombie (2 HD), she must expend a 2nd-level spell slot; to control it, she must make a successful control undead attempt. This is a supernatural ability.

Energy Drain

Starting at 15th level, the necromancer can use *energy drain* as a spell-like ability once per day, with a caster level equal to the necromancer's class level.

Touch of Undeath

At 18th level, a necromancer can use a successful melee touch attack to turn living creatures into undead. An unwilling target is

entitled to a Will save. If the saving throw succeeds, the target is unaffected and cannot be targeted with this ability again by the same necromancer. If the save fails, the necromancer must burn a spell slot equal to half the victim's level or HD and spend 100 XP/level of the victim (the DC for the Will save is the same as if the necromancer were casting a spell of the same level as the spell slot on the target). The target becomes a corporeal, fleshy undead creature of appropriate type and Hit Dice (typically a zombie, but a powerful creature may return as a ghoul, wight, mummy, or even vampire; the GM is the final arbiter). The target is not under the necromancer's control, though she can attempt to establish control normally through her control undead ability. This is a supernatural ability.

Lich

The necromancer may create a phylactery and undertake the transformation into a lich with automatic success (see page 32).

Necromancer Starting Package

Armor: None, speed 30 feet.

Weapons: Quarter staff (1d6, crit x2, 4 lbs., Large, Bludgeoning)

Skill Selection: Pick a number of class skills equal to 3 plus Int modifier.

Feat: Improved Initiative.

Spellbook: All 0-level necromantic cantrips (see page 18) plus *blood pact*, *bone armor*, *detect undead*, *sleep*, plus one of these following spells of your choice per point of Intelligence bonus (if any): *cause fear*, *dead man's eyes*, *ghost light*, *taint the blood*.

Gear: Wooden gravedigger's shovel, sack with waterskin, bedroll, flint and steel.

Gold: 2d4 gp

Necromantic Familiars

A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

—Leviticus 20: 27

Familiars are creatures magically linked to an arcane spellcaster. Necromantic familiars are unnatural creatures brought back from beyond death to serve or constructed from scratch to help a necromancer in her tasks.

Necromantic Familiar Basics

Use the basic statistics for a creature of its type, but make the changes outlined both here and on page 51 in the *Player's Handbook*.

Rebuking Necromantic Familiars

Although not all necromantic familiars are undead, all can be rebuked by a good or neutral cleric as if they were undead (this requires a turning attempt on the cleric's part, but the result is treated as a rebuke, not a turn). Necromantic familiars add their master's level to their own HD when determining whether or not they resist the turning attempt.

Table 1-2:
Necromantic Familiar
Special Abilities

Master's Class Level	Natural Armor	Int	Special
1-2	+2	4	Alertness, improved evasion, share spells
3-4	+3	5	Touch
5-6	+4	6	Speak with master
7-8	+5	7	
9-10	+6	8	Rebirth
11-12	+7	9	Speak with undead
13-14	+8	10	
15-16	+9	11	Spell resistance
17-18	+10	12	
19-20	+11	13	



Familiar Ability Descriptions

All necromantic familiars have special abilities common to all familiars and described in the *PH* (page 51 and elsewhere). In addition, necromantic familiars have two new abilities: *Speak with Undead* and *Rebirth*.

Speak with Undead

The familiar can communicate with any undead creature, subject to the limits of its Intelligence.

Rebirth

A familiar's service is never done until its master dies (and, given the ability of necromancers to transform themselves into liches, sometimes not even then). At the necromancer's option, she can restore a familiar to full health and functioning by casting *animate dead* or *bone machine* on it.

Table 1-3: Necromantic Familiars

Necromantic Familiar		Special
Undead Bat		Master gains +2 to Move Silently checks
Flesh Puppet		Master gains +2 to Dexterity
Undead Raven		Master gains +2 to all Search checks
Undead Serpent		Master gains +2 to Fortitude saving throws
Flying Skull		Master gains extra spell slot
Improved Necromantic Familiar	Level	Special
Ghost Hound	5	Master gains +2 to Track and Wilderness Lore checks
Ghost Horse	5	Trample, spook animals
Skin Cloak	7	Master gains <i>change self</i> at will
Homunculus	8	Sleep poison, construct
Quasit	9	Poison, alternate form, regeneration
Imp	10	Poison sting, spell-like abilities, regeneration

Undead Bat

CR —; Diminutive undead; HD 1; hp 5 or 1/2 master's; Init +3; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 19 (natural +2, size +4, Dex +3) [touch 17, flat-footed 16]; Atk +2 melee (1d2, bite); SD undead immunity, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 6, Dex 17, Con —, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9*, Listen +6, Spot +6 (or master's if better).

Blindsight (Ex): The undead bat has echolocation ability to see invisible creatures or see in darkness. The master gains this ability as well.

Hide in Shadows: The undead bat is small enough to hide extremely well, especially since it can hang from walls, rafters, and other unexpected locations. It gains a +6 racial bonus to Hide rolls.

Undead Immunities: 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.

Flesh Puppet

CR —; Small construct; HD 4; hp 1/2 master's; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (natural +7, size +1, Dex -2) [touch 16, flat-footed 16]; Atk +3 melee (1d4, slam); SD change self, construct immunities, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 7, Con —, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Disguise +4, Listen +3, Spot +5 (or master's if better), Swim +5; Power Attack.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Change Self: A flesh puppet can take on the form of any humanoid of about 4 feet tall or smaller: goblin, dwarf, halfling, and so forth. This is a non-magical change, with the flesh puppet literally draping itself in new skin, sticking on new hair, and even swapping eyes and other features as necessary. The new form lasts until the next form is assumed. Each change takes one minute to complete.

Undead Raven

CR —; Tiny undead; HD 2; hp 9 or 1/2 master's; Init +1; Spd 10 ft., fly 20 ft. (average); AC 16 (natural +2, size +2, Dex +2) [touch 14, flat-footed 14]; Atk +2 melee (1d2, bite); SD undead immunities, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 9, Dex 15, Con —, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +2, Listen +2, Search +5, Spot +6 (or master's if better).

Detect Traps (Ex): The undead raven has an uncanny ability to see magical and mechanical traps and snares, such as trapped runes, teleportation traps, as well as pits, blades, and poison spikes. Like a rogue, an undead raven can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a DC higher than 20.

Undead Immunities: 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.

Undead Serpent

CR —; Tiny undead; HD 1; hp 6 or 1/2 master's; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (natural +3, size +2, Dex +3) [touch 15, flat-footed 15]; Atk +3 melee (1d3, bite); SA poison; SD undead immunity, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 8, Dex 16, Con —, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Spot +3 (or master's if better); Weapon Finesse (bite).

Poison (Ex): The undead serpent creates a magical necropoison called *ghost venom*; those bitten must make a Fortitude saving throw [DC 16] or lose 1 experience level/Hit Die for 1d6 hours. The secondary effect is the same. Any victim reduced to 0 levels or Hit Dice loses consciousness.

Undead Immunities: 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.

Flying Skull

CR —; Tiny undead; HD 2; hp 9 or 1/2 master's; Init +3; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 14 (natural +1, Dex +3) [touch 13, flat-footed 11]; Atk +2 melee (1d2+2, slam+cold); SA chill slam; SD undead immunities, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 7, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +5 (or master's if better); Fly-by Attack.

Chill Touch: The slam attack of a flying skull includes a chilling touch. This adds 2 points to the damage of the attack.

Extra Memory: The skull acts as a repository for one additional necromantic spell. The flying skull's master gains an additional spell slot of a level equal to one-third her own, rounded down (minimum: 1st-level).

Undead Immunities: 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.

Improved Necromantic Familiars

Necromancers who take the Improved Familiar feat may choose one of the improved familiars listed in Table 1-3, provided she is high enough in level to qualify for such an assistant. Most improved familiars are detailed in the *MM*; the exception, the skin cloak, is detailed below and on page 66:

Ghost Hound

CR —; Small undead; HD 3d12+3; hp 22 or 1/2 master's; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 deflection) [touch 16, flat-footed 12]; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3 incorporeal bite); SA trip; SD undead immunities, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Str —, Dex 18, Con —, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Spot +1 (or master's if better); Toughness.

Trip: Ghost hounds can trip opponents with a successful attack (see *PH* p. 139).

Incorporeal: Immune to nonmagical attacks, 50% miss chance from magical attacks (except force effects and ghosttouch weapons). See *MM* p. 6.

Undead Immunities: 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.

Skin Cloak

CR —; Small undead; HD 4; hp 26 or 1/2 master's; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (Dex +2, natural +3, size +1) [touch 13, flat-footed 13]; Atk +3 melee (1d8+1, slam); SA smother; SD undead immunities, immune to crushing, granted abilities, speak with master, touch; AL Any; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Spot +3 (or master's, if better); Dodge.

Undead Immunities: 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.

The Death Knight

The death knight is a servant of dark powers, similar to the blackguard. His soul is pledged to darkness by an unholy baptism shortly after his birth. Powerful death knights gain arcane powers and are protected from disease, poison, and even death by their allegiance to evil.

Adventures

Death knights constantly seek adventure, jousting against knights-errant and paladins, leading war-bands that rape and pillage their way across an enemy's fiefdom, and slyly creeping into temples to murder the priests of gods they hold in contempt. They will use stealth and poison when necessary but by far prefer the bold assault on the citadels of good to the stealthy attack from ambush.

Characteristics

The death knight's power lies in the unholy strength of his sword arm, backed up by an ability to channel divine spells of Evil and Chaos. He is driven to perfect himself as an engine of destruction on the battlefield, to become like a destroying angel, terrifying opponents by the sheer wanton disregard he has for his own life and the lives of others. A death knight does not understand limits in pursuit of a cause; no means are too foul to achieve his ends.

Alignment

Death knights are evil without exception, and most are driven by ambition, hatred, and despair. They show a slight preference for chaos over law. Most who favor chaos drive themselves to ever greater massacres and excesses, eventually destroying themselves in fiery cataclysms that often devastate entire nations. Those who favor law sometimes masquerade as champions of justice within a nation until they can seize power, find a dark priest of the death god(s) they consider worthy of their service, or ally themselves to powerful undead such as liches or vampires.

Religion

Death knights worship the god(s) of death and the afterlife, such as Anubis of the Egyptian pantheon, Hades from the Greek pantheon, Hel from the Norse pantheon, and Arawn from the Celtic pantheon. In the Freeport campaign setting, they include the God of Death and the Goddess of Love, Death, and Magic.

Background

Death knights rarely work together; the same impulse to destruction that makes them so dangerous to others causes groups of death knights to fall out among themselves, always ending in mortal challenges, backstabbing, and betrayal. This only applies to long-term alliances, however, and anywhere

from three to a dozen death knights will sometimes gather for a short-term project, particularly at the prospect of wholesale carnage against worthy opponents.

The exception to this rule applies to a death knight and his apprentice. Each death knight at some point begins to train someone who has undergone the dark ritual (see below) to follow in his bloody footsteps. First the apprentice serves as a page while still a child, then as squire when the apprentice becomes a teen, finally becoming a full-fledged death knight upon reaching maturity, at which point the two part company. Death knights are not sentimental, but each can call upon those he has trained for short-term assistance (for example, accompanying the elder knight on a single mission). The oldest and most successful death knights eventually build up a network that can be unleashed at need upon an unsuspecting land.

Races

Humans, dwarves, and half-orcs are the most common and most widely known death knights. They enjoy the raw power of serving dark causes and are more easily corrupted to serve evil than some other races. Half-orc death knights can become powerful war-band leaders, capable of rallying an entire orcish nation to their service. Gray dwarves are well-known practitioners of death knight skills.

Elves are rarely death knights, but those who enjoy the powers granted by this path are astoundingly successful. Because of their long lifespans, they can take plenty of time to prepare for an atrocity, and then lie low for years or even decades before striking again. Because time is on their side, they are rarely caught and often grow into paragons of corruption. Drow death knights are not as common as one might suppose; their spider goddess considers those who serve as death knights to be supporters of other evil deities, and she is a very jealous goddess. Drow death knights do not cooperate with spider-god priestesses, but some claim that a patriarchal realm of drow ruled by death knights exists deep in the underworld.

Gnome, half-elf, and halfling death knights are rare. These races lack the ruthlessness and natural capacity for hatred that fuels other races. In addition, halflings in particular are difficult to pervert to evil causes. Those few who do become death knights tend to die young, seemingly driven to embrace their own destruction.

Other Classes

Death knights often work with necromancers in a sort of symbiotic partnership, providing a supply of fresh corpses in return for magical weapons and enchantments. At other times, they acquire a personal retinue of rogues, evil fighters, and evil priests as part of a bandit gang or mercenary company. Death knights distrust assassins but sometimes form mutually beneficial short-term partnerships with them. They never cooperate with druids, bards, rangers, or paladins and tend to look down on blackguards as Johnny-come-lately *nouveau riche*.

Game Rule Information

Death knights have the following game statistics.

Abilities

Strength is crucial for a death knight to inflict maximum damage on his enemies, and Constitution is important to give the death knight bonus hit points. Charisma is important for accessing the highest-level spells, controlling undead, and intimidating followers.

Alignment: Any evil.
Hit Die: d10.

Class Skills

The death knight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Handle Animal (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at 1st Level:
(2 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the death knight.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

The death knight is proficient in all simple and martial weapons and all armor and shields.

Resist Poison

What self-respecting minion of death would be laid low by a humble toxic substance? From 1st level onward, a death knight is shielded from all poisons by dark powers, gaining a +4 profane bonus to all such saving throws.

Bonus Feats

At 4th, 10th, and 16th level, the death knight gains a bonus feat. This may either be Coup de Grace (see page 16), Dying Blow (ibid), Revenant (ibid), Sense Life (ibid), Sense Undead (ibid), Steely Stare (ibid), Extra Turning (for four additional turning attempts per day—see PH page 32), or a combat feat (a combat feat is any listed as a bonus fighter feat on page 37 of the PH).

Unholy Aura

At 2nd level, the death knight gains the ability to terrify commoners and animals. This acts as a *spook* spell that affects both animals and creatures of 1 level/HD or less. A death knight can use this ability once per level per day.

Immune to Disease

Beginning at 3rd level, a death knight is immune to all diseases, including magical diseases such as mummy rot and lycanthropy.



Spells

Beginning at 4th level, a death knight gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, a death knight must have a Charisma of 10 plus the spell's level, so a death knight with a Charisma of 9 or lower cannot even cast orisons.

Unholy Steed

At 5th level, a death knight may summon a ghost horse to serve him as a magical steed. If the death knight is 10th-level or higher, he may elect to summon a nightmare instead.

Resist Cold, Lightning, and Fire

Over time, the death knight's loyalty to evil is rewarded with protection from the elements. The

death knight gains resistance against cold, lightning, and fire at 6th, 9th, and 11th level, respectively. Resistance is equal to the death knight's current class level. A 10th level death knight, for example, has cold and lightning resistance 10.

Dark Ritual

Once he reaches 8th level, the death knight may call on unholy powers to perform a dark baptism, granting a humanoid infant the ability to become a death knight, and shifting the target's alignment one step toward evil.

Touch of Death

By expending a spell slot, a death knight can channel negative planar energy directly against his enemies. Using this power channels damaging energies through the death knight into a melee touch attack, inflicting 1d8 damage per class level of the knight, to a maximum of the level of the spell slot. A death knight can channel this energy through a metal blade or bludgeon (such as a sword or mace) as part of a normal melee attack.

Control Undead

When a death knight reaches 14th level, he gains the supernatural ability to control undead. He may use this ability a number of times per day equal to three plus his Charisma modifier. He rebukes or commands undead as would an evil cleric five levels lower than the death knight's current class level. Thus, a 14th-level death knight can control undead as a 9th-level cleric.

Unnatural Vigor

The unnatural vitality of the warriors of death is legendary. The death knight can keep fighting long after he should have died. Once he gains 15th level, the negative hp a death knight must be reduced to before dying increases to double his class level. Thus, a 15th-level death knight could continue to attack until reduced to -30 hp (-32 for a 16th-level death knight, -34 for 17th level, etc.). His wounds may be obviously mortal (throat cut, disemboweled, etc.) but he continues to fight without penalty.

Unhallow

The foul aura that surrounds a death knight of power and accomplishment is anathema to consecrated places. A death knight of 17th level or higher automatically desecrates any and all holy places he visits merely by his presence. This ability is equivalent to the death knight casting the divine spell *unhallow* as a cleric of the same level.

Face of Death

The aspect of a warrior aligned with death can be fearsome indeed. At 18th level, the death knight projects a permanent *face of death* spell.

Death Knight

Upon reaching 20th level, the death knight receives the most prized of rewards—the gift of undeath, granted to him by his dark patrons. The character's type type changes to undead, granting him all the standard undead immunities, increasing his HD type to d12, and eliminating his Con score. The death knight retains his personality, memories, all spells and special abilities, and also gains the ability to cast a *fireball* at 20th level of effect once per day.

Death Knight Starting Package

Armor: Scale +4 AC, speed 20 ft., 30 lbs.

Weapons: Long sword (1d8, crit 19–20/x2, 4 lbs., Medium, Slashing), Heavy Lance (1d8, x3, 10 lb. Medium, Piercing)

Skill Selection: Pick a number of skills equal to 2 plus Int modifier.

Feat: Combat Reflexes.

Gear: Medium riding horse, backpack with waterskin, bedroll, flint and steel.

Gold: 5d4 gp

Table 1-4: The Death Knight

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day				
						0	1	2	3	4
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Resist poison	—				
2	+2	+1	+0	+3	Unholy aura	—				
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Immune to disease	—				
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	1				
5	+5	+2	+1	+4	Unholy steed	1				
6	+6/+1	+2	+2	+5	Cold resistance	2				
7	+7/+2	+2	+2	+5		3	0			
8	+8/+3	+3	+2	+6	Dark ritual	3	1			
9	+9/+4	+3	+3	+6	Lightning resistance	3	2			
10	+10/+5	+3	+3	+7	Bonus feat	4	2	0		
11	+11/+6/+1	+4	+3	+7	Fire resistance	4	2	1		
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+4	+8	Touch of death	4	3	2	0	
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+4	+8		5	3	2	1	
14	+14/+9/+4	+5	+4	+9	Control undead	5	3	2	2	
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+5	+9	Unnatural vigor	5	4	2	2	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+10	Bonus feat	6	4	3	2	0
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+5	+11	Unhallow	6	4	4	2	1
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+12	Face of death	6	5	4	3	2
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+13		7	5	4	3	3
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+7	+6	+14	Death knight	7	6	5	3	4

New Feats and Skills

The following new skills can make life easier for a necromancer, since they all pertain to matters she deals in on a regular basis. The following new feats reflect ways in which a necromancer's or death knight's constant association with all things necromantic can grant them strange powers.

New Skills

Each of these skills reflects abilities typically acquired by a working necromancer and various areas of expertise that accompany her researches.

Craft: Construct (Int, Necromancer Only)

Often a necromancer wants to fuse elements of two or more bodies, or rearrange the elements of a corpse to better suit her purposes before animating the body as an undead creature or a construct such as a golem. In some cases, she may merely make necromantic toys, such as walking lanterns or self-opening doors, to amuse herself and other necromancers or handle small, simple tasks. In most cases, though, a necromancer builds constructs as servants and soldiers.

Table 1-5: Construct Creation

Task	DC
Necromantic toy	15
Flesh golem	20
Bone golem	25
Rot golem	30
Siege Engine	varies

Table 1-6: Construct Modifiers

Task	DC
Removing limbs	12
Grafting limbs	15
Strengthening bone	16
Integrated natural weapons	17
New skin	18
Reshaping features	19
Integrate martial weapons	23
Combining two bodies	25*

*+1 for each additional body

Check: The necromancer can add limbs, reshape a body, and otherwise prepare a construct for animation. The golems are self-explanatory; with the costs given in the creature descriptions (see page 62). Removing and grafting limbs, strengthening bone, and layering on new skin are all special tasks that can be applied to constructs at the DM's discretion; treat them as creating a masterwork item if applied to a golem's creation (see "Creating Masterwork Items" under the Craft description in the PH).

Integrating either natural or forged metal weapons is a common approach to creating a more powerful golem. Most constructs

with this addition look more fearsome but are no more effective than their unmodified counterparts. If the integrated weaponry is magical, however, the construct's attacks with that weapon gain the weapon's enhancement bonus.

Reshaping features is the only result that is intended primarily for use on the living. If successful, the new facial features act as a permanent disguise, but at the risk of permanent scarring if the check fails by 5 or more. A few necromancers have been known to create a stand-in using this method; it's also useful for creating a recognizable corpse when the need arises for a necromancer to fake her own death.

Combining bodies is a technique necromancers sometimes use when creating walking walls, self-propelled coaches with nightmarish steeds, fleshy stairs, or similar abominations. Getting two distinct sets of muscles and joints to work together in tandem is extremely difficult; getting a dozen to do so is a challenge only the greatest necromancers can meet.

Retry: Yes, but each time the character fails her skill check by 5 or more, she ruins half the raw materials and has to pay half the original raw material cost again.

Special: Any character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (Construct) gains a +2 synergy bonus on Heal checks.

Craft: Embalming (Int; Necromancer Only)

The craft of embalming a human or other body to prepare it for reuse as a member of the undead is a difficult job, given the perishable materials involved. This craft includes all forms of preparation, from basic embalming to mummification, as well as taxidermy and preparation for reanimation as sentient undead.

Table 1-7: Embalming

Desired Result	DC
Ready for Burial	12
Prepare for animation as skeleton	15
Taxidermy	18
Prepare for animation as zombie	19
Prepare for animation as mummy	25
Prepare for animation as lich	30

Check: The various forms of embalming all have different results and DCs, as summarized in the chart above.

Success with a "ready for burial" check halts decay for a time, prepares skin and hair for a brief viewing, and clothes the deceased in proper garments, all while preventing odor or decay from distracting mourners at the funeral. The body lasts up to 1 week in temperate conditions, half that in tropical conditions, and up to a month in arctic conditions.

Preparing a skeleton for animation involves removing all skin and flesh by boiling but preserving cartilage and ligaments in place for proper range of motion of the animated bones. It also hardens foot and hand bones for greater durability. A successful check doubles the expected duration period of a skeleton (see page 52).

Taxidermy prepares the skin, fur, hair, and feathers of a dead creature for long-term display as a memorial or trophy.

A zombie embalming preserves the corpse from quick decay, keeping the flesh intact by draining the most easily corrupted fluids and removing unnecessary organs (such as the lungs and intestines) that are often the first site of decay. A successful check doubles the expected duration period of a zombie (see page 52).

Mummy embalming is an extremely long and involved process that requires desiccation of the body, soaking in natron salts, removal of the brain and organs, varnishing with resin and preservatives, and wrapping with long bands of linen interspersed with protective symbols, charms, and amulets. A successful check doubles the expected duration period of a mummy and provides it with a +2 bonus against fire (see page 52).

Lich embalming involves all of the difficulties of mummy embalming, but with the further challenge of preserving the brain and other organs, withered and desiccated but in place, as well as the skills and memories of the target by arcane means. Any necromancer hoping to become a lich must be able to either prepare her own body for embalming (difficult at best, but usually done with instructions to mindless undead) or must teach an apprentice the art. In many cases, this apprentice is a master embalmer taken on for just this one duty.

Retry: Yes, but each time the character fails her skill check by 5 or more, she ruins half the raw materials and has to pay half the original raw material cost again.

Knowledge: Anatomy (Int; Trained Only)

This skill includes a knowledge of surgery, dissection, and basic anatomy. As might be expected, such knowledge is enormously useful for corporeal sculpting of corpses, sculpting incorporeal ectoplasm, and even restoring bodies by proper embalming. Without a proper knowledge of Anatomy, most of the work of necromancy is pure guesswork.

Check: The character locates a particular organ, vein, or other anatomical structure on a living or dead creature. Note that finding the organs on a living creature may require careful use of Animal Handling or strong sedatives. Most often, this is used on dead creatures being looted for organs or body parts that are valuable to alchemists and wizards in preparing potions or magical items.

Retry: Yes, so long as no surgery has yet been performed.

Special: Any character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (Anatomy) gains a stackable +2 synergy bonus to Heal, Craft (Embalming), and Craft (Construct) checks.

Knowledge: Mortuary Custom (Int; Trained Only)

In the course of their reading and practical experience, necromancers come to know a lot about what to expect when opening a grave or tomb. This skill represents the accumulated knowledge of various races' and cultures' customary burial practices.

Check: The necromancer knows whether a body in a given graveyard is likely to have been embalmed or not; whether to expect a wooden coffin, metal casket, or stone sarcophagus; the likelihood of grave goods (treasure), traps, or guardians, and the like. Exceptions are always possible, but successful use of this skill enables the character to predict what an average burial should contain. The more exotic or unfamiliar the culture is to the necromancer attempting the check, the greater the DC of the roll.

Retry: Usually none until the character has gained more skill ranks in this skill (there's only so much a character can predict without going and looking for herself). However, if the character uncovers significant new information while exploring a tomb (for example, that the "dwarven tomb" is in fact a grey dwarf burial), she is entitled to a retry.

Special: Any character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (Mortuary Custom) gains a +2 synergy bonus to Profession (Graverobber) checks. A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (Religion) gains a +2 synergy bonus to her Knowledge (Mortuary Custom) check.

Profession: Graverobber (Wis, Trained Only)

Typically followed by at least some of a necromancer's minions, this profession is reviled by most people but can pay extremely well. It includes the discovery of recent graves, bribing of watchmen and priests to look the other way, digging up graves, breaking into mausoleums, and obtaining bodies by fraud.

Check: The character enters a graveyard and obtains one or more dead bodies. When successful, a graverobber earns a much higher income than most professions—instead of about half the check result in gold pieces per week of dedicated work, as is the case for honest professions, the graverobber earns the check result in gold pieces per week. "Taking 10" with this skill requires the character to take a week to study a city and its gravesites before attempting any activity; it applies only to the first of the two checks described below.

Before rolling for the wages gained each week, the graverobber must first succeed in his chosen field. The DC depends on the size of the city and the suspicions of the locals; large cities have more resources to protect gravesites, but a suspicious population can make a robber think twice. Typically, a large city with trusting inhabitants is DC 12 or so, a small trusting village is DC 10, a large city with suspicious inhabitants is DC 17, and a small town with suspicious inhabitants is DC 15. These DCs are doubled for cultures obsessed with protecting the dead (such as the ancient Egyptians). Any site with magical protections or a permanent night watchman adds +4 to the DC. A failed check alerts a cemetery watchman (if any) or bystander to the presence of intruders in hallowed ground. A check that fails by 5 or more alerts the city watch, town guard, or even another gang of graverobbers (at the DM's discretion). Penalties for being caught graverobbing tend to be much tougher than penalties for practicing honest trades such as sailor, innkeeper, or miller, ranging from a stretch of hard labor combined with being pilloried in the stocks (and thus exposed to the tender mercies of grieving relatives) to branding, maiming, or execution (typically by hanging).

Only if the first check is successful does the graverobber roll for the cash accrued that week.

Retry: An attempt to use a Profession skill to earn an income cannot be retried. The character is stuck with whatever weekly wage the check result brought him. However, the next week he may try again to determine a new income for that next period. An attempt to rob a particular grave can be retried, but only with a +3 increase to the DC (cumulative per attempt).

Special: Any character with 5 ranks or more in Profession (Graverobber) gains a +2 synergy bonus to Bluff, Innuendo, and Move Silently checks.

New Feats

These necromantic feats all reflect ways in which continued tampering with things Man Was Not Meant to Know can be used a necromancer's or death knight's advantage.

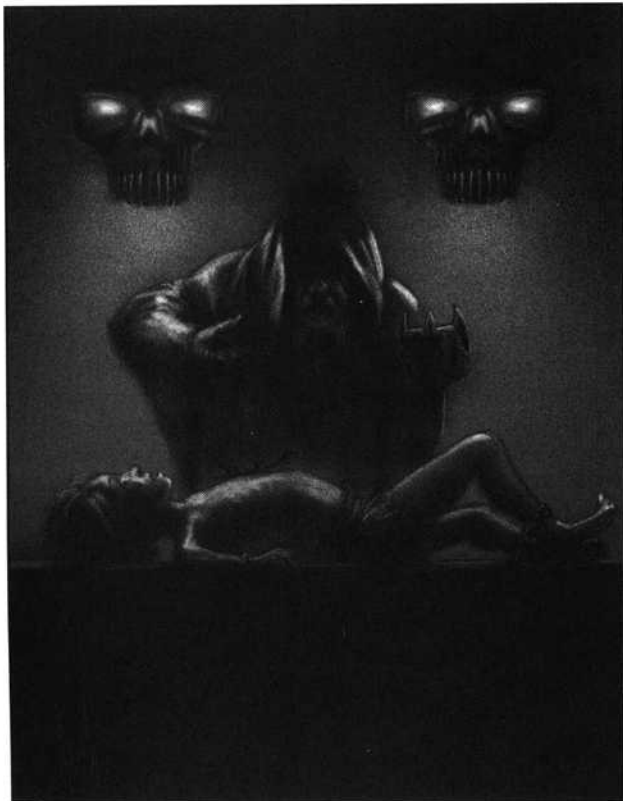
Cheat Death (General)

Your understanding of anatomy and healing is so great that you can drag living souls back from beyond the brink of death.

Prerequisites: Divine spellcasting level 5+, Heal 6+ ranks, Knowledge (Anatomy) 4+ ranks

Benefit: You can restore to life a target creature that has fallen to as few as -30 hp. This requires a full round action and successful application of either a healing spell of at least 1st level or the Heal skill; the attempt must be made within one round per your level after the target has fallen to -10 hp or below. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw with a DC equal to the number of hp he or she has fallen below 0 (so a character at -16 hp has DC 16). If successful, the target acquires a negative level but is stabilized at -9 hp. If the saving throw fails, the target cannot be revived.

Retry: No retries are permitted.



Chill Hand (General)

You gain a freezing touch as an unarmed attack.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +2 or better, access to Necromantic magic, *blood pact*.

Benefit: By channeling negative energy, the character gains a touch attack similar to the *chill touch* spell. With a successful touch attack, you cause 1d6 hp damage plus 1 hp/level. This is a supernatural ability.

Coup de Grace (General)

You quickly finish off opponents who have fallen but aren't yet dead.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3 or better, Knowledge (anatomy) 5+ ranks, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

Benefit: As a free action, you can inflict a coup de grace (see *PH*, page 133) on a number of paralyzed, held, wounded, sleeping, or otherwise immobile opponents equal to your normal number of melee attacks. This requires having a melee weapon in hand. If you sustained damage during the round, you must make a successful Concentration check as to use this feat, as if you were casting a 2nd-level spell.

Normal: You must take a full round action to finish off a sleeping or helpless opponent.

Cripple (General)

You incapacitate a target through terrific pain with a touch.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (anatomy) 4+ ranks, base attack bonus +6 or better, Chill Hand, Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: With a successful touch attack, you cripple an opponent with wracking, shooting pains. The victim is staggered for 1d4 rounds unless he makes a successful Fortitude saving throw with a DC equivalent to 10+half your level+your Cha modifier. If the saving throw succeeds, there is no effect. This is a supernatural ability.

The Dark Lady's Kiss (General)

You become resistant to negative energy attacks.

Prerequisites: Necromancer level 5+, *blood pact*, worship the Goddess of Death, Love, and Magic.

Benefit: The necromancer gains a boon through her devotion to the goddess and constant exposure to negative energy, building up a limited immunity to energy drains. When targeted by such attacks, she ignores one negative level for each five levels she has in the Necromancer class. Thus, a 5th-level necromancer with this feat attacked by three spectres (touch inflicts two negative levels) would receive only three negative levels, not six ($[2 - 1] \times 3$); a 10th-level or higher necromancer would suffer no negative levels at all.

Dying Blow (General)

Characters can fight even while dying.

Prerequisites: Toughness, Con 12+.

Benefit: With this feat, a disabled or dying character may rise up and make standard attacks or attacks of opportunity even

after being reduced to 0 hp or less. However, the character cannot move (except a five-foot step) or cast spells. Also, a character may not check for self-stabilization on a round in which this feat is used.

Special: Death Knights may gain this feat without the Toughness prerequisite.

Fearful Gaze (Metamagic)

The necromancer's presence is so imposing and so terrifying that her fear effects are intensified.

Prerequisites: Necromancer 2nd+ level, Cha 14+.

Benefit: When the necromancer casts any spell that causes fear as a primary or secondary effect, the DC for the target's saving throw to resist that effect increases by +3.

Improved Mortal Curse (Metamagic)

Characters capable of casting mortal curses can do so without actually dying (see Spells, page 18).

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 2+ ranks, Necromancer 5th+ level.

Benefit: The necromancer can cast a mortal curse when she has suffered terrible wounds but is not actually dying. She can cast mortal curses when reduced to 20% or less of her total hit points; targeting any creature that inflicted damage on her in that combat.

Master of the Past (Metamagic)

The character's spells become more effective against certain targets.

Prerequisites: Wis 12+, Necromancer level 3+.

Benefit: The saving throw DC for any spell cast by the necromancer with this feat that targets spirits, ghosts, incorporeal creatures, or ancestors increases by +2.

Revenant (General)

The character returns from the dead with a single purpose: to avenge herself on the person or things who wronged her.

Prerequisites: Iron Will, Wis 15+, character level 5+.

Benefit: A character reduced to -10 hp or less becomes a revenant thirsty for vengeance. The character's type changes to undead and HD type increases to d12. The revenant retains its base attack bonus, spell complement, feats, and skills. This return from death occurs 1d6 days after the character's death. In addition, he gains the ability to regenerate 4 hp per round. He is effectively under a *geas* to find and kill the creature(s) that reduced him to 0 hp or less; this compulsion cannot be removed. When the last of his killers is dead, the revenant returns to the earth, permanently dead.

Special: Death knights, as violent as they are already, are far more likely to get up after death to wreak vengeance on the source of their demise. A death knight may gain this feat without requiring the Iron Will prerequisite. Death knights with the Unnatural Vigor ability do not become revenants until they are actually dead.

Sense Life (General)

You can sense the presence of the living at Close range.

Prerequisites: Concentration 3+ ranks, Wis 12+.

Benefit: The information gained depends on the strength of the life energies and the time spent studying them. This feat cannot detect undead or constructs. Success requires concentration.

1st Round: Presence or absence of living creatures.

2nd Round: Number of creatures and the strength of the strongest aura.

3rd Round: The strength and location of each aura. If the creatures are in line of sight, you can make Spellcraft skill checks to determine the type of the creature (Humanoid, Fey, Animal, etc). Make one check per creature with DC 16.

4th Round: Determine the level or HD of the creature:

Table 1-8:
Life Sensing

Target Creature(s) Level/Effective HD	Strength of Aura
less than 1	Dim
1 to 3	Faint
4 to 6	Moderate
7 to 9	Average
10 to 12	Strong
13 to 15	Very Strong
16+	Overwhelming

Sense Undead (General)

You can sense the presence of the undead and magical necromantic constructs at Close range.

Prerequisites: Arcane spellcaster, Concentration 4+ ranks, Sense Life.

Benefit: The information gained depends on the strength of the magical energies and the time spent studying them. This feat cannot detect living things, only undead, energy beings, and constructs. Success requires concentration.

Determine the exact information gained using the 4 round system provided in the Sense Life feat description.

Steady Stare (General)

The necromancer has internalized the power of death to such a degree that both the living and the dead can sense it. The withering gaze of the necromancer strikes fear in mortal opponents and demands obedience from the undead.

Prerequisites: Necromancer 4th+ level, Cha 14+, Intimidate 1+ rank.

Benefit: The necromancer gains a +2 bonus to all Intimidate checks against living targets. Against undead, she gains no Intimidate bonus but instead a +2 bonus to all attempts to rebuke or command undead.

Chapter Two: Spells and Dark Magic

We went together to the Coliseum; and there the priest, having arrayed himself in necromancer's robes, began to describe circles on the earth with the finest ceremonies that can be imagined. I must say that he had made us bring precious perfumes and fire, and also drugs of fetid odour.

When the preliminaries were completed, he made the entrance into the circle; and taking us by the hand, introduced us one by one inside it. Then he assigned our several functions; to the necromancer, his comrade, he gave the pentacle to hold; the other two of us had to look after the fire and the perfumes; and then he began his incantations. This lasted more than an hour and a half; when several legions appeared, and the Coliseum was all full of devils.

—Cellini, *Autobiography*, LXIV

Traditionally, necromancy is the summoning up of the spirits of the dead. In fantasy literature, that definition has expanded to include the literal reanimation of the undead. The necromancer class does some of both.

The spells listed here are all the spells permitted to characters of the necromancer class. Death knights have access to the cantrips and all these spells up to 4th level. Spells from the *PH* (*PH*) are marked with an asterisk(*), spells from *Tome & Blood* (*T&B*) are marked with a dagger (†), and spells from *Oriental Adventures* (*OA*) are marked with a double dagger (‡).

The spells include two new descriptors common among necromantic spells: *mortal curse* and *dark pact*. Each of these is described in more detail in the spell descriptions on the following pages.

Necromancer Spells

0-Level Spells

Arcane Mark*
Bone Hand
Detect Magic*
Disrupt Undead*
Ghost Sound*
Maggots
Partial Animation
Prestidigitation*
Read Magic*
Repair Minor Damage†
Spark
Spook
Vermin
Watchful Eye

1st Level Spells

Ancient Wisdom
Blood Pact
Bone Armor
Call Undead
Cause Fear*
Chill Touch*
Dead Man's Eyes
Detect Undead*
Ghost Light‡
Ghost Writing

Grave Claws
Hibernate
Invisibility to Undead*
Negative Energy Ray†
Ray of Enfeeblement*
Ray of Palsy
Repair Light Damage†
Skull Eyes
Sleep*
Taint the Blood

2nd Level Spells

Ancient Spirit
Blindness/Deafness*
Bull's Strength*
Command Undead†
Darkness*
Darkvision*
Death Knell*
Disguise Undead†
False Life†
Familiar Pocket†
Ghost Sight
Ghoul Touch*
Grave Rot
Grave Warding
Kiss of the Toad‡
Mend Corpse

Pestilential Vapor
Repair Moderate Damage†
Scare*
Shocking Grasp*
Speak with Dead*
Spectral Hand*
Undead Warding

3rd Level Spells

Ancient Lore
Animate Dead*
Astral Dream
Cannibalize
Corpse Candle†
Death Knight Pact
Deeper Darkness*
Desecrate*
Dispel Magic*
Enhance Familiar†
Feign Death†
Gentle Repose*
Halt Undead*
Incorporeal
Infuse Dead Flesh
Leech
Negative Energy Burst†
Nondetection*
Phantom Steed*

Possess Animal‡
 Puppet Master
 Repair Serious Damage†
 Vampiric Touch*

4th Level Spells

Blood Golem
 Bolster Undead
 Contagion*
 Death Mask
 Eating the Black Lotus
 Enervation*
 Entrap Ancestor
 Fear*
 Fortify Familiar†
 Greater Sleep
 Hand of Glory
 Hands of Death
 Heart Ripper‡
 Homunculus
 Negative Energy Wave†
 Pain‡
 Repair Critical Damage†
 Suspend Life Function
 Vampiric Dream
 Wall of Bones‡

5th Level Spells

Blood of Fire‡
 Bone Machine
 Curse of Blood
 Curse of Memory

Face of Death
 Ghostform†
 Longevity
 Magic Jar*
 Quick Aging
 Permanency*
 Plague
 Possess‡
 Spirit Self‡
 Spiritwall†
 Temple Pact

6th Level Spells

Antilife Shell*
 Circle of Death*
 Create Undead*
 Death Angel Pact
 Drain Life
 Extract Memory
 Flesh Golem
 Imbue Familiar with Spell
 Ability†
 Lightning Bolt*
 Rot Flesh
 Undeath to Death†

7th Level Spells

Bone Golem
 Control Undead*
 Dust
 Finger of Death*
 From the Ashes

Legion of Skeletons
 Legion of Zombies
 Limited Wish*
 Siege Engine
 Sword of Darkness‡
 Withering Palm‡

8th Level Spells

Clone*
 Create Greater Undead*
 Horrid Wilting*
 Immortality
 Immunity to Turning
 Legion of Ghouls
 Legion of Shadows
 Mass Sleep
 Rot Golem
 Soul Switch
 Symbol*

9th Level Spells

Astral Projection*
 Energy Drain*
 Hide Life†
 Legion of Mummies
 Legion of Wraiths
 Lich
 Mortal Strike
 Soul Bind*
 Wail of the Banshee*
 Wish*

Death Knight Spells

0-Level Spells

Bone Hand
 Disrupt Undead*
 Ghost Sound*
 Maggots
 Partial Animation
 Read Magic*
 Spark
 Vermin
 Watchful Eye

1st Level Spells

Bane*
 Call Undead
 Cause Fear*
 Chill Touch*
 Divine Favor*
 Grave Claws
 Invisibility to Undead*
 Lesser Fire Orb†
 Protection from Good*

Taint the Blood
 True Strike*

2nd Level Spells

Blindness/Deafness*
 Bull's Strength*
 Darkness*
 Death Knell*
 Ghost Sight
 Ghoul Touch*
 Pestilential Vapor
 Scare*
 Shocking Grasp*
 Undead Warding
 Undetectable Alignment*

3rd Level Spells

Animate Dead*
 Desecrate*
 Dispel Magic*
 Feign Death†

Heal Mount*
 Incorporeal
 Leech
 Magic Circle Against Good*
 Negative Energy Burst†
 Nondetection*
 Puppet Master
 Vampiric Touch*

4th Level Spells

Bolster Undead
 Contagion*
 Dispel Good*
 Enervation*
 Fear*
 Fire Orb†
 Hands of Death
 Negative Energy Wave†
 Pain‡
 Unholy Blight*
 Wall of Bones

New Necromancy Spells

The following 72 new spells are best introduced to the campaign using one or more of the books of arcane lore described in the "Infamous Books" section.

Cantrip

- Bone Hand:** Animates a hand for 1d3 slashing damage.
- Maggots:** Strips meat from dead flesh
- Partial Animation:** Animates one leg or arm
- Spark:** Electricity leaps from fingers, may light flammable
- Spook:** Animals fight or flee
- Vermin:** Swarm of bugs appears
- Watchful Eye:** Eyeball records all it sees until caster returns

Level 1

- Ancient Wisdom:** Restores spirit to its skull
- Blood Pact:** Gain +3 saving throw bonus, lose 1 hp/level
- Bone Armor:** +7 natural armor bonus
- Call Undead:** Draws undead within 1 mile per level to caster
- Dead Man's Eyes:** See the last thing the target body saw
- Ghost Writing:** Hides writing from normal sight
- Grave Claws:** Hands inflict 1d6 damage per attack
- Hibernate:** Hibernate all winter
- Ray of Palsy:** Ray reduces Dex by 1d6+1 point/2 levels
- Skull Eyes:** See life forces, undead energies, and creature type
- Taint the Blood:** Target loses -2 from attack, damage, and saves, loses Dex bonus

Level 2

- Ancient Spirit:** Summon ancient spirit
- Ghost Sight:** See spirits and ethereal
- Grave Rot:** Item rots
- Grave Warding:** Grave hallowed, cannot reanimate, warning bell
- Mend Corpse:** Heals corporeal undead 1d8/level
- Pestilential Vapor:** Noxious gas within 20 feet incapacitates living creatures
- Undead Warding:** Undead cannot enter 100 sq. ft./level

Level 3

- Ancient Lore:** Compel spell, item, and potion lore from spirit
- Astral Dream:** Astral exploration during sleep for 1 round/level
- Cannibalize:** Gain 1d3 hp/HD of undead destroyed
- Death Knight Pact:** Create a death knight
- Incorporeal:** Make a target incorporeal for 1 round/level
- Infuse Dead Flesh:** Give up to 2 hp/level permanent bonus to undead
- Leech Drain:** 1d6 hp/2 levels up to 5d6, gain half that
- Puppet Master:** Control target's speech and movements

Level 4

- Blood Golem** Create a blood golem
- Bolster Undead:** Makes undead harder to turn
- Death Mask:** Molds your face into another's likeness
- Eating the Black Lotus:** Reduce target's Intelligence by 3d6

- Entrap Ancestor:** Trap spirit in item; gain advice and +3 Save bonus
- Greater Sleep:** Puts 3d6+2 HD to sleep, do not awaken
- Hand of Glory:** Paralyze all who see the hand for 1 round/level
- Hands of Death:** 3d4 chilling hands grapple randomly within 15 feet
- Homunculus:** Create a homunculus in 1 week
- Suspend Life Function:** Stops a single life-process without harm
- Vampiric Dream:** Target cannot sleep, regain spells or hp

Level 5

- Curse of Blood:** Target loses 1 hp/round for every wound
- Curse of Memory:** Amnesia, cannot acquire new skills, forgets feats and spells
- Face of Death:** Creatures flee, -4 morale penalty to saves
- Longevity:** Regain 1d10 years of lost youth
- Plague:** All creatures in 1 mile exposed to disease
- Quick Aging:** Age 1d10 years
- Temple Pact:** Gain access to divine domain of spells

Level 6

- Bone Machine:** Build undead constructs
- Death Angel Pact:** 2d3 death angels join your service
- Drain Life:** Grant 1 negative level/3 levels
- Extract Memory:** Transplant one day's memories
- Flesh Golem:** Create a flesh golem in 2 months
- Rot Flesh:** All within 1 ft. radius/level suffer unhealable 1d6/level

Level 7

- Bone Golem:** Create a bone golem in 2 months
- Dust:** Destroys one undead irrevocably
- From the Ashes:** Return as undead with of same HD
- Legion of Skeletons:** Creates 1d6 double-HD skeletons/level
- Legion of Zombies:** Creates 1d4 double-HD zombies/level
- Siege Engine:** Create a siege engine in 1 year ritual

Level 8

- Immortality:** Aging stops, immune to poison and disease
- Immunity to Turning:** Target undead cannot be turned/commanded
- Legion of Ghouls:** Creates 1d4 double-HD ghouls/level
- Legion of Shadows:** Creates 1d6 double-HD shadows/level
- Mass Sleep:** 14d6 HD fall asleep, but not 15+ HD creatures
- Rot Golem:** Create a rot golem in 3 months
- Soul Switch:** Switch souls between two bodies for 1 day/level

Level 9

- Legion of Mummies:** Creates 1d6 double-HD skeletons/level
- Legion of Wraiths:** Creates 1d3 double-HD wraiths/level
- Lich:** Helps transformation to lichdom
- Mortal Strike:** Caster's levels become negative levels for her killers

Spell Descriptions

Ancient Lore

Necromancy, Summoning

Level: Nec 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 hour
Effect: Spirit summoned
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You summon up a dead necromancer to instruct you. You can compel information with a successful Spellcraft check (DC 10 + target's level in life). If this fails, promises of a fine host body, transmutation into lich or ghoul form, or other inducements sometimes garner a spirit's cooperation.

The incorporeal spirit cannot wander more than 100 feet from the necromancer without becoming dissipated back into the afterlife, and it cannot write down spell instructions, sigils, and so forth until it is provided with a host body (typically a fresh zombie). When the host body is destroyed, the spirit again banished to the afterlife.

Even without a host body, the summoned necromancer's spirit can see its surroundings (darkvision 60 feet) and can hear normally. The spirit still speaks the languages it knew in life. Necromancers typically use this spell on their masters, deceased comrades, or legendary necromancers of old.

Once the spirit has taught you a single necromantic spell, item construction method, or potion formulae, it cannot be summoned again for 10 years.

Arcane Material Component: Bones or shroud of a necromancer, a burnt blood offering, and shadow ink (see page 47).

Ancient Spirit

Necromancy, Summoning

Level: Nec 2
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: N/A
Effect: Spirit summoned
Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You summon up a spirit of the departed to gain information from it. The incorporeal spirit cannot leave the spot where it was summoned and does not gain a physical form or attacks. It can see its surroundings (darkvision 60 feet) and can hear normally. The spirit is under no compulsion to answer questions put to it but may be convinced to cooperate by successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks. It still speaks the languages it knew in life.

Arcane Material Component: Incense, a burnt blood offering, wine, and dirt from the spirit's grave.

Ancient Wisdom

Necromancy

Level: Nec 1, Clr 1
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Effect: Target skull becomes inhabited by spirit
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

The target skull becomes home again to the spirit that once inhabited it. The skull does not gain mobility or any attacks, nor can it feel pain. It can see what is in front of it (darkvision to 60 feet) and can hear and speak normally. The skull is under no compulsion to answer questions put to it but can sometimes be convinced to cooperate with the caster by use of successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks. It still speaks the languages it knew in life.

Many necromancers use this spell on close relatives or departed loved ones, late masters, unlucky apprentices, or hated rivals. (Having the spirits of one's greatest enemies imprisoned on one's laboratory shelves can be very satisfying.) Skulls can be attacked as objects (Hardness 1, hp 2).

Ancient wisdom can be combined with *animate dead* to create talking undead, such skeletons or zombies. Note, however, that the skull has no control over the body it is attached to unless the caster allows it.

If the skull is destroyed, the spirit flees.

Astral Dream

Necromancy

Level: Nec 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Effect: Dream travel
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Your spirit leaves your body during sleep and explores your immediate surroundings. To cast the spell, you light the incense (see below), then fall asleep normally. You then appear to "wake" but leave your body behind—your spirit is incorporeal and gains a speed of 10 ft. per point of Intelligence. *Detect invisibility* will not detect your dream-self, but *ghost sight*, *skull eyes*, *true seeing*, and any creature able to see into the astral plane can see your dream-self. You can see the material world but hear nothing and can touch nothing. At the end of the spell's duration, you sink into normal sleep, though upon waking you remember everything you saw in the *astral dream*.

Material Component: Incense made of opium, mandrake root, and phlogiston.



Blood Golem

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S, M, XP
Casting Time: 1-month ritual
Range: Touch
Effect: Animates blood construct
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Every good necromancer can use a few minions, and sometimes zombies and skeletons just can't handle the job. This spell creates a greater minion, a blood golem to serve you, as described in this book (see page 62). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures required for wizards to achieve the same result. For a necromancer, the time required to build the receiving vessel is much longer than the time required to animate it.

Material Component: The spell requires a fully fermented and distilled essence of blood and membranes to house the animating energies of the spell. This armature is constructed from the blood, fluids, and lungs of twelve human corpses brewed within a specially prepared cauldron (of tarnished copper engraved with necromantic sigils) with vinegar, poisonous plants and mushrooms, and rare essences of earth and water. Assembly requires a successful Craft (Construct) check (DC 15). Various other substances required to treat the blood bring the total cost to 20,000 gp (half what it would cost a wizard to create a blood golem).

XP Cost: Casting this spell and activating the blood golem drains 1,000 XP from the caster.

Blood Pact

Necromancy [Dark Pact]

Level: Nec 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Personal
Effect: Fortifies caster against attack
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

The caster offers up her own blood in exchange for temporary daemonic protection. When the spell is cast, the caster gains +3 to all saving throws in a single category of her choice (Fortitude, Reflex, or Will). In exchange, however, the caster suffers hit point damage (1 point per level). The price is cheap at first (1 hp at 1st level), but grows ever steeper (7 hp at 7th level, 10 hp at 10th level, etc.) as the caster grows in power and can afford greater sacrifices.

The *blood pact* is a short-lived offer that feeds a daemon's hunger while only nibbling away at the caster's soul. The claim that it offers daemonic forces a way to influence diabolists and necromancers, or that it leads to ever greater dark pacts, has not been proven.

Material Component: The caster's blood. Typically, the caster cuts herself with a small knife and dribbles the blood onto the ground.

Bolster Undead

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 4, Nec 4
Components: S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Effect: Grants target undead resistance against turning
Duration: 10 minutes + 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

With the direct support of a necromancer, even the lowliest undead can fight with great determination—and even face down divine power. When this spell is cast, you channel negative energy into undead under your control, temporarily making them more difficult for anyone else to turn or rebuke. You can affect one undead creature for each of your necromancer levels. Thus, a 7th-level necromancer could affect up to seven undead with a single casting of this spell. Target creatures become 4 HD higher than their actual level/HD for purposes of Table 8–16: Turning Undead (see *PH*, page 140). However, you may still attempt to influence those same undead as if they were at their original HD. Hit points, spell capacity, and the like are not increased, merely the undeads' ability to shrug off attempted turnings.

Arcane Focus: You must have a holy or unholy symbol dedicated to a god whose clerics have the power to rebuke or bolster undead, over which you must sprinkle dust or distilled essence taken from an undead creature at least 4 HD greater than the type you are boosting (for example, mummy dust could *bolster* zombies). The dust or distillate costs 100 gp per application/casting.

Bone Armor

Necromancy

Level: Clr 2, Nec 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Caster
Effect: Protect caster
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a layer of bony ribs on your arms, legs, and torso, as well as a skull-like helmet. The effect is to provide you with a +7 natural armor bonus (AC 17) against all physical forms of attack. The *bone armor* is destroyed by the attacks it absorbs; when it has absorbed hp of damage equal to twice your caster level, the armor falls into useless brittle shards.

Material Component: A rib bone from a humanoid slain within the last seven days.

Bone Golem

Necromancy

Level: Nec 7
Components: V, S, M, XP
Casting Time: 2-month ritual
Range: Touch
Effect: Animates bone construct
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a bone golem to serve you, as described in this book (see page 62). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures required for wizards to achieve the same result. The time required to build the receiving vessel is much longer than the time required to animate it.

Arcane Material Component: The spell requires a fully constructed bone armature to house the animating energies of the spell. This armature is constructed from the bones and tendons of twelve human corpses stitched, tied, and mortised together; assembly requires a successful Craft (Construct) check (DC 15). Various other substances required to treat the bones bring the total cost to 30,000 gp (half what it would cost a wizard to create a bone golem).

XP Cost: Casting this spell and activating the bone golem drains 1,000 XP from the caster.

Bone Hand

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Animate hand
Duration: Concentration
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell animates a bony hand and allows you to use it as a weapon at a distance, but it does not allow you to deliver touch spells through it. The bony hand floats at your command and attacks once per round with your base attack bonus. If an attack is successful, the hand inflicts 1d3 slashing damage.

Focus: A preserved hand.

Bone Machine

Necromancy

Level: Nec 5
Components: V, S, M, XP
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Animates bone and sinew
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

You animate a structure of bone and sinew into a necromantic construct. It follows the normal rules for constructs but must be made entirely of once-living material. The result is a bone creature that obeys its creator's commands. The construct is not undead and cannot be turned or rebuked; its animating forces are those of the spell, rather than the negative energies that power undead. You can animate 1 cubic foot of bone per caster level. The resultant construct cannot have more HD than the Necromancer has class levels.

Undead made of bone (e.g., skeletons) are not affected by this spell.

Material Component: Infusions of quicksilver (mercury) and virgin's blood applied to the bones.

XP Cost: The caster loses 500 XP per Hit Die of the machine constructed, plus 1,000 XP for each power, immunity, or special attack imbued in the machine.

Call Undead

Necromancy, Enchantment (Compulsion)

Level: Dkn 1, Nec 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: 1 mile per level
Effect: Attracts undead
Duration: 8 hours
Saving Throw: Yes
Spell Resistance: Yes

You create an invisible magical beacon that attracts undead like moths to a flame. Once the ritual is properly performed, any undead within range make their way directly to the site without delay. Once there, they remain in the area for the remainder of the spell's duration. There is no guarantee that the undead are friendly, but you may attempt to awe or control the undead through normal means.

Uncontrolled undead attack the caster, returning to their lairs if they succeed in killing the one who disturbed their rest. If you leave the site, the undead go first to the site and then follow after you for the remainder of the spell duration, unerringly sensing your current location. In such a case, the control roll is made for each undead whenever it first encounters you. Should any undead fail to reach you before the spell duration elapses, each returns to its own lair.

The effects of this spell are keyed to your caster level with regard to the potency of the undead so contacted. If your caster level is 1st through 5th level, only skeletons and zombies will answer the summons. Once you reach 6th level, ghouls, ghastrs, and shadows will also respond. At 11th level, you can compel wights, wraiths, and mummies to come, and at 15th level and above even vampires, spectres, and ghosts must make the journey. Liches are immune to this spell, although they will hear the call and may investigate on their own accord out of curiosity.

Material Component: A small funerary bell (1 gp).

Cannibalize

Necromancy

Level: Nec 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Hp transfer from undead

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: See below

Spell Resistance: No

You steal hit points from low-level undead to heal your injuries. For each HD of undead destroyed by the spell, you gain 1d3 hit points. You cannot gain hit points beyond your maximum, merely replace those lost by injury or disease. The spell affects undead of up to 4 HD.

However, the process is dangerous, because it infuses negative energy into a living body. If you gain hit points equal to two-thirds of your total by this method, you must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 19). Failure results in immediate transformation into an undead state as a free-willed creature of darkness—typically an intelligent skeleton or zombie. Despite the danger, this spell can be immensely handy in a tight spot, buying a necromancer time to escape or regroup by sacrificing mindless minions.

Curse of Blood

Necromancy [Mortal Curse]

Level: Nec 5

Components: V or S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Special, see below

Effect: One creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You curse your killer with your dying breath. The target must be present, but distance or touch is not a factor. Like a *contingency*, this spell is cast ahead of time but doesn't take full effect until later—specifically, when the caster dies by violence. At that time, the person responsible suffers the full effect; if several are responsible, the *mortal curse* falls on the individual singled out by the dying spellcaster by word, glare, or gesture.

The curse induces hemophilia, causing the recipient to bleed from any wound, beginning the round after the injury is received. The victim loses an extra hp of damage each round for each wound he or she has suffered. Binding the wounds

or applying any magical healing stops the bleeding for that injury. This curse is particularly devastating for fighters of all types, and hence is usually aimed at characters who see a lot of hand-to-hand combat. Wearing a *ring of regeneration* places the curse in abeyance so long as the ring remains, but actual regeneration and healing do not take place until all wounds have been bound. If the victim ever receives more than 12 points of damage from a single blow, he or she must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or bleed internally—a situation that can be resolved only through self-stabilization (10% chance; see *PH* p.129) or the speedy application of magical healing.

Once laid, a *mortal curse* is exceedingly difficult to lift. Typically, only a major quest or the intervention of a deity can free the victim from its effects. Other methods offer temporary relief, but the curse's insidious effects always reassert themselves.

The chief component of the spell is the caster's ebbing life force; hence it can only take effect upon your demise. Note that this curse remains in effect even if the caster is later resurrected or raised from the dead.

Curse of Memory

Necromancy [Mortal Curse]

Level: Nec 5

Components: V or S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Special, see below

Effect: One creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You curse your killer with your dying breath. The target must be present, but distance or touch is not a factor. Like a *contingency*, this spell is cast ahead of time but doesn't take full effect until later—specifically, when the caster dies by violence. At that time, the person responsible suffers the full effect; if several are responsible, the *mortal curse* falls on the individual singled out by the dying spellcaster by word, glare, or gesture.

The *curse of memory* causes recurrent amnesia. This does not affect the recipient's current memories, but makes it difficult for new memories to stick. Each day, the victim awakes with no memory of anything that has happened on the day before, and only the vaguest recollection of any event since the curse was laid. Short-term memory remains sharp; a target does not become forgetful in the midst of a conversation or battle. But long-term memories never form, so the target wakes up with no idea where he or she is, who his or her companions are (other than those known before the curse took effect, who may seem from his or her perspective to have suddenly aged), or what the current mission is. Some targets suffering from this curse keep detailed diaries to re-orient themselves. The curse does not halt level advancement. Thus spellcasters can learn new spells and advance in level normally, but forget that they can memorize higher-level spells unless reminded. New skills cannot be acquired; the recurrent memory loss makes it impossible. Feats can, but again the victim forgets he or she has them.

Once laid, a *mortal curse* is exceedingly difficult to lift. Typically, only a major quest or the intervention of a deity

can free the victim from its effects. Other methods offer temporary relief, but the curse's insidious effects always reassert themselves.

The chief component of the spell is the caster's ebbing life force; hence it can only take effect upon your demise. Note that this curse remains in effect even if the caster is later resurrected or raised from the dead.

Dead Man's Eyes

Necromancy, Divination

Level: Nec 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, M, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: See dying vision
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You see the last thing seen by the target corpse. The body cannot be more than 3 days old per your caster level. The point of view is the same as the last moment of the target's life; anything behind the target or outside its range of vision cannot be seen. The spell does not improve the target's vision, so someone who died in darkness reveals only blackness, even if the caster has darkvision. However, if the deceased had special vision then you will see events with that sight.

Visions created by this spell are very vivid, emotionally charged, and often extremely unpleasant. You must make a Fortitude saving throw at the end of the vision (i.e., the moment of death) or pass out for 1d10 rounds from the psychic shock of sharing in the target's death.

Material Component: A whole eye from the target creature.

Death Angel Pact

Necromancy [Dark Pact]

Level: Nec 6
Components: V, XP
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Varies

You visit the plane most likely to be your home in the afterlife (determined by alignment), and there can seek to strike a bargain with dark powers. Usually, you speak with a death angel (q.v.) or other servant of the God of Death.

The necromancer offers up a portion of her soul to the God of Death in exchange for ever-loyal servants. In return, the caster gains the service of 2d3 death angels and gains their advice and service, including instruction in all necromantic spells, signs, and mysteries. When the caster dies, the death angels immediately take the remainder of her soul to the afterlife—she cannot be resurrected or raised from the dead by any means other than a *wish*. Using a *wish* nullifies the dark pact, removing all benefits and an additional 1d3 levels from the target.

XP Cost: Loss of a partial soul results in the loss of 1d3 experience levels.

Death Knight Pact

Necromancy [Dark Pact]

Level: Nec 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: A newborn
Duration: Varies

You are granted a vision of the plane most likely to be your home in the afterlife (determined by alignment), and there can seek to strike bargains with dark powers. Most often, the necromancer speaks with a death angel (q.v.) or other servant of the God of Death.

The details of any bargain struck must always be approved by the DM, but in most cases the caster offers up a newborn (her own, or one acquired especially for the purpose) to become a death knight. The child undergoes a dark baptism and henceforth has an affinity to death and the powers of darkness, beginning martial training as soon as he or she can walk. See page 11 for more on the training of such a child to be a death knight. The child of such a pact remains loyal to the caster so long as the caster remains a good and faithful servant of the God of Death. If the caster restores a soul against the God of Death's wishes, fails to offer sacrifices, destroys a powerful agent of death and darkness, or otherwise betrays the pact, the death knight turns against the caster.

Death Mask

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 full round
Range: Touch
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level

You can mold your face to assume the likeness of a recently killed humanoid, allowing you to impersonate that person—in facial appearance, at least—for a short period of time.

You must touch the face of the dead person whose identity you wish to assume, and he or she can have been dead for no more than 30 minutes. Your own features then become soft as clay, and you can mold them to match the dead person's. All physical features at the time of death, including cuts, bruises, and other injuries, are duplicated. Your face matches the shape of beings approximately your own size; those with noticeably greater or smaller facial areas than your own (i.e., belonging to a different size category, like an ogre or halfling) are compressed or stretched to fit your own facial proportions. Identifying features such as skin color, beards, eye color, ear shape, tattoos, and the like are automatically transferred.

The transformation is physical, not an illusion, and cannot be detected by most spells that penetrate illusions; *true seeing* reveals a magical aura but not your original features. At the end of the spell's duration, your face appears to grotesquely sag and melt into corruption, only regaining its normal appearance 10 minutes after the spell's expiration.

Material Component: A piece of clay.

Drain Life

Necromancy

Level: Clr 6, Nec 6
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Grant 1 negative level/3 levels
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

This foul enchantment allows the necromancer or priest to wither and shrivel the soul of his opponents. To cast this spell, you expose both the target and yourself to negative energy. You both get a Will save to resist the spell effect. On a failed save, that character (whether the caster or her target) gains one negative level for every three levels of the caster.

As noted in the *PH* (p. 280), negative levels result in actual level loss 24 hours later unless the character thus afflicted succeeds on a Fort save. The DC for this Fort save differs depending on whether one is the caster or target of this spell. The target's save DC is 10 + 1/2 your caster level + your Charisma bonus, while your save DC is 10 + 1/2 your caster level. In addition, you gain a bonus to your roll equal to your Charisma modifier—thus, not only is your DC lower but you also gain a bonus to the actual roll.

Arcane Material Component: A rusty nail.

Dust

Necromancy

Level: Clr 7, Nec 7
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. +10 ft./level)
Effect: Slay undead
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

What necromancers learn how to create, they also learn how to destroy. *Dust* is to the undead what *finger of death* is to the living: a spell of devastating potency that can instantly destroy its target. The target of *dust* literally crumbles away, as if it were a vampire exposed to daylight, going from full strength to nothingness (or at most inert powder) in a single round, during which time the target creature can do nothing but wail in agony.

An undead destroyed by *dust* is forever lost. Even if the target makes its save, it still takes 1d4 points of damage per level of the caster. Immaterial and material undead alike are affected by the spell, as the force of the annihilating blast is essentially a massive "feedback" of energy from the Energy Plane that is antithetical to the source of the undead's animating power (for most undead, this is the Positive Energy Plane).

Dust affects a single ghost or vampire, two spectres or mummies, three wraiths or wights, four shadows or ghouls, and five zombies or skeletons per casting. Liches are immune to its effects.

Eating the Black Lotus

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Black ray destroys opponent's mind
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will mitigates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Eating the black lotus devours an opponent's mind from within; leaving him a living but unthinking shell. The spell requires the caster to see the opponent and make a ranged touch attack. If this succeeds, the target must attempt a Fortitude saving throw as negative energies course from the caster into the victim's mind, eating away his intelligence. Creatures who do not cast arcane spells (such as fighters, druids, or monks) suffer a -4 penalty to this saving throw.

If the saving throw fails, the victim loses 3d6 points of Intelligence. If this reduces the victim to Int 0, he is reduced to a stupor and loses all volition—staring blissfully off into space, unable even to eat or drink without aid. If his Intelligence is reduced to Int 1 or Int 2, he has animal intelligence and can walk, eat, fight, or run away but not speak; some necromancers have been known to use the spell to acquire a friendly, attractive human "pet." If his Intelligence remains in the Int 3 to Int 9 range, he can speak coherently and fight normally but may be unable to use Intelligence-based skills well and cannot cast any spells.

The spell's effects fade in time and can be removed by a successful *heal*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. However, the state of mindless bliss created by the spell is addictive, meaning that characters who have succumbed suffer a cumulative -1 penalty to their Will saves for each consecutive failed save.

If the saving throw succeeds, the target's mind is only slightly clouded; he acts as if mentally staggered (see *DMG* p. 85), able to take only a single action per round for 1 round per caster level of the necromancer. This means he could move or attack in a round but not both, full-round actions take two rounds, etc.

Entrap Ancestor

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Imbues item with ancestor spirit
Duration: 10 rounds/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Binds the soul of an ancestor spirit within a masterwork item. As long as the item remains whole, unscarred, and complete, the ancestor is trapped within it, able to offer advice, magical protection, and information to whoever carries the item. The ancestor's advice may or may not prove useful, but its protective energies provide a +3 bonus to all saving throws made by any creature carrying the item. As soon as the item is scratched, lost, or broken, or when the spell duration expires, the spirit returns to its proper place in the afterlife. The ancestor can be seen normally by anyone using *ghost sight*.

Arcane Material Component: Dirt from the ancestor's gravesite.

Arcane Focus: A masterwork item appropriate to the type of ancestor summoned (a war fan for a general, a katana for a samurai, a painted scroll for a wu jen, etc, minimum 1000 gp).

Extract Memory

Necromancy, Enchantment

Level: Nec 6, Sor/Wiz 7

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Effect: Grab memory from victim's brain

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You become slightly out of phase with a target creature and can literally reach inside his skull and remove memories or information. You can then implant that memory within your own skull or that of a third creature. Each use of this spell removes one day's memories. The spell is sometimes referred to as *trepanning*.

The target must make a Will save; success means that the target misleads the caster and hides the desired information, losing memories of some other day instead. The process is painful; both target and the recipient must make Fortitude saves; failure means the creature screams and faints as the memory is removed or inserted. The recipient is typically a henchman or simple-minded minion of the caster. The process requires concentration and deftness, so both target and recipient are typically restrained to avoid accidents.

Extracted memories are permanently transferred and can be restored only by reversing the process. The spell cannot transfer skills, feats, or class-related powers, but the very life-experience of the target moves from one mind to another. The transplanted memories are so vivid that the recipient feels he or she experienced them first-hand. Receiving too many memories from the same source is unwise, as the recipient may identify with the "donor." In extreme cases, the recipient develops a split personality or believes that he or she is the person who originally experienced those events.

If the caster is a necromancer, the spell need not be cast on a living donor; memories can be retrieved from creatures dead for up to one day per level of the caster. The necromancer Tanith is said to have attempted a "personality transplant" by transferring months of memories following a friend's death, all to the same recipient.

Material Component: The brains of the donor and recipient. The somatic components are the passes required to establish the rapport, isolate the desired memory, and pluck it forth.

Face of Death

Necromancy [Fear, Mind-Affecting]

Level: Nec 5

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: Cone

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes



Your face becomes a terrifying skull; all who see it see their own death reflected in your visage. Living creatures must save or flee in terror, suffering a -4 morale penalty on saving throws. The fleeing creature chooses its path randomly (as long as it is away from you and immediate danger) and has a 75% chance to drop what it is holding. If cornered, a terrified victim of the spell cowers and pleads.

The spell continues to generate this effect for as long as its duration lasts, unless you choose to dismiss it. New creatures seeing the caster for the first time during this period must make a saving throw or be affected; creatures who shake off the spell effect must make another saving throw each time they see the skull-faced caster. Creatures attempting to engage the caster in combat can either avert their gaze from your head (suffering a 20% miss chance on all attack rolls) or must make a new saving throw every round.

Material Component: A white rose, and a mouse skull.

Flesh Golem

Necromancy

Level: Nec 6

Components: V, S, M, XP

Casting Time: 2-month ritual

Range: Touch

Effect: Animates flesh construct

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a flesh golem to serve you (cf. *MM* pp. 109-110). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures described in the *MM*. All the physical components are still required, as well as a Craft (construct) check (DC 13).

Material Component: The main components are no less than six undecayed human corpses, parts of which you stitch together to create the golem's body. Various other required substances bring the total cost to 25,000 gp (half what it would cost a wizard to create a flesh golem).

XP Cost: Casting this spell and activating the flesh golem drains 1,000 XP from the caster.

From the Ashes

Necromancy

Level: Nec 7
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: A 1-week ritual
Range: Personal
Effect: Allows slain caster to spontaneously animate as undead
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: No

This necromantic *contingency* allows you to return from the dead. However, unlike divine spells such as *raise dead* and *resurrection*, it has no power to restore life; instead, you return as one of the undead.

You must make a successful Will saving throw when you die (whether by violence or natural causes makes no difference). If successful, you become an undead creature with Hit Dice equal to your level. Your personality remains intact.

If unsuccessful, you become mindless undead of a type whose HD equal to one-half your level (rounded down). For example, a 12th-level necromancer who made her save might become a vampire (12 HD); one who failed might become a mummy (6 HD) or stronger than usual allip (6 HD). The manner of your demise is also important, since affects the possible outcome—a necromancer whose body is destroyed cannot become any type of corporeal undead but instead defaults to the next lowest type of immaterial undead.

Material Component: An elixir compounded from the bodily remains of undead types which the caster could potentially become. These include ground bone from a skeleton, juice from rendered zombie and ghoul fragments, mummy powder, vampire and lich dust, and captured essences from a shadow, wight, wraith, spectre, and ghost. Drinking this concoction renders you helpless for 10 days, minus one day for every three points of Constitution.

Ghost Sight

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 2, Nec 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Effect: See spirits and ethereal creatures
Duration: Concentration + 3 rounds
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You see all spirits, incorporeal creatures, and ethereal creatures as if they had physical form, up to the limit of your line of sight. You can also target them with magical attacks, including ranged touch attacks.

Ghost Writing

Necromancy

Level: Nec 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: S, F
Casting Time: 3 rounds
Range: Touch
Effect: 1 page writing/level
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

By means of this spell, you can safely record hidden information (a diary, anatomical experiments, etc.), or send hidden messages to a fellow necromancer. *Ghost writing* is completely invisible to the naked eye, and even potent effects such as *true seeing* and other divinations only reveal the presence of the writing, not its import or meaning. Only *corpse candle* or a second casting of *ghost writing* ("ghost reading") causes the hidden letters to dimly glow and reveal themselves. Tanith is said to have devised this spell to provide her fellow necromancers with a sort of secret code, analogous to the secret language hoarded by druids, with which they could communicate matters of no concern to the outside world.

Arcane Focus: A pen made from bone, typically human. No ink is required; the caster simply writes the desired message with the dry pen on the empty page.

Grave Claws

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 1, Nec 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Effect: Hands become claws
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

Your hands grow sharp, blackened claws, capable of tearing iron and shredding flesh. You gain a natural attack form with your usual base attack bonus, inflicting 1d6 hp damage per attack. Since you temporarily gain natural weaponry, you suffer no attack of opportunity for unarmed attacks. *Grave claws* can combine with other touch attack spells, such as *chill touch*, *ghoul touch*, and *shocking grasp*.

Grave claws allow you to dig through soft earth and clay at a rate of 5 ft./round.

Grave Rot

Necromancy

Level: Nec 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Target item touched rusts or rots
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: No

You speed up the natural process of decay in inanimate matter. If the target item is magical or is held by an opposing creature, it is entitled to a saving throw. If the item is not held or magical, the effect is automatic—the object rusts, rots, and decays into a state that destroys its functionality. The target object must be medium-sized or smaller.

Material Component: Pinch of mummy dust.

Grave Warding

Necromancy, Abjuration

Level: Clr 2, Nec 2
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: One grave hallowed
Duration: 1 month
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You protect a single grave from desecration and the body from reanimation. A funereal bell tolls if the grave is disturbed; this tolling can be heard out to Long range (400 ft. + 40 ft./caster level). Even if the grave is robbed, the body within the grave cannot be reanimated or used in a construct while the spell is in force.

Arcane Material Component: The material component is a vial of holy water and a consecrated silver bell (50 gp).

Greater Sleep

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Nec 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Puts several creatures to sleep
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A *greater sleep* spell causes a single powerful creature to fall into a coma. Roll 3d6+2 to determine how many total Hit Dice are affected. Once a creature falls into a *greater sleep*, it cannot be awakened by normal means (slapping, shaking, etc.). Wounding awakens affected creatures, but normal noise does not.

Sleeping creatures are helpless. *Greater sleep* does not target unconscious creatures, constructs, or the undead.

Material Component: Grave dust, and the spindle of a spinning wheel.

Hand of Glory

Necromancy, Enchantment

Level: Nec 4
Components: S, M
Casting Time: 5 actions
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Up to four target creatures
Duration: 1 minute/level

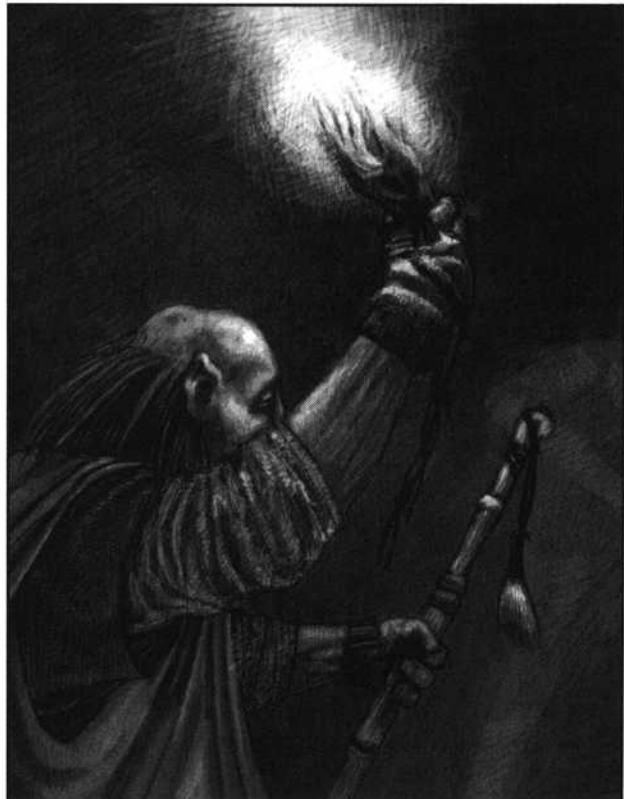
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You freeze anyone who sees the *Glorious Hand*. Creatures must make a Will save or be held immobile for 1 minute (10 rounds) per level of the caster; those who make the save are *slowed* for 1 round per caster level. Creatures consciously averting their eyes gain a +4 bonus to the save but suffer a 20% miss chance to all attacks. Surprised creatures automatically fail the save. The spell cannot affect those who are blind or otherwise immune to gaze attacks.

Those affected are held motionless in the position they had when they saw the *Glorious Hand*, not even blinking. They are fully conscious and see normally in their field of vision, hear whatever happens in the vicinity, etc. Those who made their saves are magically dazzled, seeing the flickering candle flames of the *hand of glory* wherever they look and thus suffering a -2 penalty to attack rolls and to skill checks involving movement, vision, and the like.

Material Component: The left hand of a hanged man, severed at the wrist, with wicks made from twists of his hair placed on the tip of each finger and thumb; grease from his rendered body fat serves instead of wax to make the whole burn as a ghastly candle. The spell is activated by lighting all five wicks and then holding the *Glorious Hand* aloft. If any of the flames should go out, the spell's effects end instantly; it is thus vulnerable to *gust of wind*, clever applications of *create water*, and the like. The caster is allowed a Reflex saving throw against such attempts to snuff the flames; if successful, the Hand stays lit.

A necromancer of at least 10th level needs no material component; she can create a *hand of glory* using her own left hand. She may not cast a spell with a somatic component while her hand is occupied, but she may end the spell at any time.



Hands of Death

Necromancy, Conjuratation

Level: Dkn 4, Nec 4
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: 30 square feet per level
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Reflex negates
Spell Resistance: No

This necromantic variant of *Evard's black tentacles* animates ghostly hands that reach up through the surface upon which the spell is cast (typically a floor, wall, door, or platform). A single casting creates 3d4 hands, which attempt to grab anyone or anything within the area of effect. The ghostly hands ignore the caster, other necromancers, undead, and death knights present.

All targets must make a Reflex saving throw for each *hand* targeting them. Success means that the hand misses; failure means that it grasps the character, causing 1d4 points of damage. In addition, each hand automatically inflicts a modified *chill touch* upon anyone it grasps; the target must make a Fortitude save or lose an additional 1d4 hit points plus a point of Constitution damage. Lost Constitution is regained at the regular rate (1 point per day), but until it is regained the target suffers a -1 penalty to all saving throws against Necromantic spells for each point of Constitution damage he is still suffering.

Note that *hands of death* ignore anyone in incorporeal form, *ghostform*, or *vampiric form* but can attack ethereal targets. *Negative energy protection* offers complete immunity, but each failed saving throw has a chance of canceling the protection (this chance is 50% for the first failed save, 60% for the second, 70% for the third, and so forth).

Arcane Focus: A preserved human or humanoid hand. Using a *hand of glory* increases the DC of saving throws against the spell by +2.

Hibernate

Necromancy

Level: Nec 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Hibernate for winter
Duration: Until season changes
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The creature you touch enters the state of slowed metabolism. You "bank the embers" of the target's life force, sending it into a deep sleep. Any attack (successful or not) causes it to wake, as does loud noise, shaking, etc. Otherwise, raging thirst awakens most creatures in three days or so; creatures that hibernate naturally may sleep all winter.

A successful Will saving throw negates the effect, but animals that naturally hibernate or sleep deeply (bears, badger, dragons, squirrels, etc.) suffer a -2 penalty to this saving throw.

Homunculus

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 week ritual
Range: 20 feet
Effect: Animates a servitor
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a homunculus to serve you (cf. *MM* p. 121). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures described in the *MM*. All the physical components are still required, as well as a Craft (construct) check (DC 12).

Material Components: Clay, ashes, mandrake root, spring water, and a pint of the caster's blood. Total cost is 50 gp (half what it would cost a wizard to create a homunculus).

Immortality

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 12 hours
Range: Personal
Effect: Stops aging
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

You effectively stop the aging process, remaining as youthful and vigorous as you were when you cast the spell. While your mental ability scores can still improve, your physical ability scores do not decline with the passing years. You are immune to poison and disease (though not magical poison or magical disease). You can still be killed by violent means.

Material Component: A *percept of wisdom* +6.

Immunity to Turning

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8
Components: M, S, F, XP
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Makes target undead immune to turning
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

You summon into existence a shell of negative energy, which surrounds the undead target(s) like an invisible second skin, encasing them within a small mobile "sinkhole of evil" effect. Creatures so shielded are completely immune to any attempt to turn, destroy, rebuke, or command them. In addition, the spell mitigates the effects of spells to which undead are particularly vulnerable, such as *sunbeam* and *sunburst*: the target creature takes only half-damage from these attacks on a failed save and no damage

on a successful save. Finally, this spell blocks the special power of a *disruption* weapon; the weapon inflicts normal damage but the shielded undead automatically makes their saves. You can grant this immunity to 1 HD of undead per your caster level. If the caster is undead, she can cast this spell on herself.

Material Component: A small vial of powdered silver, which must be sprinkled over the targets to be protected.

Arcane Focus: A talisman imbued with pure negative energy; such a talisman typically costs 10,000 gp to construct.

XP Cost: Each casting of this spell drains 100 XP from the caster (a side-effect of your brief contact with the Negative Energy Plane)

Incorporeal

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 3, Nec 3, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Effect: Target creature's body made immaterial

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Reflex negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Casting this spell makes the creature you target incorporeal, granting it all the benefits and hindrances of that state. The target creature cannot be touched by physical objects, cannot handle physical objects, and can only be damaged by magical weapons with an attack bonus equal to your caster level divided by five (round up). All of the creature's equipment is made incorporeal with it.

While incorporeal, the creature can still cast spells that affect it (if a spellcaster) but cannot cast spells that affect corporeal creatures.

Arcane Material Component: Spectre ichor.

Infuse Dead Flesh

Necromancy

Level: Nec 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Hit point transfer to undead

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: See below

Spell Resistance: No

A reversed form of *cannibalize*, this spell can be incorporated into any *animate dead* ceremony, doubling that spell's casting time. By drawing from your own life energy, you can create stronger undead. In addition to rolling randomly to determine the skeleton's or zombie's hit points, you may safely contribute up to two hit points per level to the creature, to the maximum allowed by the undead's Hit Dice. Thus a skeleton could have as many as 12 hp and a zombie as many as 27 hit points (24 for 2 HD, +3 for the Toughness feat). The extra points are added to the number randomly rolled but you must decide how many points to *infuse* before rolling. If animating more than one corpse, you may allocate the boost among them however you wish once the rolls are made, so long as the 12-hp-per-HD cap is not exceeded.

This spell is both painful and potentially dangerous. You take damage on a one-to-one ratio (thus *infusing* three skeletons with 3 extra hp each causes you to suffer 9 hp of damage); this damage may be healed normally. You must also make a Fort save (DC 10 +1/point lost) at the conclusion of the ceremony or collapse for 1 minute per hit point lost.

You may donate more than 2 hit points per level, but this is risky. Exceeding the 2-hp-per-level limit creates such a strong tie to the Negative Energy Plane that you must make a Will save (DC 20) to control the transfer. Failure costs you 1 point of Constitution for every undead you were boosting. This is a permanent loss and cannot be undone by any spell less potent than *wish* or *miracle*. Undead resulting from such an episode seem slightly more self-aware, intelligent, and willful than normal; for purposes of turning or rebuking them, they behave as if they were double their actual HD.

Material Component: A copper charm in the shape of manacles.

Leech

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 3, Nec 3

Components: S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 10 ft./level

Effect: Drains life force

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell drains hit points from a single living target creature within range and transfers them to the caster. If the target fails its save, it loses 1d6 hit points for every two of your caster levels (round down), to a maximum of 5d6 hp. Simultaneously, you gain half as many hit points as the target lost (the transfer is not very efficient, the remaining points simply being drained away by the Negative Energy Plane). These are temporary hit points, like those granted by an *aid* spell, lasting only 1 round/caster level.

A target killed by *leech* has a 5% chance, plus 5% per every five levels of the caster, of spontaneously animating as an uncontrolled undead within 24 hours.

Arcane Material Component: A remora scale, and blood sucked from a giant leech.

Legion of Ghouls

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8

Components: V, S, M, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter

Effect: Creates ghouls

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

As *legion of skeletons*, but creates 1d4 ghouls/level of the caster. They have double the normal Hit Dice of ghouls.

Material Component: One hundred ghoulish claws.

Arcane Focus: A war horn looted from a grave.

Legion of Mummies

Necromancy

Level: Nec 9
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter
Effect: Creates mummies
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

As *legion of skeletons*, but creates 1d6 mummies/level of the caster. The mummies have double the Hit Dice of normal mummies.

Material Component: One hundred jeweled scarabs pried from powdered mummy bandages (2,000 gp).

Arcane Focus: A pharaoh's crown, crook, and flail.

Legion of Shadows

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter
Effect: Creates shadows
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

As *legion of skeletons*, but creates 1d6 shadows/level of the caster. They have double the Hit Dice of normal shadows.

Material Component: A shadow bottle.

Arcane Focus: Twenty flickering candles.

Legion of Skeletons

Necromancy

Level: Nec 7
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter
Effect: Creates skeletons
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

You create a small army of undead skeletons, which claw their way out of the earth at the end of the round and attack opponents as you direct. *Legion of skeletons* creates 1d6 skeletons for each of your caster levels; these skeletons appear in a circle roughly 40 feet in diameter, with the caster at the center. They have double the normal Hit Dice of skeletons. They can be turned or rebuked normally, but their circular formation means several turning attempts are usually required to cover all of them. If cast in an *unhallowed* graveyard or catacombs, the number of skeletons increases to 2d6/level.

Material Component: One hundred teeth from humanoid skeletons.

Arcane Focus: A war horn looted from a grave

Legion of Wraiths

Necromancy

Level: Nec 9
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter
Effect: Creates wights
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

As *legion of skeletons*, but this spell creates 1d3 wraiths/level of the caster. The wraiths have double the Hit Dice of normal wraiths.

Material Component: Ashes from hundred burnt burial shrouds.

Arcane Focus: An iron crown blessed by the God of Death.

Legion of Zombies

Necromancy

Level: Nec 7
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: A circle 40 ft. in diameter
Effect: Creates zombies
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

As *legion of skeletons*, but this spell creates 1d4 zombies per level of the caster. They have double the normal Hit Dice of zombies.

Material Component: One hundred powdered skulls.

Arcane Focus: A war horn looted from a grave

Lich

Necromancy

Level: Nec 9
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 week
Range: Personal
Effect: You become a lich
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Fortitude (see text)

By drinking a potion compounded of rare herbs, deadly poisons, and pure negative energy distilled into liquid form, you pass over the border from life to death, and from death into undeath, and become a lich. This spell allows the caster to compound the proper liquid and ceremony that must precede the transformation. If the potion succeeds, you gain the lich template. If not, you die upon drinking the potion and remain dead. This spell cancels any other *contingency* in effect on the character, including *from the ashes*.

Arcane Focus: Your phylactery. This spell does not create a lich's phylactery, but the phylactery must be complete and ready for use when the ritual begins.

Longevity

Necromancy

Level: Nec 5, Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Touch
Effect: Target touched regains youth
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You regain 1d10 years of lost youth, losing all physical effects of aging but retaining all the experience, wisdom, and knowledge gained during those years. A creature reduced to an age younger than the time of his or her birth is entitled to a Fortitude saving throw; if it succeeds, he or she is unaffected. If the saving throw fails, he or she becomes a newborn infant.

This spell counters, and is countered by, *quick aging*.

Arcane Material Component: Infant's blood from a placenta, quicksilver (liquid mercury), and a butterfly cocoon.

Maggots

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0
Components: V, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 1 ft./level
Effect: A clump of maggots appears
Duration: 1 hour
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

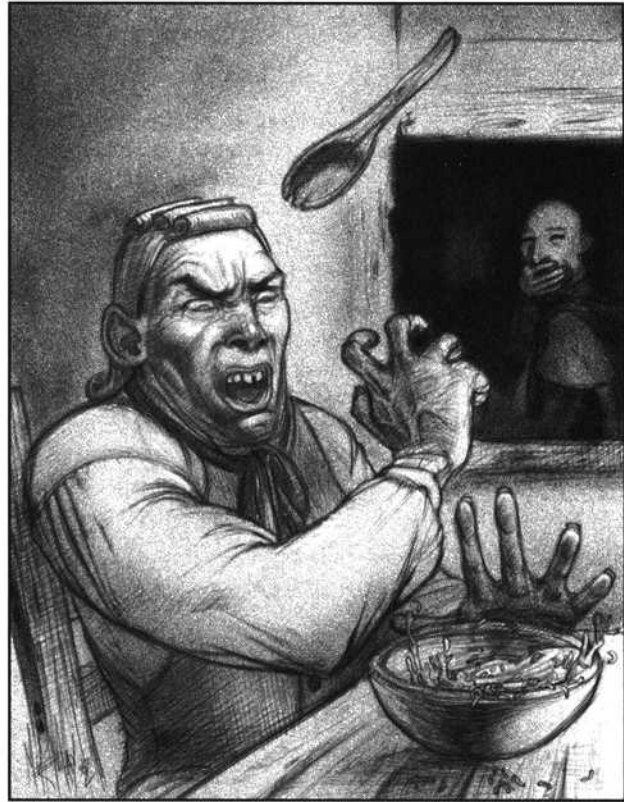
You create a swarm of maggots from any dead flesh—even cooked meat is subject to this spell. These maggots cause no damage but immediately begin to devour any dead matter they come in contact with. Most often used to strip bones for skeletons, to destroy remains so that they cannot be raised from the dead, or to terrify guests at the dinner table. The maggots disappear when the spell ends.

Mass Sleep

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Nec 8, Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Effect: Many living creatures within a 50-ft.-radius burst
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A *mass sleep* spell causes a crowd of weaker creatures or a single powerful creature to fall into a comatose slumber. Roll 14d6 to determine how many total Hit Dice of creatures are affected. Creatures with the fewest HD are affected first. Among creatures with equal HD, those who are closest to the spell's center are affected first. No creature with 15 HD or more is affected, and HD that are not sufficient to affect a creature are wasted.



For example, Vikram the Black casts *mass sleep* at twenty gnolls (2 HD), two hill giants (12 HD), and a mature adult red dragon (25 HD). The roll of 14d6 generates a result of 57. All twenty gnolls and one of the hill giants are affected ($20 \times 2 = 40$, $40 + 12 = 52$). The remaining 5 HD is not enough to affect the second hill giant or the dragon. Since the spell affects low-HD creatures first, Vikram can't choose to have *mass sleep* ignore the gnolls to affect the dragon or the second giant. Extra hit points are irrelevant for determining how many HD a creature has. A hill giant with $12d8 + 72$ hit points still has only 12 HD and can be affected by the spell.

Sleeping creatures are helpless. Slapping or wounding awakens affected creatures, but normal noise does not. Awakening a creature is a standard action. *Mass sleep* does not target unconscious creatures, constructs, or undead creatures.

Arcane Material Component: Grave dust, and a pinch of dried lavender.

Mend Corpse

Necromancy

Level: Nec 2
Components: S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Heals undead
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

You can repair the wounds of corporeal undead, restoring 1d8 points of damage per caster level (max 5d8). You may distribute this total in any fashion you please. However, the specific kind of undead you can mend is a function of your caster level, as indicated below:

Table 2-1: Mend Corpse

Level	Undead Types
3-4	Skeleton, zombie, flesh puppet
5-8	Ghoul and ghastr, skin cloak
9-10	Wight, flayed man, blood golem
11-14	Mummy, flesh golem
15-16	Vampire, bone golem
17+	Lich, rot golem, other constructs

The spell cannot grant hit points greater than the total the undead had when first animated, but it can restore that original total. The spell cannot revive undead who have been reduced to zero hit points or below, but it can reassemble hacked corpses and shattered bones for later reanimation. Combined with *animate dead*, it provides a renewable pool of undead labor. It can also restore the bodies of fallen comrades for burial.

Arcane Material Component: antique sutures, cracked splints, dried-out paste.

Mortal Strike

Necromancy [Mortal Curse]

Level: Nec 9
Components: V or S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Special, see below
Effect: One or more creatures
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You curse your killer with your dying breath. The target must be present and within line of sight. Like a *contingency*, this spell is cast ahead of time but doesn't take full effect until later—specifically, when the caster dies by violence. Unlike other mortal curses, a *mortal strike* can target either an individual or a group, so long as they played a significant role in the caster's death. The caster's life-force is converted into negative energy, strikes the target(s), and bestows negative levels upon them at the rate of one negative level per HD/level of the caster. This posthumous attack takes two forms, an arc or a burst.

Arc: The dying spellcaster chooses a specific target for the mortal curse and singles out that target by word, glare, or gesture. A great black bolt of negative energy arcs from her body to strike the target (no attack roll needed, no save permitted). The target acquires negative levels equal to the caster's levels.

Burst: If the caster does not specify a single target, the negative energy explodes in a shock wave, bestowing negative levels on all who contributed to her death. These negative levels are divided equally among her killers, with any excess going to the creature that struck the final blow. The caster's allies are not harmed by the burst; undead allies temporarily gain extra HD/levels equal to the average negative levels bestowed on a given foe.

Once laid, a *mortal curse* is difficult to lift. Victims gain no save to resist initially acquiring the negative levels. Those negative levels are harder than usual to remove before they create permanent level loss: all Fort saves suffer a -5 penalty,

plus -1 per point of the deceased caster's Charisma bonus. Even *restoration* requires a successful Fort save to have any effect.

A character killed by a *mortal strike* becomes an undead of appropriate type and Hit Dice. If free-willed, he or she becomes a convert who carries on the work of the deceased necromancer.

The spell's chief component is the caster's ebbing life-force; hence it can only take effect upon your demise. Since the *mortal strike* converts life-force explosively into negative energy, the caster cannot later be resurrected or raised from the dead. Instead, she has a 50/50 chance of either being destroyed outright or transformed into undead (typically a ghost, vampire, or lich). If she becomes undead, treat her as the beneficiary of a ghost's Rejuvenation power (cf. *MM* page 213, except that the DC for her save is 30, not 16).

Undead spellcasters can cast *mortal strike*, but in these cases the spell is powered by their animating energies and they are invariably and irrevocably destroyed by its activation. Liches often place this mortal curse on their phylactery, so that if it is destroyed and their essence lost they gain a parting shot at their destroyer(s).

Partial Animation

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)
Effect: Animate muscle
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell animates part of a corpse, giving movement to a single limb or facial feature. A *partial animation* can, for instance, animate a leg, an arm, a mouth or an eye. Casting it twice on a corpse's two legs allows the caster to provide a slow, lurching movement (speed 10 ft.) to the target. In this form, the spell is popular among grave-robbers and mischievous apprentices.

Attempts to strike an opponent with a partially animated corpse are rarely successful but can be attempted by surprise. The animated corpse has a base attack bonus equal to half the caster's base attack bonus, rounded up.

Pestilential Vapor

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 2, Nec 2
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Effect: Noxious gas from caster
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fort negates
Spell Resistance: No

You exude the stench of the grave, nauseating and possibly incapacitating creatures nearby. All breathing creatures within 20 feet of the caster except the caster herself must make a

Fortitude save or suffer a fit of wracking coughs and nausea. Creatures who fail are unable to attack, cast spells, maintain concentration, or do anything else requiring attention: all they can do is take a single move action, and their speed is cut in half. The effects move with the caster always at the center point of the circle.

The effect lasts for as long as the victim remains within 20 feet of the caster and for 1d3 rounds thereafter. Those who make a successful saving throw but stay within range of the *pestilential vapor* must make an additional saving throw each round.

Plague

Necromancy

Level: Nec 5, Clr 5
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Disease spreads to all nearby
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

All creatures within range, including yourself, are exposed to a horrible disease, which strikes after a 24 hour incubation period. Those who make a successful Fortitude save stave off the disease and remain healthy. You can infect the targets with any one of a number of unpleasant diseases: blinding sickness, cackle fever, filth fever, mindfire, red ache, the shakes, or slimy doom. See *DMG* page 75 for details.

Arcane Material Component: A desiccated rat.

Puppet Master

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 3, Nec 3
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Target moves as caster moves
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You can manipulate the target's body like a puppet by channeling life energy through its limbs, making it move and speak as you wish. Unlike possession, however, your soul remains in your own body, and the duration of your control over the target is limited.

Attempts to force the controlled body to perform a self-destructive act (walking off a cliff, jumping into a river in armor, etc.) allow the target to immediately make an additional Will saving throw with a (cumulative) +2 bonus. However, inaction that might result in injury, embarrassing actions, and potentially dangerous speech do not permit an additional saving throw.

Arcane Material Component: Noose used in an execution.

Focus: An object intimately associate with the target (hair, clothes, jewelry).

Quick Aging

Necromancy

Level: Nec 5, Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Target touched grows older
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You make a target creature age in the blink of an eye, suffering all physical effects of aging but gaining none of the experience, wisdom, and knowledge gained from normal aging. A creature thus aged is entitled to a Fortitude saving throw; if it succeeds, he or she is unaffected. If the saving throw fails, he or she ages 1d10 years. This spell counters, and is countered by, *longevity*.

Material Component: A hair from a sage's beard.

Ray of Palsy

Necromancy

Level: Nec 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 6 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The tremors of age can incapacitate even the mightiest warrior. When this spell is cast, a charcoal-black ray leaps from your finger. You must succeed at a ranged touch attack to strike a target. If the target fails its save, it suffers a -1d6 enhancement penalty to Dexterity, with an additional -1 per two caster levels (for a maximum additional penalty of -5). The target's Dexterity score cannot drop below 1 by means of this spell.

Rot Flesh

Necromancy

Level: Nec 6
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 1-ft. radius per level
Effect: Corrupts living flesh
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Fort half
Spell Resistance: Yes

Putrefaction and decay are familiar effects to practitioners of the necromantic arts. By casting this spell, you create a field of corruption that speeds up the breakdown of all living flesh (except your own) within range. All living creatures within the area of effect must make a Fortitude save. Those who fail suffer 1d6 hp damage/caster level; those who succeed suffer only half that amount. This damage cannot be healed by magical means short of a *heal* spell.

Rot Golem

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8
Components: V, M, XP
Casting Time: 3 month ritual
Range: Touch
Effect: Animates rotting flesh construct
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a rot golem to serve you, as described in this book (see page 62). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures required for wizards to achieve the same result. The time required to build the receiving vessel is much longer than the time required to animate it.

Material Component: The spell requires a well-fermented mass of humanoid flesh, infused with maggots, encased in a fungoid shell, and with channels for the infusion of negative energies. This mass of putrescence requires the flesh, viscera, and blood of twenty corpses carefully minced and brewed in conjunction with alchemical treatments, costing 45,000 gp to complete (half what it would cost a wizard to create a rot golem). Creating the correct shell requires a successful Craft (Construct) check (DC 17), while concocting the liquid corruption requires successful Alchemy check (also DC 17).

XP Cost: Casting this spell and activating the rot golem drains 2,000 XP from the caster.

Siege Engine

Necromancy

Level: Nec 7
Components: V, M, XP
Casting Time: 1 year ritual
Range: Touch
Effect: Animates huge construct
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

This spell creates a necromantic siege engine to serve you, as described in this book (see page 64). However, because necromancers are masters of creating life and undeath, this spell replaces all the spells and procedures required for wizards to achieve the same result. The time required to build the receiving framework is much longer than the time required to animate it.

Material Component: The spell requires graveyards full of corpses; a minimum of 100 for a ram, 1000 for a tower, and 1 elder dragon for a dragon engine. The parts must be enchanted for motion, durability, and speed, and while the elder dragon does not require the difficult fusion of many separate parts that must work in unison, the enchantment of a container capable of holding and recharging its negative energy breath weapon is entirely as difficult a task. The machines cost 100,000 gp to complete. Creating the correct framework requires a successful Craft (Construct) check (ram DC 16, tower DC 20, dragon DC 25).

XP Cost: Casting this spell and activating the siege engine drains 2,000 XP from the caster.

Skull Eyes

Necromancy, Divination

Level: Nec 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Effect: See life energy
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

Your eyes become black hollows, yet with them you can detect life forces and the energies of the undead. The amount of information gained depends on the strength of the target creature's life energies. You see all creatures hidden in shadow, incorporeal creatures, and the true type of creatures hidden by illusion. You cannot see invisible creatures or constructs, and you do not see the true type of polymorphed creatures.

For each creature in line of sight, you can make Spellcraft skill checks to determine creature type (Humanoid, Fey, Animal, etc.). Make one check per creature (DC 16). If successful, you detect the level or Hit Dice of the creature.

Table 2-2: Skull Eyes

Level/HD	Strength
less than 1	Dim
1 to 3	Faint
4 to 6	Moderate
7 to 9	Average
10 to 12	Strong
13 to 15	Very Strong
16+	Overwhelming

For the duration of the spell, the caster has the undead subtype, with all its benefits and hindrances.

Soul Switch

Necromancy

Level: Nec 8
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Two souls switch bodies
Duration: 1 day/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You trade bodies with a target creature. The target creature is entitled to a Will save, modified by the difference in levels or Hit Dice between you and the target. A target with fewer levels suffers a penalty equal to the difference. A target with more Hit Dice or levels gains a saving throw bonus equal to the difference. The creature inhabiting your body retains its own skills, spells, and supernatural abilities; just as you retain yours. If either body dies before the spell ends, the switch is permanent.

The caster may reverse the switch at any time by making a successful Will save; otherwise, it ends automatically when the spell duration expires.



Material Component: A drop of blood and a clipping of hair from the target.

Spark

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 1 ft./level
Effect: Static discharge
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

Even the most minor of enchantments can be useful in the right situation. This spell creates a brief spark of static electricity, leaping from your fingers to a target within range. This spark causes no damage, but may break a spellcaster's concentration, light volatile flammable materials (such as oil, tar or swamp gas), and may even illuminate a dark room or cave for an instant.

Spook

Necromancy

Level: Nec 0
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./level)
Effect: Startle animal
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell puts a jolt of fear into an animal's brain, creating a fight-or-flight reflex. It cannot affect creatures with an Intelligence score either higher or lower than the Animal range (1 or 2). Affected creatures either run for one round or attack the nearest living creature. Roll percentile dice. On a 1-50 the target fights, and on a 51-100 it flees.

Suspend Life Function

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Stops life function for 1 creature
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: No

This spell temporarily stops a single life-process without affecting the target's health or ability to function. For example, you can stop a creature's heart from beating, slowing down the spread of an injected poison. Or you could deactivate his lungs, making him immune to drowning. If a creature affected by this spell undergoes a *dispel magic*, the interrupted life function resumes but he suffers no other ill effects, although a hostile environment has its normal effect when the spell stops. The spell can allow a living creature to mimic a corpse.

Material Component: For inert lungs, a small bottle, which must be corked at the time of casting. Breaking or premature uncorking of the bottle terminates the spell. For a stopped heart, a heart-shaped weight on a thin chain that must first be swung like a pendulum and then stopped in mid-swing; a second use of the pendulum re-starts the heart.

Taint the Blood

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 1, Nec 1
Components: S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Effect: Target touched suffers tainted blood
Duration: 3 rounds
Saving Throw: Fort negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You taint the blood and chill the bones of the target creature, causing sweat and shivers simultaneously. The victim suffers a -2 penalty to all attack, damage, and saving throw rolls for the duration of the spell. The victim also temporarily loses any Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

Arcane Material Component: A bit of horse dung and an amanita mushroom.

Temple Pact

Necromancy [Dark Pact]

Level: Nec 5
Components: V
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Concentration

You visit the plane most likely to be your home in the afterlife (determined by alignment), and there can seek to strike bargains with dark powers. Usually you speak with a death angel (q.v.) or other servant of the God of Death.

To execute a *temple pact*, you must offer to build or expand a temple of the God of Death, recruit its priests and servants, endow it with funds for sacrifices and ornament, and swears to protect it against its enemies (minimum cost 200,000 gp). The priests are not your servants; if anything, the reverse is true, as you must maintain good faith with the temple's high priest or priestess.

In exchange, you gain access to a domain of divine spells and its granted power, choosing one from among the following: Death, Earth, Evil, or Healing. You may prepare and cast these domain spells as if they were spells on the necromancer spell list. If the temple is ever abandoned, destroyed, or desecrated, you immediately and permanently lose access to all divine domains.

In no case must the God of Death or his agents accept any pact. It is impossible for the caster to compel these arrangements, but the successful use of Diplomacy skill against a DC of 20 should grant the caster some leeway. And, as always, the DM must approve any bargain struck.

Undead Warding

Necromancy, Abjuration

Level: Clr 3, Dkn 2, Nec 2
Components: V, F
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: 100 square feet/level

Effect: Barrier against undead
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

By placing carefully carved bone wands, you can bar passage into an area for any and all undead. On a failed save undead creatures, even incorporeal ones, cannot enter an area thus warded under their own volition. If forced to enter, they can take no action other than attempting to leave the area by the fastest available means.

These wards last for the full spell duration, so long as the bone wands remain in place. No undead creature can deliberately harm or move them (except the caster, if undead), but if a living creature disturbs them the spell ends immediately. The wards and wands shatter entirely if an undead creature of more Hit Dice than the caster's level succeeds on its Will save (DC 10 + your caster level) and forces passage across the barrier.

Arcane Focus: Dragon bones carved with protective runes.

Vampiric Dream

Necromancy

Level: Nec 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 1 mile/level
Effect: Sends evil dream to victim
Duration: Until victim wakes
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You gain the ability to haunt the dreams of a sleeping creature, exhausting him. By casting the spell, you project your consciousness into that of the target, disrupting his normal sleep with your thoughts, speech, and mental images. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, you are thrown out of his sleeping mind and cannot return for the rest of the night. If the victim succeeds on a second, opposed, Will save succeeds he recognizes your face, voice, or image as the source of the *vampiric dream*.

If the target's first saving throw fails, you may linger in his dreams until he wakes up. This sleep provides no rest for the victim; hit points are not recovered, spells are not regained, and psionic energies are not restored. If the same victim loses sleep for more than one night, consult the following table for effects:

Table 2-3: Sleep Deprivation

Sleepless Nights	Penalty
1	No hit points or spells regained
2-3	-1 Wisdom, -1 Dexterity, -1 Charisma
4-5	-1 Wisdom, -1 Intelligence
6-7	-2 Wisdom, -1 Constitution, -1 Charisma
8+	-3 Wisdom, -1 Intelligence, -1 Constitution

All effects are cumulative; if a victim has no sleep for four nights, he suffers -2 Wisdom, -1 Dexterity, -1 Charisma, and -1 Intelligence, as well as regaining no spells or hit points.

Note that this spell does not remove the caster's own need for sleep.

Material Component: Sand, ashes, and incubus blood.

Vermin

Necromancy, Conjunction

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Target: One location (20-ft x 20-ft. cube)

Effect: Calls Diminutive or Fine vermin

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The alignment of necromancers with the world of decay puts them in close contact with the festering creatures that dispose of dead flesh. The tiny, unclean, loathsome crawling and creeping things of the world heed your call when this spell is unleashed

When this spell is cast, you call roaches, flies, spiders, centipedes, or other type of Diminutive- or Fine-sized vermin to you. The swarm or cloud or carpet of vermin cause no damage but may startle animals, ruin food, and drive humans out of an area in disgust. You cannot control the vermin once called.

Watchful Eye

Necromancy

Level: Dkn 0, Nec 0

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Animate eye

Duration: One hour

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You enchant an eyeball to watch over all it sees and magically remember what passes before it. The eyeball cannot move, its eyesight is limited to the range given, and the eye does not gain darkvision or other special sight unless further enchanted (eyes from creatures with such vision retain that vision when enchanted—e.g., a dragon's ability to see invisible beings).

When you return and pick up the eye, you see all that the eye has seen if it is still intact. If the eye has been shuttered, you see nothing. If the eye has been magically blinded, you must make a saving throw against the spell as if you had been its intended target.

Arcane Focus: A preserved eye.

Infamous Books

The souls of the dead cannot be called up without blood and a carcass: but their shadowes to be easily allured by the fumigations of these things; eggs being also used, and milk, honey, oil, wine, water, flour, as it were yielding a fit medicine for the souls to reassume their bodies Hence Necromancy hath its name, because it worketh on the bodies of the dead, and giveth answers by the ghosts and apparitions of the dead, and subterrany spirits, alluring them into the carcasses of the dead, by certain hellish charms, and infernall invocations, and by deadly sacrifices, and wicked oblations... but there are two kinds of Necromancy, the one called Necromancy, raising the carcasses, which is not done without blood. The other Sciomancy, in which the calling up of the shadow only sufficeth: to conclude, it worketh all its experiments by the carcasses of the slain, and their bones and members ... alluring these unhappy souls by the apposition of their body or by the taking of some part thereof, and compelling them by their devilish charmes, by entreating them by the deformed carcasses dispersed through the wide fields, and the wandering shadowes of those that want burials, and by the ghosts sent back from Acheron, and the guests of hell, whom untimely death hath precipitated into Hell.

—Cornelius Agrippa, *Occult Philosophy*, Ch. XLII

Animus Necrotus

The animation of dead flesh is the goal of this work, written over about ten years during an anonymous apprentice's studies in medicine and anatomy at the Winter Manor of the Secret College (see Chapter V). It contains notes from many workers and is now passed around among the members of the college for the instruction of their henchman and apprentices.

History: The *Animus Necrotus* begins with several pages describing the history of the Art, the past members of the Secret College, and the fundamental arcane principles of animation.

Appearance: Like many a necromancer's workbook, this volume is functional but hardly beautiful. The leather cover has been cut and scarred, and the pages hold the musty smell of the dissection chamber. An acid spill or electrical spark has charred the upper right corner of all the pages. At its four corners are four brass clawed feet, like those of an eagle.

Twist: The Secret College has enchanted the *Animus Necrotus* to be a very single-minded construct; no matter whether it is stolen, sold, or lost, it always finds its way home to the Secret

College's apprentice laboratory. When it has not been handled by a necromancer for more than three days, the volume first becomes invisible, then begins inching its way home. When it reaches the college, it becomes visible again.

Spells: *ancient wisdom*, *animate dead**, *chill touch**, *create undead**, *feign death*†, *ghost sight*, *maggots*, *partial animation*, *read magic**, *ray of enfeeblement**, *ray of palsy*, *repair minor damage*†, *repair moderate damage*†, *repair serious damage*†, *spark*, *spook*, *taint the blood*, *vermin*.

*PH †T&B

Book of Dead Smiles

Written by the brilliant but sickly Tanith, the famed research necromancer, this volume is a wide-ranging study of the field, with particular emphasis on healing and destruction using necromantic energies.

History: The full history of the volume known as "The Book of Dead Smiles" is not recorded, but unlike many a legendary tome it is not an ancient work but of quite modern origin; indeed,

there is every reason to think its creator still living (more or less). Rumor has it that after several perilous expeditions to satisfy her boundless curiosity about the Black Arts, she had a religious experience and henceforth devoted herself to the worship of the Goddess of Death, Love, and Magic shifting her focus from spell research to proselytizing. The current excerpt excludes the enchantments she researched and recorded within its pages (indeed, there are enough of these as early entries in the book to seem to indicate that she hesitated for a considerable time between devoting herself to Enchantments or Necromancy before choosing the latter course).

As for the author, her successful efforts to elude attention have been successful enough that little can be stated for certain beyond what can be learned from the book itself. Even her name, variously spelled "Tanis" or "Tanith," is clearly an assumed name adopted when she began her adventuring career. However, persistent rumor maintains that she was the scion of a noble family who deliberately excluded herself from the line of succession in order to gain the independence necessary to pursue her own interests. After early training at the hands of an archmage (whom she does not name), she began what proved to be a long and successful adventuring career, eventually establishing her own wizard's tower and attracting a cadre of apprentices, mainly female, some of whom have gone on to success in their own right as Necromancers, Enchantresses, and Sorceresses.

Appearance: The book itself is a handsome folio with black leather binding, the title carefully laid on in gold leaf. The volume shows signs of considerable wear, lovingly repaired, indicating that it accompanied Tanith on many of her travels and adventures. A working spellbook, it is filled with jottings of ideas for new spells, many of them worked out in full on later pages. Missing leaves here and there mark either unsuccessful and rejected research or spells she removed to prevent apprentices and others from gaining access to them. Blotches and stains from testing and experimentation mark many of the pages, sometimes half-obliterating vital bits of text (these are, for the most part, carefully restored in Tanith's neat script). Tanith hid some details pertaining to the spells from prying and possibly censorious eyes via *ghost writing*. Hence, anyone attempting to learn a spell from *The Book of Dead Smiles* suffers a -5 circumstance penalty to his or her Spellcraft check unless he or she employs *ghost reading* (the reversed application of *ghost writing*) or *corpse candle*†, in which case he or she gains a +5 bonus to the check.

Spells: In addition to many of the standard necromancy spells found in the *Player's Handbook* and some incomplete spells Tanith had apparently not yet completed researching, *The Book of Dead Smiles* includes complete and castable versions of the following, all of which Tanith claims to have invented (at least in their current form): *bolster undead*, *call undead* (under the name "whistle ceremony"), *cannibalize*, *corpse candle*†, *curse of blood*, *curse of memory*, *dead man's eyes*, *detect life*, *disguise undead*‡, *dust*, *extract memory* (under the name "trepanning"), *false life*† (under the name "defer death"), *feign death*†, *from the ashes*, *ghostform*†, *ghost writing*, *hand of glory*, *hands of death*, *hide life*†, *immunity to turning*, *infuse dead flesh*, *leech*, *mend corpse*, *mortal strike*, *rot flesh* (under the name "putrefy"), *spiritwall*†, *suspend life function*.

†T&B

The Black Book of Slaying

A quasi-religious work, *The Black Book of Slaying* is dedicated to the cult of the death-god.

History: Said to be the work of the first priest of the God of Death, this book has been handed down for generations.

Appearance: The *Black Book* richly deserves its name; its pages are black leather marked with tarnished silver ink that glitters a dull grey on the page. Its cover is black snakeskin, and the spine is carved of black dragon horn, etched with the seven true names of the God of Death. The pages are well-worn, but not blotted, torn, or marked in any way. The text of the book glows with a slightly purple light under the starlight or in the darkness of a cavern or a *deeper darkness* spell.

Twist: *The Black Book of Slaying* is never granted to anyone who is not a priest of the God of Death or necromancer devoted to the god. It is given to its new owner by the old owner on his or her deathbed. Anyone else who obtains the book by fraud or theft (or by looting it from the body of a fallen foe) is haunted by angels of death; a new angel arrives at the dark of the moon (e.g., every new moon) to retake the book. The priests of the death cult likewise are the mortal enemies of anyone who takes this book from them.

Spells: *animate dead**, *bone hand*, *chill touch**, *circle of death**, *death knell**, *dust*, *eating the black lotus*, *finger of death**, *ghoul touch**, *horrid wilting**, *partial animation*, *pestilential vapor*, *rot golem*, *spectral hand**, and *withering palm*‡. In addition it contains a special version of *summon monster VIII** and *summon monster IX** that summon a death angel and 1d4+1 death angels, respectively.

*PH ‡OA

Corpus Diabolicus

Considered the masterwork of the blackguard necromancer Stomos dur Malcudar, this slim work with its dozen woodcut illustrations is a marvel of evil. It is the first work to examine in a systematic way the relationship between diabolism and necromancy, and to offer up spells, formulae, and fully-described ritual invocations that bridge the chasm between these two schools of black magic.

History: The work was written by Stomos dur Malcudar, but inspired by diabolic forces and may even have been dictated to dur Malcudar by his demonic familiar. After Malcudar's death, the book disappeared with one of his apprentices (believed to be the Scarlet Thaumaturge, whose legions of blood skeletons seized the city after Malcudar's body was refused burial). While the Scarlet Thaumaturge escaped the ensuing counterattack on the city by Royalist forces, the book was abandoned in her haste to escape. The *Corpus Diabolicus* was to be burnt by the followers of the God of Fire in a cleansing ceremony, but the book proved to be fireproof, much to their embarrassment. Raked out of the ashes, the book was stored in the temple of the God of Fire under heavy guard while the priests discussed how best to deal with it. During their discussions, the volume was somehow stolen from within the very heart of the temple complex, and it hasn't been seen since.

Appearance: The *Corpus Diabolicus* is a gloriously decadent book, richly made with endpapers of thin red-gold leaf, pages of

translucent vellum dyed blood red, and glittering ink as shiny as beetle shells. The margins are decorated with cavorting, leering demons and naked, whorish witches servicing the demons' every desire. Each section and spell starts with a single illustrated drop cap letter gilded with gold leaf and colored with red dragon's blood, emerald green, and an azure made from lapis lazuli. The binding is made of dark brown tendons, with six bound-in bookmarks made of strips of rich maroon leather.

Twist: The book is guarded by a marilith demon (90 hp), who demands that anyone opening it first perform a dark pact. Anyone unwilling to make such a pact is thereafter burned with unholy fire as long as they hold the book; this is equal to a *burning hands* attack (DC 16).

Content: The works here are weighted toward the divinatory and divine, and include summonings as well as necromancies. They include *ancient wisdom*, *ghoul touch**, *phantom steed**, *entrap ancestor*, *ghostform†*, *drain life*, *from the ashes*, *immortality*, *lich*, and all four *dark pact* spells (*blood pact*, *death knight pact*, *death angel pact*, and *temple pact*), plus *desecrate**, *finger of death**, *immortality*, *ray of enfeeblement**, *kiss of the toad‡*, *mortal curse*, *negative energy burst†*, *negative energy ray†*, *negative energy wave†*, and *sword of darkness‡*.

*PH †T&B ‡OA

Corruption of Flesh

This banned book by the excommunicated Bishop of Trengate details his obsessions with the functioning of the body and the slow deterioration of the flesh.

History: Oswald Abbington, the Bishop of Trengate, was a man obsessed with plagues, punishment, and disease. He worried constantly about his health, about the health and souls of his congregation, and about the various plagues that have cut through cities and nations like scythes through a harvest.

Appearance: The book itself resembles a work of scripture; roughly 6 inches thick, 14 inches wide, and 20 inches tall, it is bound between thick boards of white ash covered in gilded leather and with four bound-in red ribbons for use as bookmarks. The paper pages are very thick parchment, and though they have yellowed with age they are not yet brittle. Small holes from insects, however, have eaten away at the paper in the margins; the text is unaffected.

Twist: The evil bishop cursed his work so that only fellow necromancers would profit from it, and so that clerics in particular would suffer for handling it. The entire volume is infused in negative energy, which has darkened the pages and rotted the binding yet preserved the core of the book. Anyone other than a necromancer or death knight who touches the book suffers 1d6 points of negative energy damage per round. Any priest of Good alignment suffers 3d6 points of negative energy damage per round from touching the book.

Content: The spells within the book date from after the Bishop's excommunication, and include *blindness/deafness**, *bull's strength**, *contagion**, *darkvision**, *drain life*, *ernervation**, *from the ashes*, *grave rot*, *hibernate*, *hide life†*, *infuse dead flesh*, *longevity*, *plague*, *quick aging*, *rot flesh*, *suspend life function*, and *taint the blood*.

*PH †T&B



Pathways of the Soul

This book is the pinnacle of the necromantic arts of the description and manipulation of mind and spirit.

History: *Pathways of the Soul* was written in a burst of inspiration by a necromancer who is said to have achieved an almost miraculous goal: transubstantiation from physical matter into a creature of pure spirit.

Appearance: The book itself is a very thin volume bound in black leather, its corners protected by brass triangles each decorated with a pair of feathered wings. The book has a thick leather strap and lock, but the strap has been cut, making the seal useless.

Twist: A necromancer of at least 12th level who reads *Pathways of the Soul* and succeeds in a Spellcraft check (DC 23) understands the hidden allusions and hidden meanings of the work, those beyond the simple instructions and formulae, and may choose to pursue a course of physical transformation into a spiritual being. Any character who succeeds in this becomes a Celestial when he or she dies, and may retain that form rather than moving on to the afterlife. The exact type of Celestial is up to the DM.

Content: The first 20 pages are descriptions of the soul, the mind, and their connection to life forces. The next section contains an abbreviated description of the planes, and the final section describes the spells listed below. The spells within *Pathways of the Soul* are related to noncorporeal elements of the art, including *ancient lore*, *ancient spirit*, *ancient wisdom*, *arcane mark**, *astral dream*, *astral projection**, *cause fear**, *dark pact* (*blood pact*, *death knight pact*, *death angel pact*, and *temple pact*), *entrap ancestor*, *extract memory*, *face of death*, *fear**, *ghostform†*, *greater sleep*, *hide life†*, *incorporeal*, *leech*, *mass sleep*, *possess‡*, *possess animal‡*, *scare**, *spectral hand**, *spirit self‡*, *spook*, *vampiric dream*, and *vampiric touch**.

*PH †T&B ‡OA

Skull, Blood and Bone: On the Construction of Base Matter

This is the touchstone of all necromantic work on animation, sculpting, and design of necromantic constructs.

History: The origin of this work is obscure, but is thought that the book was first offered up to the academic world as a scholarly work. It is said to have been published by a university press under the authorship of "Wilhelm Brintzenhoff, Doctor of Natural Philosophy, University of Altdorph". However, this edition is little known because it was immediately banned by church authorities and all known copies were burnt. Subsequent copies have been hand-copied, annotated, and expanded in a number of versions.

Appearance: The original edition was said to be printed on parchment, bound in quarto size, and covered in green tooled leather, with watered silk endpapers and a set of color plates tipped into the binding, to show various niceties of anatomy and craftsmanship. These drawings have been copied in the various underground reproductions circulated since that time, but many of the etchings and woodblocks are substandard, especially compared to the marvelous technical draughtmanship and design of the originals.

Twist: The book is not only banned but often the source of its unwary owner's death. Creatures created with it have a chance of escaping their owner's control, and then seeking out the owner of the book and rending him limb from limb. When the book is taken by force, all the creations of the previous owner descend on the new owner, seeking to kill him or her and thus free themselves from any necromantic control.



Content: The majority of the book contains descriptions of the craft of sculpting flesh and bone into appropriate forms, as well as how to obtain materials and even a short section on the mechanics of muscle movement. However, most of the work deals with the infusion of what the author refers to as "the spark" (life energies or negative energies) into once-living tissues. The spells included are *bone armor*, *bone golem*, *bone hand*, *bone machine*, *clone**, *flesh golem*, *grave claws*, *lightning bolt**, *partial animation*, *puppet master*, *repair minor damage†*, *repair light damage†*, *repair moderate damage†*, *repair serious damage†*, *repair critical damage†*, *rot golem*, *shocking grasp**, *spark*, and *wall of bones‡*.

*PH †T&B ‡OA

Wormatia

Notorious even among necromancers, this volume is an unholy work that deals exclusively with the creation, control, and mastery of the undead.

History: It is not clear that the author of the *Wormatia* is human or even necessarily humanoid; the book itself was clearly written over a very long span of time. Its authorship is usually attributed to Entaimo of the New Moon, a dark-elven necromancer of near-legendary status in the regions beneath the earth. His work on the mastery of the undead is said to have taken more than 300 years, and the book certainly reflects the growth of a minor apprentice into a lord of the undead. According to the text, the author became the ruler of a great underground kingdom of undead, and this realm survives even today as a great kingdom of ghouls. The author abandoned this creation in search of ever deeper arcane knowledge, and eventually achieved it.

Appearance: The cover is made of very well-tanned and treated human skin, dyed red and tooled with spider patterns and edged in tarnished silver at the spine and corners. The pages are vellum of various types; goblin-skin, deep-gnome, dwarven, etc. The ink is made of a uniform red, brighter even than fresh blood—roughly the color of henna or faded poppies. The pages at the front are of much older working than those at the very end; it seems that decades if not centuries separate the start and conclusion of the work. The volume runs to a total of 404 pages.

Twist: Most of the book is written in dark elven, and the spells themselves are all written in *ghost writing* between the lines of the elven text. Thus, it appears to be nothing more than a work of praise for the God of Death and Undeath, with long passages describing (in flowery and often allegorical terms) how the state of undeath is superior to that of living creatures. Its hints about this may help a necromancer pass from life into lich status.

Content: The spells included are *cannibalize*, *command undead†*, *control undead**, *corpse candle†*, *create greater undead**, *create undead**, *death knell**, *detect undead**, *disguise undead†*, *drain life*, *dust*, *false life†*, *ghost writing*, *ghoul touch**, *halt undead**, *hand of glory*, *hands of death*, *infuse dead flesh*, *legion of ghouls*, *legion of shadows*, *legion of mummies*, *legion of skeletons*, *legion of wraiths*, *legion of zombies*, *lich*, *maggots*, *mend corpse*, *undead warding*, and *undeath to death†*.

*PH †T&B

Necromantic Items

He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days

—Numbers 19: 11

Equipment

Like all spellcasters, necromancers need specialized tools and unusual components to cast spells, brew potions, scribe scrolls, and make magical items. Of course, since many of the items they create are constructs of flesh and blood, necromancers have perhaps a bit more specialized needs than most wizards.

Obtaining items ranges from simple to extremely complex. As already noted, tools, some threads, herbs, resins, and salts are readily available, for a price. The supply of monster bodies, skeletons, and parts is far more limited. It's not uncommon for a necromancer to commission a group of adventurers to bring back the body of a medusa or the head of a giant. This may raise a few eyebrows, but again wizards of other schools have been known to make similar commissions; requesting a monstrous corpse does not automatically make one a necromancer.

A final category of goods, though, is strictly illegal; things made from the parts of sentient and friendly peoples—like the neighbors down the street, for example. Only the darkest of black markets carries these items. Generally only necromancers have a need for these things. Obtaining the goods involves high prices, special commissions, and a notable chance of blackmail. For the necromancer, finding a trustworthy supplier is half the challenge (see the section on Graverobbers in Chapter III).

Belladonna

The distilled sap of the plant, this poison (DC 15) can render people unconscious, weaken, or kill, depending on dose size. It must be ingested to be effective.

Small dose: Unconsciousness

Medium dose: Initial damage, 1 Con; Secondary Damage, 1d6 Con

Large dose: Initial damage, 1d6 Con; Secondary Damage, 2d8 Con

Body Parts

Arms, legs, torsos, heads—there's always a need for something. The price of body parts (creatures or humanoids) is a fraction of the whole body cost for that creature. An arm or leg usually brings 10% of the total cost, heads 20%, while torsos range from 20% for standard humanoid to nearly full price for a particularly hefty creature (especially where taking off the limbs becomes more trouble than it is worth). Humanoid body parts are generally available through the black market; exotics will require special hunting expeditions.

Bodies

Human bodies are always available. Generally a poor beggar from the pauper's field will cost only a hundred gold coins, since it is a low-risk, non-specific request. Corpses of other player-character races (dwarf, gnome, half-orc, halfling) have only 50% chance of being available in the City and are double or triple the price, unless it's an elf, which is very expensive indeed (1000 gp

or more). The availability of other humanoids varies with their rarity. The price for other humanoids is based on their challenge ratings.

Special requirements can easily double the price or more. Specifying the sex typically adds 50% to the cost. Humanoids with special abilities or special qualities are double or triple price, while the cost for an adventurer of a specific level is determined by the challenge rating. Requirements like undamaged, uncut, or killed in specific ways (drowned or suffocated, for example) will at least double the price. Finally, the bodies of shapechangers are automatically 50% more expensive, not necessarily because they are harder to kill but because necromancers have more uses for the plastic properties of their flesh.

For example, the body of an ogre mage (CR 8) would typically cost 8,000 gp, a necromancer who needed a *female* ogre mage corpse would expect to pay 12,000 gp for it, while a female killed without any blemishes on its body could cost the demanding necromancer as much as 24,000 gp. Before player characters run out to become peddlers in dead flesh, remember that finding a buyer for exotic corpses is very rare, and finding a buyer who needs an exotic corpse killed just so is probably unique. Also, that same necromancer they just see as a potential customer might instead really need a body exactly like one of the PCs...

Canoptic Jar

This is a special earthenware jar made according to exact specifications for holding organs and bodily fluids and preserving them for long periods of time.

Flaying Knife

With its slender, flexible blade, the flaying knife is not an effective combat weapon, although it's very well suited to its designed task of skinning and de-fleshing bodies.

Linen Wrappings

These are fine quality linen bandages already treated with preserving herbs and spices. One bundle is enough to wrap a medium-sized humanoid body.

Natron Salts

Special chemical salts used as desiccating agents for the preservation of bodies, particularly when creating mummies.

Powdered Blood

These bloods are generally used in the preparation of inks for scrolls. Many wizards make use of the blood of exotic creatures, not just necromancers, so the average price is 100 gp per vial. However, illegal substances (various humanoid bloods) are pretty much the purview of necromancers only, so the prices for these tend to range from 200 to 500 gp a vial.

Table 2-4: Tool and Component Prices and Weights

Item	Cost	Weight
Belladonna extract, vial	100 gp	*
Body parts	**	**
Body, animal	3 sp to 10 gp	variable
Body, beast/magical beast	†	variable
Body, exotic (includes fey, giant, dragon, outsider)	†	variable
Body, humanoid	**	100 to 200 lbs.
Body, monstrous humanoid	†	variable
Body, shapechanger	**	variable
Bone saw	3 sp	1 lb.
Canopic jar	5 gp	10 lb.
Coffin nail	1 sp	*
Flying knife	3 gp	1 lb.
Grave earth	5 sp	1 lb.
Linen wrappings	1 gp	5 lb.
Mummy bones	100 gp	3 lb.
Mummy dust, small jar	50 gp	1 lb.
Natron salts	10 gp	10 lb.
Needle, humanoid bone	5 gp	*
Needle, silver	7 sp	*
Needle, gold	1 gp	*
Powdered blood, exotic, vial	100 gp	*
Powdered blood, humanoid, vial	200 to 500 gp	*
Pus, vial	200 gp	*
Embalming resin	10 gp	4 lb.
Scarab beetle, dead	2 cp	*
Scarab beetle, live	1 sp	*
Skeleton, animal	5 sp to 100 gp	variable
Skeleton, beast/magical beast	‡	variable
Skeleton, exotic (includes aberrations, fey, giant, dragon, outsider)	‡	variable
Skeleton, humanoid	**	20 to 70 lbs.
Skeleton, monstrous humanoid	‡	variable
Skeleton, shapechanger	**	variable
Skin parchment, humanoid, sheet	100 gp	*
Skin parchment, magical beast, sheet	50 to 1000 gp	*
Tannis leaf	1 gp	*
Thread, animal sinew, spool	5 cp	*
Thread, silver, spool	1 gp	*
Thread, gold, spool	5 gp	*
Thread, ogre sinew, spool	25 gp	*
Thread, human sinew, spool	50 gp	*

*Item is of negligible weight

**See item description for more details

† 1000 gp or more per point of challenge rating

‡ 1000 gp or more per point of challenge rating plus 200 gp for cleaning

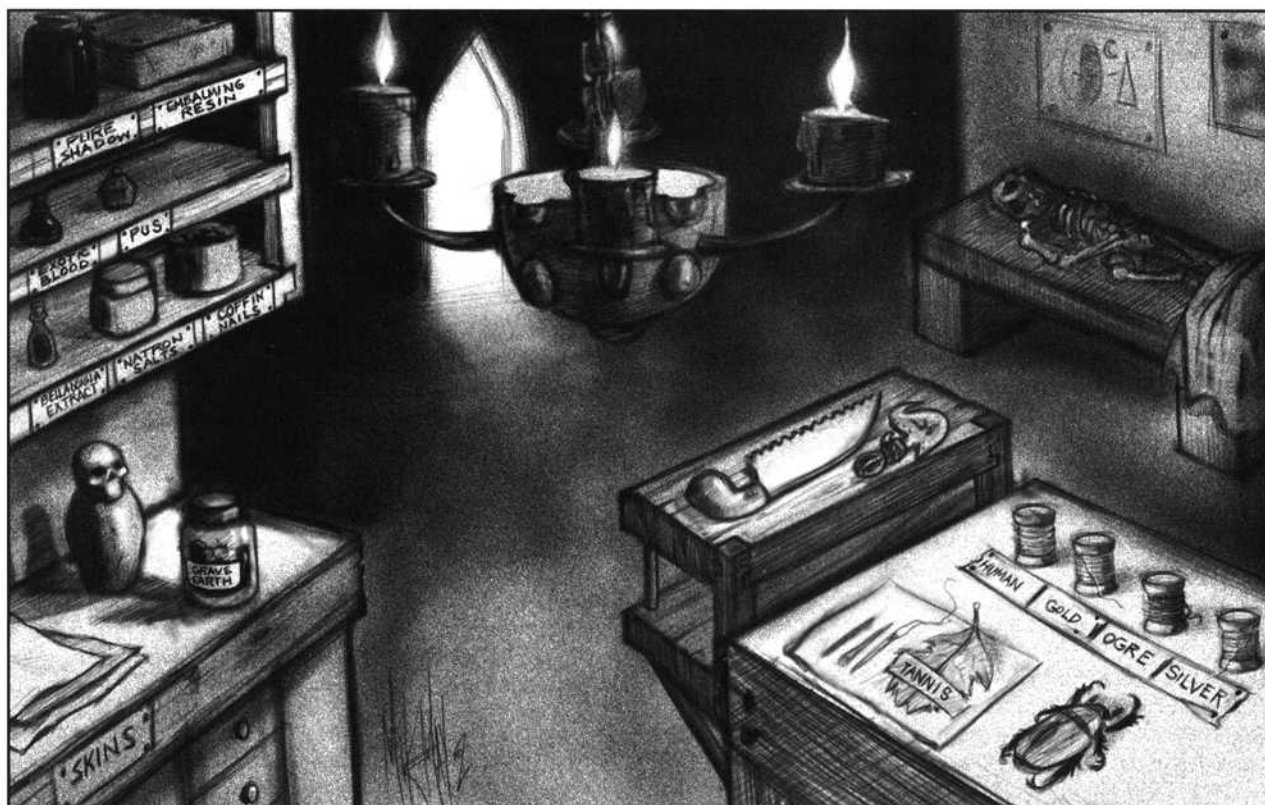
Scarab Beetle

These little creatures are used in the preparation of various potions, sometimes ground into a powder and other times boiled alive. There are hints that ancient necromancers may have used an unknown carnivorous version to strip flesh in the preparation of skeletons.

Skeleton

Skeleton costs follow the same guidelines as those for whole bodies with two exceptions. First, human skeletons are 50%

cheaper than human bodies, since they are easier for graverobbers to obtain (older graves are less well guarded). However, this discount price only applies for the skeleton "as is"—e.g., a box of freshly exhumed bones. Second, a preparation charge drives up the cost, since it takes extra work to remove any remaining flesh from the bones, clean the bones, and assemble them into a ready-to-animate structure. Thus a fully assembled human skeleton can cost anywhere between 70 and 100 gp, depending on condition, while a box of grave-stained bones would bring perhaps 50 gp, assuming all the pieces were there. Note, however, that skeletons have the advantage of being far less recognizable than zombies.



Skin Parchment

Again, not all exotic parchments are unique to the necromancer. More than a few wizards have spellbooks and scrolls made from dragon or manticores hide. These types of parchment are relatively obtainable. The more gruesome parchments are used by truly vile necromancers for scroll making. Certain necromantic procedures require spells to be cast from scrolls made of these sinister materials function at maximum effectiveness.

Tannis Leaf

This exotic plant is an important component in reanimation and soul-transferring magic and is used in potions or ground into inks for scrolls. In addition, tannis leaf, when ingested or inhaled (burnt as an incense) it causes a -2 on Will checks vs. *magic jar* and other possessing or dominating spells. Many necromancers keep it around for this effect alone.

New Magic Items

All the following items are necromantic in origin, created by necromancers to aid them in their dark work.

Blood Candles

As long as one of these candles burn, it obscures and entangles the life-energies of creatures within its light. As a result, all scrying and divinatory magics detect the life energies of all creatures within the area as an undifferentiated mass: alignment, visibility, and other elements of people, mice, roaches, familiars, and so forth cannot be seen separately. This effectively confounds *detect chaos/evil/good/law*, *detect thoughts*, *detect undead*, *locate creature*, and *see invisibility* (on creatures) as long as more than one living creature is

in the area of effect. It does not affect *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *detect snare and pits*, and *see invisibility* (applied to objects). Each candle burns for one hour.

Caster Level: 1st, *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, 5th-level arcane caster, *nondetection*; *Market Price:* 200 gp; *Weight:* ½ lb.; *Hardness:* 0, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 100 gp + 8 XP.

Bone Door

Made entirely of ivory and polished bone, this door is magically warded. It only opens for undead creatures and constructs. Striking the door with a weapon or foot to force it open triggers a successful *chill touch* attack [DC equal to creator's DC]. The door has a hardness of 20 and 15 hit points.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *bone machine*, *chill touch*, *detect undead*; *Market Price:* 16,000 gp; *Cost to Create:* 8000 gp + 360 XP.

Bridge of Bones

This is a set of four matching thighbones from a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal creature, enchanted to create a magical bridge of bones upon command. The maximum size of the bridge depends on the size of the original bones; there is no minimum size.

To use the bridge, two of the bones are set in the ground like posts, with a distance between them equal to the desired width of the bridge. The remaining two bones are leaned up against the posts. When the command word is spoken, the two loose bones fly across the river, chasm, or other obstacle, up to a distance of 50 feet away for Large bones, 80 feet for Huge bones, 120 feet for Gargantuan bones, and 200 feet for Colossal bones. As they go, they magically extrude interlocked vertebrae that form

suspension cables between the four bridge pillar bones, as well as rib bones and arm bones that form the bridge's flooring. The bridge is stable in any wind or under any load up to 2,000 pounds for Large bones, 4,000 pounds for Huge bones, 6,000 pounds for Gargantuan bones, and 10,000 pounds for Colossal bones.

The bridge can be closed at any time, and from either side, by speaking the command word, even if creatures are still on the bridge. The bones on the far side from the character speaking the command word come loose and fly to lie next to the two remaining bone-pillars, the other bones having been absorbed as rapidly as they appeared. Creatures still on the bridge do not disappear with it, but fall normally. A typical *bridge of bones* can only be used a few times a day (one, two, or three times per 24 hours, depending on the individual bridge). A few only work at night (these tend to be the ones with multiple uses), and at least one has been reported that can be used over and over but only operates under the dark of the moon.

Note: The user needs 4 complete bones in order for this to work properly, if any one or them is destroyed, a bridge cannot be formed. Any of the thighbones from the bridge of bones can be used as a great club in a pinch. It is not uncommon for twisted necromancers to make enchanted versions of these so as they are as hard as steel.

4 Large Thighbone Bridge Bones, 1 use per 24 hours: *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *wall of bones*; 7,200 gp; *Height:* 6' ½" long each; *Weight:* 10 lbs. each (40 total); *Hardness:* 5 each, *Hit Points:* 60 each; *Cost to Create:* 3600 gp + 288 XP.

2 uses per 24 hours: *Market Price:* 14,400 gp; *Cost to Create:* 7200 gp + 576 XP.

3 uses per 24 hours: *Market Price:* 22500 gp; *Cost to Create:* 11250 gp + 900 XP.

Enchanted Bone Bridge Bones

Any of the bones can be used as a +1 Greatclub, the formula below is PER bone and adds to the total cost.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor; *Market Price:* 2305 gp; *Cost to Create:* 1305 gp + 92 XP. Adds +1 HP and Hardness to the thighbone.

Clattering Armor

This strange suit of necromantic armor is made of turtle shells and thick, heavy bones chosen for their density and toughness, such as those from elephant ribs, horse thighbones, badger claws, and ram skulls. It is linked together with metal rings and with similarly heavy sinews. It resembles an external, skeletal set of pulleys; these pulleys and levers are covered with a layer of bone plates, scales, and reinforcements. The armor is equivalent to +2 banded mail, and also adds a +2 enhancement bonus to the wearer's Strength. Treat it as a chain shirt for purposes of armor penalties and weight. It is especially popular among death knights.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Bone Armor*, *Bull Strength*; *Market Price:* 16,000 gp; *Weight:* 25 lbs.; *Cost to Create:* 8000 gp + 640 XP.

Floating Eyeball

This eyeball is supernaturally preserved and has the power of flight; it can act exactly as a permanent *arcane eye* for its owner. Most *floating eyeballs* are human, but some are extracted from races possessing darkvision and low-light vision, bestowing these

abilities on the necromancer who uses them for reconnaissance. A few are smaller than human (e.g., a cat's eye) and some much larger (including a well-attested report of a cyclops eye), granting superior darkvision or other modes of sight to their controller.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, 10th level Necromancer, *watchful eye*; *Market Price:* 20,000 gp; *Weight:* 0 lbs.; *Hardness:* 0, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 10000 gp + 800 XP.

Floating Demonic Eyeball

Provides *Darkvision* as well.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, 10th level Necromancer, *darkvision*, *watchful eye*; *Market Price:* 60,000 gp; *Weight:* 0 lbs.; *Hardness:* 0, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 30000 gp + 2400 XP.

Floating Necromancer Eyeball

Provides *Skull Eyes* as well.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, 10th level Necromancer, *skull eyes*, *watchful eye*; *Market Price:* 40,000 gp; *Weight:* 0 lbs.; *Hardness:* 0, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 20000 gp + 1600 XP.

Floating Lich's Eyeball

Provides *Darkvision* and *Skull Eyes* as well.

Caster Level: 10th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, 10th level Necromancer, *darkvision*, *skull eyes*, *watchful eye*; *Market Price:* 80,000 gp; *Weight:* 0 lbs.; *Hardness:* 0, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 40000 gp + 3200 XP.

Ring of Stolen Alignment

A black steel band flecked with bits of fool's gold, this ring allows the wearer to assume one aspect of the alignment of another. To activate, the ring must be placed on the finger of a dead subject and the desired alignment aspect (good, evil, lawful, neutral, or chaos) stated. If that aspect was part of the departed's alignment, its essence is absorbed into the ring. When worn by the caster, the ring hides an aspect of the wearer's alignment and replaces it with that stored in the ring in response to all divinations that would reveal alignment. *True seeing* reveals the trace of dweomer on the wearer but not the nature the spell or the wearer's true alignment.

If the source of the alignment is resurrected, the stolen alignment is not restored; the revived victim has a void in his or her soul. If a lawful good character had his goodness absorbed by the ring, when raised the character would be purely ethically lawful, but morally blank—not good, evil, or even neutral. Such questions and issues simply would not apply to the character. Abilities and powers dependent on the missing alignment aspect are lost (abilities dependent on being lawful good are lost if either the lawful or good aspect are stolen). The lost alignment cannot be willfully regained, nor can another alignment be assumed at will. (It is still possible for a character to acquire a new alignment aspect over time, but this is solely based on the character's behavior.) The stolen alignment can be regained through the use of a *freedom* spell, at which point the magic on the ring is permanently destroyed.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *Magic Jar*, *nondetection*; *Market Price:* 28,950 gp; *Weight:* 0 lbs.; *Hardness:* 5, *Hit Points:* 2; *Cost to Create:* 14475 gp + 1158 XP.

Scrollkeeper

This bookstand is made of leather stretched over a frame of bones; shrunken human skulls are often used as the feet of the lectern. The item's task is to protect libraries of magical writings, typically necromantic ones. It can be set to guard a number of books, scrolls, and magical items equal to the number of levels of its creator.

If any of the items it is set to guard are moved out of its immediate sight, it croaks a warning, somewhat like a frog's croak. If the item is removed from the room or is moved more than 50 feet away from the scrollkeeper, its leather sides open, skeletal arms appear at either side, and the croaking becomes a sepulchral voice, asking for the return of the item. Typically, a scrollkeeper knows the items by name. Failure to return the item within 1 round results in a *pain* spell cast against the target. The scrollkeeper's spell attack has charges, typically 10.

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *ancient wisdom, bone hands, detect magic, pain, watchful eye*; *Market Price:* 9,000 gp; *Weight:* 125 lbs.; *Cost to Create:* 4500 gp + 360 XP.

Shadow Bottle

This bottle made of translucent, heavy lead-crystal is enchanted to be capable of holding negative energy in various forms. When found, it is often filled with incorporeal undead (typically a shadow, thus its name), pure negative energy, or *shadow ink* (see below). A full bottle always appears to contain pure blackness, regardless of the exact contents. Roll on the table below to determine a given bottle's contents.

Table 2-5: Shadow Bottle Contents

d% roll	Contents
1-5	Empty
6-10	Lampblack (carbon dust)
11-25	Shadow ink
26-45	Shadow
46-50	Shadows (1d4+1)
51-60	Pure negative energy
61-67	Ghost hound
68-74	Phantom steed
75-82	Wraith
83-92	Death angel
93-97	Spectre
98-99	Ghost
100	Banshee

The shadow or other contents can be "poured" out by decanting or simply uncorking the bottle; this typically requires a command word. Pouring out pure negative energy releases a *negative energy burst* that affects all creatures within 30 feet; its damage is 1d8+10. Victims are entitled to a Reflex save for half [DC 17].

Putting an incorporeal undead into the bottle is a simple matter of speaking the command word and corking the bottle afterwards; the undead is entitled to a Will save (DC 20) to negate the effect.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *create greater undead, negative energy burst*; *Market Price:* 60,200 gp; *Weight:* 5 lbs.; *Hardness:* 2, *Hit Points:* 4; *Cost to Create:* 28000 gp + 2240 XP.

Shadow Ink

Shadow ink is a magical ink that allows a necromancer to transcribe a single spell from a scroll or from another arcane spellcaster's spellbook into her spellbook in one hour, even if she does not understand the spell. The ink itself magically speeds up the writing process, filling in words, signs, and arcane symbols as quickly as the necromancer can compose them in her mind. If the spell is one that the caster herself understands, the letters automatically fade into *ghost writing* (per the spell) as the ink dries.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *ghost writing, read magic*; Must be a Necromancer; *Market Price:* 300 gp per vial (1 use, 1 spell); *Weight:* ½ lbs. per vial; *Hardness:* 1, *Hit Points:* 1; *Cost to Create:* 150 gp + 12 XP.

Skin Cloak

This is a leather cloak tanned from the intact skin of a humanoid, complete with hair, eyeholes, and fingers tanned into gloves. The cloak can either be worn as a ragged shape over ordinary clothes, or as a second skin of crackling leather next to your bare skin.

When worn as a regular cloak, the *skin cloak* allows you to assume the appearance of any type of humanoid creature you see, though you can only hold a given form for up to three rounds once an hour. You cannot mimic any particular individual, only a general type ("a fat orc" or a "red-bearded dwarf"). If the *skin cloak* is worn as a second skin, you can assume just one other form but can keep that form indefinitely; the *skin cloak* bonds to you magically until you remove it.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *death mask*; *Market Price:* 56,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lbs.; *Hardness:* 1, *Hit Points:* 4; *Cost to Create:* 28000 gp + 2240 XP.

Soul Binder

This magical device is a large crystal orb set with an ironwork cage. When activated, the crystal flares with bursts of energy that strike the cage, causing it to glow as the power is absorbed and radiated.

The *soul binder* has a two-fold function. First, upon command, it binds a target undead creature provided it is within 20 feet of the device when the command is issued. A bound undead must remain within 100 yards of the device. A *soul binder* can bind 1d20+20 Hit Dice of undead. Second, the undead cannot harm the owner of the *soul binder* and is subject to his commands so long as it remains in his possession. Any time a command is issued, the undead is allowed a Will save (DC 25 minus the HD of the undead). If successful, the undead is freed from the *soul binder*'s effect and can act normally. Beyond the range limitation and any commands imposed by the master of the device, bound undead are free to act according to their normal natures.

Caster Level: 13th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *control undead*; *Market Price:* 163,800 gp; *Weight:* 12lbs.; *Hardness:* 7, *Hit Points:* 2; *Cost to Create:* 81900 gp + 6552 XP.

Talking Skulls

The spell *ancient wisdom* can create a talking skull, inhabited by a spirit from centuries past. These items are simply skulls enchanted in this way, sometimes in collections, more often singly. The skull is under no compulsion to obey its owner; Bluff, Intimidate, and Diplomacy checks may be needed to gain its cooperation.

Chapter Three: Graverobbing and the Undead

Bodies were bought and sold, they were touted, priced, haggled over, negotiated for, discussed in terms of supply and demand, delivered, imported, exported, transported. Human bodies were compressed into boxes, packed in sawdust, packed in hay, trussed up in sacks, roped up like hams, sewn in canvas, packed in cases, casks, barrels, crates and hampers; salted, pickled or injected with preservative. They were carried in carts and wagons, in barrows and steamboats; manhandled, damaged in transit, and hidden under loads of vegetables. They were stored in cellars and on quays. Human bodies were dismembered and sold in pieces, or measured and sold by the inch.

—Ruth Richardson

Over the centuries, necromancers have learned to build new creatures from the available parts. Most necromancers still begin with the easiest methods, animating the corpses of the dead, but almost all necromancers of higher levels twist bone and flesh into new forms. The new creatures they sculpt usually come from carrion remains; a few have dispensed with flesh altogether and work directly with ghostly remains. Inevitably, the art of necromancy begins with the acquisition of corpses by various means, both honest and stealthy.

Practical Graverobbing

Necromancers can do nothing without the corpses that hold the spell energies and the materials that can be stitched together. Getting them takes hard work and good help, as described here.

Resurrection Men

Gangs of graverobbers in large cities are called “resurrection men,” and they are the cheapest and easiest way for a necromancer to acquire large quantities of bodies, body parts, and even mummified dead. In London in the 18th century, some such gangs would dig up or bribe their way to acquiring as many as a dozen bodies a night, usually at least seven of them adults, the rest of them children.

To rob graves successfully, most resurrection men follow three basic rules: 1) get good information, 2) work fast, and 3) leave no mark behind. Failure to follow any one of them can result in disaster, imprisonment, or even dismemberment by a mob.

The first rule is straightforward; to rob graves, you need to know who was buried where and how long ago. Gravestones are a help, but graverobbers need to find the right sort of body to fill the very specific means of demanding clients. For that, they haunt big cities, where funerals occur every day. Typically, they pay small fees to venial priests, corrupt watchmen, and impoverished gravediggers for accurate information. Sometimes the gravediggers and graverobbers are one and the same.

Working fast is also easy, in principle. In practice, it requires a team of young, strong men who can dig furiously for a short stretch, each being replaced by a fresh worker as he tires out. Since the hole that the robbers dig is usually smaller than the entire grave, a good team can reach a coffin and extract a body within 15 minutes, but even the slowest crew should be able to get the goods in under an hour. Necromancer’s apprentices are

often taught graverobbery at an early age; as they grow older, they supervise more and dig less.

Finally, leaving no trace ensures that the robbery is undetected and thus unpunished. Darkvision or dark lanterns are ideal, and hastily erected tents over a grave can both muffle noise and hide light. Also, the ground itself should not be disturbed; resurrection men cut a piece of sod before they dig (when exhuming older graves) and spread a tarp to catch the earth around the hole, minimizing the signs of any disturbance. The surface of the ground is afterwards carefully restored to minimize the likelihood of anyone detecting the theft. In the best circumstances, an illusion or other enchantment guarantees that the grave looks untouched.

Tools of the Trade

The tools of the resurrectionists are simple enough. They use short, daggerlike wooden shovels that minimize noise while digging because they don’t clink against stone or metal. Sturdy sacks, chests, or slings between poles serve to carry bodies in; sacks for bodies can also serve double duty by dampening noise when it’s time to break open coffins.

The coffins are broken into using either a sledge as a bludgeon (effective but noisy) or by placing two iron hooks under the lid and pulled up with a rope to break off a large section of the lid. The coffin is typically broken open near the head, to allow a body to be removed from a coffin easily and without a large hole. A rope around the neck is standard practice, followed by violent jerking pulls from the whole team to bring the body up. The same rope can then be used to tie the body into a fetal position to minimize space in a cart, sack, or box.

Finally, carts and horses are needed to carry all the weight when mass graves are opened, or in big cities where a single gang may need to transport goods unobtrusively between distant graveyards and safe houses.



Payment

Historically, at the height of graverobbing, adults were bought for 4 guineas each (about \$20—a sizable sum in those days) by anatomists and surgeon's schools; children were bought by size, 6 shillings for the first foot and then 4 pence per inch. Adult corpses are used for reanimation, constructs, and experiments; children for sorcery, magical item construction, and any ritual requiring virgin flesh or blood.

In addition to fees for each body recovered, resurrection men typically demand a flat fee to join a necromancer's service, a steady fee for continued silence, a *solatium* (compensation) upon a gang member's release from prison, and extra fees for especially valuable corpses (giants, nobles, especially fresh or beautiful corpses). Finally, they keep any jewels on the body, keep the fat from rejected bits of decomposed bodies for use in candles, and sometimes sell off the teeth to dentists for use in dentures. A talented resurrectionist can easily earn 14 gp or more per week, 20 times the wages of an unskilled worker.

Failure to pay up a gang of resurrection men is never a good idea. In revenge, they may bring their employer the body of a smallpox victim, spreading the disease to the necromancer and her servants and apprentices. In other cases, resurrectionists may simply leave a trail of corpses (typically children) from a graveyard to the necromancer's door—this usually brings a mob to the necromancer's door very quickly. Particularly bold resurrectionists may even exhume family members of the necromancer and deliver them as raw material to other dissectors. Even if a necromancer successfully snubs or shortchanges his resurrectionists, she'll quickly find that they desert her to work elsewhere—and no other graverobbers are likely to volunteer to work for a necromancer who has cheated her servants even once.

Other Ways to Acquire Bodies

While digging up the dead is the most common method of getting bodies, there are other options—tricks of the trade, so to speak. Necromancers and resurrection men make use of the following methods in varying degrees, depending on local conditions.

Animation on Site

Animating the dead and letting them dig themselves out of their own graves is a favorite tactic for amateur necromancers, but it cannot be recommended for the professional. When it works, a necromancer walks in, animates the dead, and walks them out. But the technique often fails on consecrated ground—and the noise of spellcasting draws unwanted attention. If the necromancer is caught, the crime she is charged with is much more serious than just despoiling a grave; attempted reanimation of the dead is often punishable by death.

Battlefields

While there are many dead bodies on a battlefield, they are a poor source for regular supplies, both because large battles are infrequent and because soldiers take a notoriously dim view of anyone stealing and abusing the bodies of their fellow soldiers. Ancient battlefields are safer, except when haunted by undead beyond the necromancer's power to rebuke.

Bribery

The easiest way generally is to bribe the gatekeeper at a cemetery; in other cases, the gravediggers are bribed as well, so they are paid twice for a single grave (and the graverobbers

avoid having to do the digging themselves). Usually a necromancer won't expose herself to danger by offering the bribe in person but will send a cohort, trusted servant, or gang of resurrection men to do the bribery and haul off the corpses.

Executed Criminals

In many places, criminals sentenced to death lose their right to an honorable burial, and their corpses may be legally sold to surgeons, anatomists, wizards, and necromancers. However, just because this use of murderers, arsonists, spies, and thieves might be permitted doesn't mean it's easy: in most cases, friends and relatives of the executed may form a rioting mob to prevent anyone from carrying away the body.

Fraud

Sometimes a necromancer or resurrection man pretends to be a relative of the deceased and simply asks for the body. Most clergy are entirely willing to turn over a corpse to the "bereaved" out of sympathy. Obviously, this ploy must not be repeated too often or even the most accommodating priests will grow suspicious.

Ghouls

Working from beneath the earth to dig into graves, ghouls make wonderful graverobbers, their comings and goings practically undetectable. They take their pay in flesh but have little use for bones; thus they can thus be useful when a necromancer wishes to acquire material for bone golems, skeletons, etc.

Imports

If security is too tight in an area where necromancers have long practiced their art, they may resort to bringing in bodies from other places where precautions are less severe. In order to survive the journey undamaged and undetected the corpses are typically loaded in casks and preserved in brine, spirits, salts, or by magical means.

Murder

The freshest corpse is the one that has just died. Hence, a few vile necromancers and their servants avoid waiting entirely and simply kill those they need for their experiments and reanimations. In a few cases, this involves a ritual sacrifice, but usually it involves nothing more than luring a poor, starving peasant or beggar to a remote location with promises of food or money and then overpowering him.

Paupers and Slaves

The poor who die without anyone to pay their funeral expenses may in some places be legally sold by the local reeve, lord, or mayor, only too glad to make a little money off their misfortune; this is especially true of those in poorhouses, debtor's prison, and slaves. In other cases, paupers are buried in mass graves—which are targets for necromancers seeking a big haul at once. Indeed, it is almost always easier to rob the graves of the poor than the rich—potter's fields are rarely guarded—and so they are targeted more often.

In some cultures, the bodies of slaves may be reanimated to continue serving their masters after death, but this is rare and

usually limited to evil kingdoms and tribes. In these cases, the undead slaves are used for the simplest and foulest tasks; living servants are typically the house slaves and undead the field hands.

Shallow Burial

One trick to make the acquisition of bodies easier is sometimes practiced by dishonest gravediggers (or, rather, grave-fillers). The body lowered into the grave is transferred into a large sack when no mourner is looking; then the grave-digger buries the empty coffin deep but lifts the sack and body as the grave fills so that the body is buried near the top of the grave. Later, the body can be recovered quickly and without much fuss.

Hazards for Graverobbers

Most cultures find the practice of necromancy abominable, and take various precautions to prevent the abuse of bodies after death. Some of the most common defenses against dissection or reanimation are the following:

Cremation

The simplest way to prevent a body from being abused is to burn it. This requires a fair bit of wood (a cord or more), which isn't always easy to acquire in certain climates. In some cases, magical fire serves the same purpose.

Devouring the Dead

Some religions believe that earth, fire, and water should not be contaminated with rotting flesh. For these groups, such as the Zoroastrians of Persia, the correct disposal of the dead involved a funeral procession to one or more great open-topped towers haunted by vultures. There, the body of the deceased is exposed to the air and quickly reduced to bone by the attention of the scavengers.

In a fantasy world, bodies could be devoured entirely to prevent their reanimation. Creatures used might be carrion crawlers, gelatinous cubes, ghouls, otyughs, purple worms, or even maggots summoned by necromancy.

Magical Protection

Certain spells are believed to prevent the animation of a body, such as *gentle repose*, *consecration*, and *dust*. In other cases, protective spells prevent the robbery in the first place. These spells include *protection from evil*, *grave warding*, and *gentle repose*.

Moist Stones and Cadaver Grills

In places where necromancy is common but burial is preferred to other means of disposing of the dead, the easiest way to keep a body in its grave is to make it too much trouble to dig out. After the coffin is deposited and the mourners have left, the gravediggers and a priest drop a heavy stone (typically as large as the coffin itself) on top of the coffin before filling in the grave. Digging around it and lifting it is more work than most resurrectionists prefer to do, and reanimated undead are usually too disoriented to dig down or behind themselves to get around

the stone (which is often warded against undead). As a result, the grave stays quiet.

Cadaver grills use the same principle but require a hoist and tackle to place a 1,500 pound (or heavier) iron grill on top of the grave, just below the surface. After the body has rotted away and shown no signs of animation, the grill can be reused at another grave site. Naturally, such devices are also useful in areas where spontaneous animation of undead is a real threat, as a precautionary measure.

Putrefaction

Bodies are less useful for dissection and study when they have begun to decompose. In most cases, this requires nothing more than time, and spells such as *rot flesh* or *maggots* can speed up the process considerably. Where magic is not used, a cadaver house guarded by watchmen serves the same purpose. After a body is guarded for 3 to 6 weeks, it has usually rotted beyond usefulness as anything but a skeleton—or not even that if the bones are then ritually broken before the remains are disposed of.

Recognition of the Dead

In some cases, a reanimated body is the son, daughter, mother, or other relative of an important person (say, a high-level

adventurer) who does not appreciate his or her loved one's undead state. When this happens, the rich and powerful may act to avenge their despoiled relatives, or they may act to appease an angry mob of citizens who will turn against the rulers if nothing is done. In either case, the unwise necromancer who committed such a blunder must now deal with both the population and its leaders turned against her.

Sealed Graves and Mausoleums

Iron bars, cement slabs, granite sarcophagi, even pyramids are all part of the same strategy of sealing the grave. Making the final resting place difficult to reach, whether by deadly traps or sheer weight of intervening walls, will lead all but the most determined of grave-robbers to look elsewhere.

Secrecy

In the end, the most effective way to preserve a grave inviolate is to keep its location hidden. This can be difficult, given the array of divination spells available, but through misdirection and mystification it's possible to hide the location of someone's final resting place so well that no one who wishes to disturb the body can ever find it—at least not without a major quest.

Creating the Undead

*I have made candles of dead men's fat
The sextons have been my slaves
I have bottled babes unborn, and dried
Hearts and livers from rifled graves*

*And my Prentices now will surely come
And carve me bone from bone
And I who have rifled the dead man's grave
Shall never have rest in my own.*

—Robert Southey, "The Surgeon's Warning"

Necromantic Categories

Necromancers classify their creations into two primary categories—*undead* and *constructs*—each of which is further divided into several smaller, more specific categories. Some of these parallel monster categories, while others are more concerned with describing their methods of construction or animation.

In addition, necromancers recognize two other categories of interest in the study of life energies: *conjunctions*, which includes summoning up the spirits of the dead and the afterlife, as well as *afterwalkers*, creatures which survive their own death by evolving from life into another form.

Undead

The most obvious category of necromantic inquiry is that of the undead. By definition, all undead creatures were once living, but the forms they take after death are the basis of the three further types: fleshy undead, skeletal undead, and incorporeal undead.

Fleshy Undead

Fleshy undead include zombies, ghouls, wights, vampires, flayed men, and other undead made from whole bodies. Other examples include the *kuang shi* and *fukuranbou* (from *Jade*

Dragons and Hungry Ghosts). The bodies of the fleshy undead are imbued with negative energy that animates and sustains them. If their bodies are destroyed, the undead are destroyed as well.

Skeletal Undead

Skeletal undead no longer have flesh, blood, eyes, or (in most cases) skin. Some retain wisps of hair or bits of leathery, desiccated skin, but these are the exception—in all cases, they are lacking most of their bodily organs and fluids. Skeletal undead include skeletons, mummies, ghost horses, undead war elephants, and lichs. Destroying their bones destroys the undead as well (the exception being the lich, which can transfer its spirit into another body). While mummies do have some flesh on their skeletal remains, they are so desiccated and withered that most necromancers classify them with the skeletal undead rather than with the fleshy undead.

Incorporeal Undead

Incorporeal undead have no bodies, and all benefit from the incorporeal trait. They include banshee, ghosts, spectres, wraiths, and ghost hounds. Some incorporeal undead have a special quality known as "Rejuvenation," meaning that they are difficult to destroy permanently (see MM page 213).

Undead Speed

"The dead ride fast."

—Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

While undead don't walk that much faster than humans—and some are slower—undead have the enormous advantage of perpetual motion. Unlike living creatures, undead can travel all night and all day without ever stopping to rest.

The table below shows movement rates for undead horses, undead infantry, and constructs moving 24 hours a day. Note that carrying a load still slows the undead down, though they do not tire.

Table 3-1: Constant Undead Movement

Mount	Per Hour	Per Day
Ghost Horse	7 miles	168 miles
Ghost Horse with load (150–500 lb.)	6 miles	144 miles
Undead Light Warhorse	6 miles	144 miles
Undead Light Warhorse with load (150–500lb.)	5 miles	120 miles
Undead Heavy Warhorse	4 miles	96 miles
Undead Heavy Warhorse with load (200–800 lb.)	3 miles	72 miles
Undead War Elephant	3 miles	72 miles
Undead War Elephant with load (500–1,500 lb.)	2 miles	48 miles

Footsoldier	Per Hour	Per Day
Skeleton, zombie, ghoul	3 miles	72 miles
Flayed Man	4 miles	96 miles

Flying	Per Hour	Per Night (12 hours)
Vampire (bat or dire bat form)	4 miles	48 miles
Wraith	6 miles	72 miles
Spectre	8 miles	96 miles

Time spent to replenish weapons or supplies, raise more undead to fill out the ranks, or allow living allies to rest is not accounted for in these figures, which assume a constant, unwary pace that only the dead can maintain.

Table 3-2: Undead Durability

Conditions	Skeleton	Zombie
Hard Use: Daily marching, frequent battles, exposure to the elements (i.e., during wartime)	2 to 4 months	1 to 2 months
Constant Use: Exposure to the elements, regular activity, infrequent battles (i.e., castle guards, undead watchmen)	6 to 12 months	2 to 6 months
Frequent Use: Regular activity, partial exposure to the elements, rare battles (i.e., household servants)	1 to 3 years	6 to 12 months
Infrequent Use: No battles, infrequent exposure to the elements (i.e., laboratory guards)	up to 10 years	1 to 3 years
Not Used: Created and abandoned (tomb guardians)	200+ years	up to 100 years

Constructs

Constructs are built from a variety of parts, rather than animated whole like the undead. Furthermore, they are rarely given an animating spirit and intelligence as great as that of all but the lowliest undead; they are more often things of little or no intelligence, obedient to commands but unable to pursue plans of their own.

Golem

The most common golems made by necromancers are all built of flesh, blood, and bone. They include flesh golems, blood golems, bone golems, and rot golems.

Machine

Machine constructs made by necromancers have no humanoid form and cover a wide variety of shapes and functions. They are either sculpted and stitched together into the desired shape that replicates some device or machine usually constructed of more mundane materials (such as necromantic siege engines) or, more rarely, grown in vats to a final shape not found in nature. A final subcategory is that of body parts animated to serve some specific purpose—for example, an animated hand that opens doors or fetches components.

Conjurations

Necromancy would be impossible without the necromancer's ability to draw energy from the Negative Energy Plane to animate the undead and constructs they create. Sometimes, however, instead of infusing this energy into a creation of their own they manage to summon up a sentient being made partly or wholly of negative energy. Most such beings are beyond their ability to control, but sometimes it's possible for a necromancer to strike a bargain and gain the service of such a being—see *death angel pact*. The other most common conjuration is the shadow, will o' wispis are also sometimes considered in this category.

Afterwalkers

A few of those who dabble in necromancy eventually master the dark art so thoroughly that they are able to transform themselves into free-willed undead before their deaths. The most common of these (although still quite rare) are the lich and death knight, who are created when a 20th-level necromancer or living 20th-level death knight choose to undergo the transformation. Less powerful afterwalkers also exist, usually as the result of mishaps when channeling negative energy for spells like *cannibalize* or as the result of a necromancer dying while under the effect of *from the ashes*. The shade also falls into this category.

Undead Feats and Qualities

Certain feats and qualities are specific to undead, or more common among undead than among living creatures.

New Feats

Undead feats can only be learned or performed by those creatures that are no longer living. Necromancers often create special undead that can perform these feats, but the magic used in their creation is a closely guarded secret.

Airy Gallop (Undead)

You can run wherever your rider wishes—whether there's ground underneath your feet or not!

Prerequisite: Con —.

Benefit: Mounts with the Airy Gallop feat can gallop over chasms, gallop “downhill” from a sheer cliff to the ground below, or even be convinced to gallop “uphill” into the air. To achieve these remarkable tasks, the mount's rider must make a successful Ride check (DC 15) at the beginning of the action, and every 10 minutes thereafter with a cumulative –2 penalty. Mounts cannot stand still in midair while performing an Airy Gallop; if forced to move slower or stop, they immediately fall.

Disassemble (Undead)

You can remove body parts and replace them at will.

Prerequisite: Con —.

Benefit: You can remove an eye, head, hand, arm, or leg without suffering damage, and then replace the limb later when it proves convenient. The limb can move at half normal speed and can attack normally. Vorpal blades and similar decapitating attacks cause you no harm.

Disincorporate (Undead)

You can become momentarily insubstantial, disappearing in a wispy puff of smoke or sand.

Prerequisite: Con —.

Benefit: You do not require a physical form. You become incorporeal for a single round a number of times equal to your level or Hit Dice per day. Your equipment and any creatures you entirely enclose are likewise momentarily out of phase with the



material world. You must return to material form the following round but may have moved in the meantime.

False Demise (Undead)

You seem to fall apart but can restore your unliving form at will.

Prerequisite: Con —, Disassemble.

Benefit: As long as you have hit points remaining, you may fake your own death by falling into dust, into puddles of ectoplasm, or into fading shadows, as appropriate. Within a few minutes or rounds, you pull yourself back together and go about your business.

Fearful Moan (Undead)

Your voice is terrifying to living things.

Prerequisite: Con —, Spook Animals

Benefit: You can moan as a standard action, forcing all living things within a 30-foot spread to make a Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, necromantic, mind-affecting fear effect, and saving throw penalties from the Necromantic Fearful Gaze feat do stack with it. A creature that saves successfully cannot be affected by another Fearful Moan for 1 day.

Ghost Light (Undead)

You create an entrancing light.

Prerequisite: Con —, Discorporate

Benefit: You can create a small pale light like a will o' the wisp. This acts as a *light* spell, and with its motion you can effectively create a compulsion to follow the light (Fort negates, DC 10+your level or HD). Maintaining the light for more than a single round requires concentration.

Jay Wind (Undead)

Your motions can create a blast of freezing wind.

Prerequisite: Con —, Chill Hand

Benefit: You can create a gust of freezing wind with a gesture or sudden motion, such as a charge, a retreat, or when slamming a door. The wind acts as a *gust of wind* spell and inflicts 1d3 hp damage.

Regeneration (Undead)

You regain strength directly from the Negative Energy Plane.

Prerequisite: Con —, Dark Lady's Kiss

Benefit: You regenerate 1 hp/round. You do not regenerate damage from fire, sunlight, or holy water.

Rejuvenation (Undead)

You return from death to your old haunts without fail.

Prerequisite: Con —, Discorporate

Benefit: You return from death in 2d4 days. Even the most powerful spells and weapons can only destroy you temporarily. Returning requires a successful level check (d20 + your level or HD) against DC 16.

Spook Animals (Undead)

Undead mounts and even regular undead often frighten untrained horses, donkeys, and mules, and other mounts.

Prerequisite: Con —.

Benefit: When you charge or attack a normal mount or animal, it must make a Will saving throw (DC of 10 plus undead HD). If the saving throw fails, the target is affected as if by a *cause fear* spell. Note: this is similar to the Special Quality "Frightful Presence" (see MM page 8) but only affects animals or creatures of animal intelligence (Int 1–2).

Vermin Form (Undead)

You assume the form of a swarm of insects.

Prerequisite: Con —.

Benefit: You can turn from undead form to a swarm of flies, scorpions, spiders, cockroaches, or other small invertebrates. You suffer minimal damage from all weapon types and spells while in this form but cannot speak, attack, or cast spells while in vermin form. Clothes and equipment are not transformed with you.

Undead Lackeys

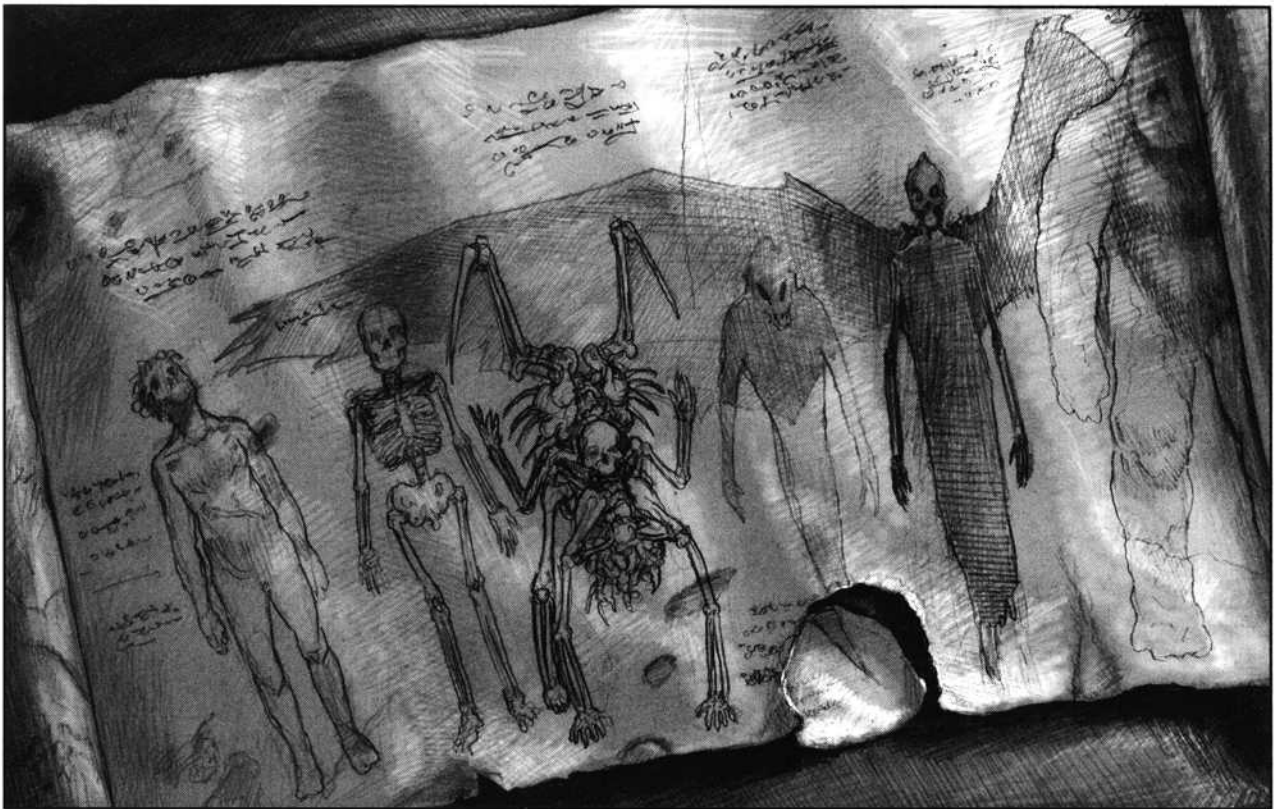
It would seem with the ability to use *animate dead* to create skeletons and zombies any necromancer could raise an unstoppable army (or at least a really big one), just like The Ghoul, and conquer the world. Obviously it hasn't happened. Why?

Skeletons and Zombies

The truth is that although animated skeletons and zombies are described as remaining active until destroyed, they are no more permanent than a tree or a rock. Over time they rot, erode, and eventually crumble. A skeleton's bones get chipped and gradually grow brittle. Zombie flesh gets gnawed by rats and plays host to maggots and worms until it cannot hold together any more. The duration is dependent upon the activities of the undead and environment it inhabits, as shown on Table 3–2.

Extreme conditions—bright sunlight, heat, cold, humidity—can all exacerbate the problem by drying flesh, promoting mold, or freezing and thawing flesh and bone. In these cases, an undead's durability can be dramatically reduced. Ideal condition—being kept in a consistent environment, such as a cave or underground tomb—can greatly extend them.

Finally, both skeletons and zombies make poor daily servants. To be sure, they are cheap, but very limited. Aside from scaring the guests, skeletons and zombies show a remarkable lack of initiative (i.e., none) and so can't be counted on to clean up messes, put out fires, solve little household problems, or anticipate needs. As laboratory assistants, they are absolutely useless where a thinking mind is a must but can literally be life-savers when experiment involve pouring corrosive or explosive mixtures, allowing a necromancer to manipulate items from a safe distance through her undead puppets. They are also useful for repetitive, mindless tasks like manning a pump, powering a mill-wheel, and the like. In many ways it's best to consider them both nothing more than animated furniture.



Ghouls

Various necromancers have come up with formulae to create ghouls, with limited success (it can be done but is difficult and dangerous). Compared to a zombie a ghoul is more desirable, since it has a mind and can formulate its own thoughts and plans. The trouble is these plans consist of “kill all living things” (with the possible exception of its creator). This makes it an admirable single-minded focus but of limited use about the house.

The process for creating a ghoul requires the fresh body of a particularly wicked individual (a cannibal is best), components to the cost of 2000 gp, and a week of time. After the appropriate spells are cast and the components placed on the corpse, it must be buried in a graveyard for seven nights. On the last night the ghoul must be dug up and the final incantations uttered. All told it is quite a bit of work and expense for so simple a creature, but the advantage is that created ghouls will heed their master, although they still exist only to kill. As for their duration, a ghoul has a lifespan roughly double that of a zombie.

Wights

From time to time, necromancers have attempted to create wights, but while these experiments have met with limited success the resultant undead are invariably so difficult to control that the necromancers eventually abandon that line of research for more reliable ghouls, mummies, or constructs.

Mummies

These undead are popular among necromancers, and several members of the Secret College have their own mummies stashed in the basement of their townhouses. Part of their popularity is undoubtedly due to the danger associated with having one.

Properly made, a mummy is a powerful creature, one that is filled with a desire to be free. Although its creator can bind it to her will, she must be constantly watchful for the attempts by the mummy to break her domination and assert its own free will.

Constructing a mummy is a difficult and time-consuming task. Of course it begins with a body, still living. The embalming rituals that follow both preserve the body and bind the spirit to the body. The process involves drugging the subject and then removing and preserving the organs, keeping the victim alive for as long as possible. Once death finally occurs (usually when the heart and lungs are removed), the flesh is cured with natron salts (packed into the newly-created body cavities) and embalming resins, and the body wrapped in linen strips that have been enchanted to seal the embalming. When the embalming is complete, the final spells and rituals must be uttered over the body. If all is done right (and there are several opportunities to err) the mummy will awaken to unlife. Aside from the materials—the body, salts, resins, etc.—the process requires an expenditure of 10,000 gp for everything from ritual robes and a ceremonial copy of *The Book of Coming Forth by Day* (also known as *The Book of the Dead*) to incenses made from exotic woods and ground gems. The process requires six to nine months of work, during which time the necromancer is not available for other activities (such as adventuring).

The awakening is the most dangerous part, for it is literally a return to self-awareness. Properly done, the victim/mummy does not fully realize it has been killed, at least not right away. On a successful Will check (DC 20), the mummy resists control by the necromancer and gains its own free will. When this happens, generally its first goal is revenge on its murderer (the necromancer). However, if the check fails, the necromancer can force the mummy to serve her. Since it possesses intelligence and reasoning, a mummy is a powerful servant for a necromancer.

Every month a Will check is made to see if the mummy breaks its domination. In addition, extreme danger will automatically

trigger a check. Once control is lost, the necromancer must make three successful Control Undead rolls to regain command over her creation. It ceases trying to kill the necromancer after the first successful roll and attempts to flee instead. It ceases its attempt at flight after the second successful roll but only obeys the necromancer's commands again after the third successful roll. If more than 24 hours elapse between one successful roll and re-establishment of control, the success lapses and the necromancer must begin the process again.

As for durability, mummies in regular use can survive for decades, although fire is a great risk. If put to little or no use they can last millennia.

The Road to Lichdom

For many necromancers, their entire lifetime is spent in a preparation for their death; most if not all necromancers aspire to become liches, undead masters of magic. To become a necromancer lich requires that the necromancer's body be correctly embalmed and prepared, that her corpse be enchanted with the proper spells and wards before her death, and that she have prepared a working phylactery.

This last item is crucial; the phylactery is the foundation of lichdom. Without it, a necromancer cannot essentially raise herself into undeath. The lich uses the phylactery to store its life-force while the body is prepared for its new undead form, and to store its life-force whenever its body is destroyed and it prepares to inhabit a new one.

Enchanting a Phylactery

Each would-be lich must make her own phylactery; as repositories of life-energies, these items are too personal to be borrowed, repaired, or reused. Making the phylactery requires the use of the Craft Wondrous Item feat, a necromancer of at least 11th level, and the successful casting of the *permanency* spell. For purposes of the

feat and spell, the lich phylactery is an item worth 120,000 gp; thus its manufacture takes 120 days and costs 4,800 XP and 60,000 gp in raw materials. Its material components include black diamond dust, black lotus powder, the dried blood of a spellcasting outsider, the still-liquid blood of a virgin, an umbilical cord animated with *animate dead* and braided around the outside of the container like twine, as well as a special incantation written with a toad-bone stylus and a pint of pure *shadow ink*.

Part of the enormous cost of enchanting a phylactery involves placing part of the caster's arcane spellbook within the phylactery. Each spell so added contributes twice as many days and gold pieces to the cost of construction, as if the spell were being written as a scroll; the phylactery cannot hold more than 1 spell per level plus any Intelligence bonus the necromancer is entitled to. For example, an 11th-level necromancer can cast cantrips and spells from 1st to 6th level; a phylactery she makes can contain one 1st-, 2nd-, 3rd-, 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-level spell, plus one extra 1st-, one extra 2nd-, and one extra 3rd-level spell for her Intelligence of 16; this adds 10 days and 10,000 gp to the cost. The lich can memorize spells placed within the phylactery as normal even while it is bodiless (see "Perpetual Undeath" below). Only necromancers are capable of adding spells to a phylactery this way; their understanding of undeath is much greater than that of wizards or sorcerers who aspire to lichdom.

In appearance, the phylactery itself is almost always a small container usually of metal or stone. The container's contents are one of the great secrets of the road to lichdom, and they seem to vary from lich to lich. In some cases, the phylactery holds a contract that created the lich, a contract that constitutes the physical embodiment of a dark pact. This dark pact is usually written in *ghost writing* on a scroll made not of paper but of enchanted wind. This makes the paper impossible to burn, cut, or even rot—it also means that the scroll is invisible and the phylactery appears empty to the casual observer. Other phylacteries are said to contain no contract, but instead hold a blasphemous denial of the gods of death, a way of spitting in the eye of the divine and the afterlife, a renunciation of mortality and all its burdens. Still others are said to be empty but for the dust of a lich or demilich slain by the necromancer. Some believe that the only way to become a lich is to first destroy one, and this accounts for the relative rarity of liches despite generations of effort by devoted necromancers to achieve lichdom.

Not every phylactery is a container. A few examples of phylacteries made as jeweled rings and carved with runes are known, as are a few examples of crowns and even goblets. These are incredibly rare and are rarely made by necromancers. Such soul-phylacteries contain no necromantic spellbook.

Rebirth as a Lich

The phylactery is magically able to cast spells that the necromancer has memorized, functioning as a caster of the same level that the necromancer had at the time she became a lich (levels acquired later are never reflected in the spellcasting ability of the caster while within the phylactery).

Once the phylactery is made, the necromancer must memorize two instances of a body-switching spell such as *magic jar*, *possess*, *spirit self*, *soul switch*, *suspend life function*, or *lich*. The first of these is used to switch her soul into the phylactery; the second allows the soul to return to its body. Since there is no soul within the phylactery to switch into her own body, casting the spell means that her physical body immediately dies. This allows the necromancer's body to be embalmed, imbued with resins, covered with the proper arcane sigils, and finally shocked into undead status

Table 3-3:
Lich Preparations

Method	Bonus to Undeath Check
<i>Lich spell</i>	+20
<i>Soul switch</i>	+15
<i>Magic jar</i>	+12
<i>Spirit self</i>	+11
<i>Possess</i>	+10
<i>Suspend life function</i>	+5
Additional cost	+1 per additional 60,000 gp spent (maximum +5 bonus)
Life energy*	+1 per level sacrificed (no maximum)
20th-level Necromancer	Automatic success

*The levels sacrificed must be her own; the necromancer casts *energy drain* on herself while holding the phylactery.



with a bolt of pure negative energy. Doing so requires a successful Craft (Embalming) check with a DC of 30. In many cases, the necromancer prepares her own body using a *puppet master* spell from within the phylactery.

Finally, the necromancer must return her spirit from the phylactery to her original body. However, since the body is now undead, it is difficult for her soul to find its way home, and the transformation to sentient undeath is not always smooth. Depending on the spell used and the caster's level, the journey can be simple or arduous. The necromancer must succeed in a special Undeath check with a DC 30 (Charisma bonuses apply). Apply the bonuses from Table 3-3 if the necromancer uses powerful magics to aid her rebirth as a lich, sacrifices life energy levels, or spends enormous sums on her phylactery.

If the check succeeds, the lich's spirit finds its way back into its body. If the check fails, the soul is forever lost and can only be restored by a *wish* or *miracle* (and this restores only a living body, not granting the status of a lich on the target).

If all of these conditions have been met successfully, apply the lich template to the character. She retains all necromancer levels and gains all benefits and restrictions of lichdom.

Perpetual Undeath

The phylactery also provides shelter to a lich's life force when its body is destroyed. Unless the phylactery is located and destroyed, the lich always reappears 1d10 days after its apparent death. When its body is "killed," the lich's life force automatically returns to the phylactery, no matter how distant the phylactery is or how the lich is killed. The lich retains all its existing spells and memories despite the sudden transfer.

Once there, the use of a cloned body can restore the lich to a new body identical to its previous body (if the necromancer has prepared

for this event carefully enough) or the lich can simply use *puppet master*, *magic jar*, *possession*, or similar body-snatching spells to take over a new body within range. The target creature is entitled to a Will save; if it succeeds, the lich's attempt is thwarted and the undead must find another host. If the attack succeeds, the victim immediately transforms into a desiccated undead lich, losing all its existing skills, levels, and feats but gaining those of the lich, whose personality destroys the soul that formerly inhabited that body.

Destroying a phylactery, however, destroys a lich permanently. In some exceptional cases, a supremely powerful lich may return as a demilich, but this is exceedingly rare.

Quicklich

Powerful as liches are, they are still vulnerable to turning, positive energy channeling, and other interference from good clerics and paladins just like any other undead. For this reason, some who make the transition to lichdom prefer to keep their new status secret for as long as possible, the better to confuse their enemies. The most successful of them all is the fabled quicklich ("living lich").

A quicklich is created when a 20th-level necromancer uses the *suspend life function* spell to ease her transition into undeath. When combined with the *lich* and *hide life* spells and a yearlong ritual (three times the normal period, or 360 days), she uses her own body as her phylactery. A quicklich retains the appearance she had in life, rather than the horrid, decayed skeletal visage common to most liches. If her body is destroyed, she can reform it within thirteen days, just as if she possessed the ghost's Rejuvenation special quality. However, to do so the quicklich must have a fragment of her body separated from the rest (her heart, a little finger, a tooth, etc.) and hidden elsewhere. If this piece is destroyed she cannot again resume physical form and becomes a mere ghost, albeit still a most powerful one.

Chapter Four: Creatures of Necromancy

Death Angel

Medium-size Outsider

Hit Dice: 16d8+32 (104 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+5 Dex)

Speed: 50 feet, fly 100 feet (Good)

Armor Class: 25 (+10 natural, +5 Dex)

Attacks: scythe +24/+19/+14/+9 melee or 2 claws +21/+21 melee

Damage: scythe 2d4+10 +2d4 cold, claws 1d6+5 +2d4 cold each

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./ 5 ft.

Special Attacks:

Touch of death, marked for death, face of fear, icy scythe

Special Qualities:

Outsider immunities, spell-like abilities

Saving Throws: Fort +12, Ref +15, Will +11

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 19

Skills: Alchemy +5, Balance +7, Bluff +9, Concentration +4, Craft (Construct) +8, Disguise +14, Hide +15, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (Anatomy) +6, Knowledge (Mortuary Custom) +4, Listen +18, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +6, Spot +20, Tumble +24.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Power Attack, Silent Spell, Sunder

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually Lawful evil

Advancement Range: 17 to 25 HD

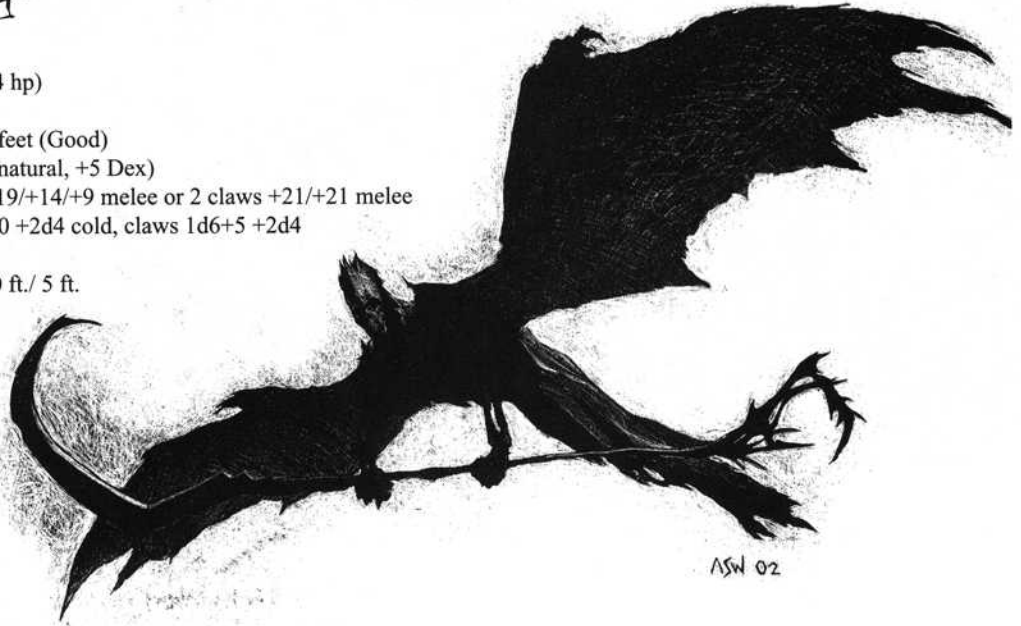
The angels of death are eerie creatures that serve the God of Death, as well as their own mysterious ends. When summoned to the material plane, they never leave voluntarily without taking a soul back to the afterworld.

An angel of death is a black-winged skeleton whose grey bones are as hard as steel. Unlike many outsiders, they often wear robes of black, or tattered lace. They stand six feet or more tall, with a wingspan approaching twenty-five feet. When their wings are folded, they can be tucked within the creature's rib cage, hiding them completely. Its scythe also has a collapsible blade that disappears into the handle, making it look like a long staff. When in a suitable disguise—say a dark veil and heavy clothes—a death angel can pass unnoticed among humans. Death angels do not speak, but only communicate telepathically.

Death angels are almost always on a very specific mission: protecting a shrine to the God of Death from unbelievers, finding and killing someone who has offended the God of Death, punishing those who torture or abuse the God of Death's clergy. Sometimes death angels appear to protect a child who has undergone the dark baptism (see page 12) or to bestow gifts and instructions upon necromancers who stand high in the God of Death's favor (and who have undertaken a dark pact).

Combat

In combat, death angels prefer to attack by surprise or from the air. When airborne, they attack by swooping down and striking at speed. This is equivalent to an aerial charge (allowing them to dive at twice their normal flying speed and gain a +2 attack bonus



against their target). On the ground they wheel and strike in a dazzling deadly dance that can overwhelm foes before they realize just how deadly their opponent is.

Icy Scythe (Su): A death angel's scythe is a magical +3 weapon that delivers 2d4 points of cold damage on each successful strike, in addition to the scythe's normal damage. The death angel often attacks its opponent's weapons, seeking either to shatter them or at least disarm its foe, the better to slay him or her. Like all scythes, the *icy scythe* delivers quadruple damage on a confirmed critical hit. In addition, the *icy scythe* is both keen (doubling its crit range to 19–20) and ghost touch (see *DMG* pages 186 & 187).

Touch of Death (Ex): The death angel has a direct channel to the negative plane at all times. Three times per day, it can draw on this connection to deliver additional damage. This requires a successful claw attack, but adds 5d8 hp cold damage to the normal claw damage.

Face of Fear (Ex): The appearance of an angel of death is terrifying enough that most creatures run from it in panic. If its face is revealed, all creatures at first see their own face in death and must make a Will save (DC 26) or be affected by *fear* for 1d6 rounds. This effect applies even to characters normally immune to fear (although such characters do gain a +4 bonus to their saves).

Necromantic Spell-like Abilities (Su): All death angels have the spellcasting ability of a 12th-level necromancer, amounting to 6/6/6/5/5/3/2 spells plus their Intelligence bonus spells. In addition, they can cast *deeper darkness* three times per day.

Marked for Death (Su): A death angel may concentrate on killing a single target rather than scattering its blows among many. As a standard action, it can choose to select a target as its chosen prey. It acts before the target in the next combat round, and all its attacks against that target automatically succeed. It cannot use this power on that same target again until 24 hours have elapsed, but it can mark another target once the first is slain, and another after that, and so forth. Clerics of the God of Death are always immune to this supernatural power.

Outsider Immunities: Death angels are immune to cold, poison, and electricity, and resistant to fire and acid (resistance 20). They can see perfectly in darkness, even that caused by *deeper darkness* spells, and they can communicate telepathically with any intelligent creature.

Dragon Engine

Gargantuan Construct [Necromantic Siege Engine]

Hit Dice: 32d10 (176 hp)

Initiative: –1 (–1 Dex)

Speed: 50 feet, 50 feet flying (clumsy)

Armor Class: 25 (–4 size, +19 natural)

Attacks: 1 bite +24 melee, 2 claws +19 melee, tail slam +19 melee

Damage: Bite 4d6+10, claw 3d8+10, tail slam 2d6+15

Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 40 ft/20 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon (shadow breath)

Special Qualities: Construct immunities, provide cover

Saves: Fort +10 (immune), Ref +9, Will +11

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 9, Con —, Int 12, Wis 13,

Cha 14

Feats: None

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 33 to 66

HD (Colossal)

Dragon engines are necromantic machines built from the tanned hides and preserved bones of elder dragons, retaining a breath weapon but with it transformed into one generated from a store of negative energy. The dragon engine's wings are leathery, but functional. The flesh and internal organs are gone, the withered skin clinging to the bones.



The enchantments required trap a dragon soul within the necromantic framework, allowing the construct some self-awareness but placing it under the maker's control.

A hollow inside the bony ribcage can carry up to 12 lesser undead of Medium size or smaller. The entrance into this grisly chamber is hidden in the crook of a hind leg; the leg itself creates a step down from the ribcage to ground level. The construct's skin grants passengers in the ribcage near-total concealment, while small arrow slits between the ribs allow them to look out and even launch assaults with 90% cover.

Combat

Dragon engines are brutal combatants, willing to blast a battlement with a swooping diving blast of shadow breath, then landing on opponents and disgorging a swarm of undead warriors and death knights from their interior spaces. They fight without imagination or mercy, almost entirely at their controller's command. Occasionally, a spark of draconic rage seems to seep through, but these constructs have never yet been known to break free of their master's control.

Trample: A dragon engine can trample Huge or smaller foes for automatic claw damage; see *MM* page 9.

Shadow Breath (Su): The dragon engine breathes pure negative energy; a cloud of shadowy darkness 40 feet in diameter. Those caught in the cloud suffer 32d8 hit points of damage unless they make a successful a Fortitude save (DC 24) for half-damage. However, unlike a living dragon, a dragon engine is very slow to recharge its breath weapon and can only use it twice per day.

Provide Cover (Ex): Like most necromantic siege engines, a dragon engine is large enough to provide cover to creatures sheltering inside it. Treat this scaly dragon skin as 90% cover.

Construct Immunities (Ex): Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, and disease; not subject to critical hits, ability damage, subdual damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Flayed Man

Medium-size Undead

Hit Dice: 10d12+3 (68 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 feet

Armor Class: 19 (+8 natural, +1 Dex)

Attacks: 1 slam +10 melee

Damage: 1d6+5 slam

Special Attacks: Grisly face, negative energy ray, spells, command undead

Special Qualities: Undead immunities, dying energy

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +10

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 12, Con —, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 19

Feats: Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Maximize Spell, Toughness.

Skills: Alchemy +3, Bluff +6, Climb +10, Concentration +6, Escape Artist +3, Hide +10, Intimidate +12, Jump +7, Ride +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +5, Spot +11.

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 10

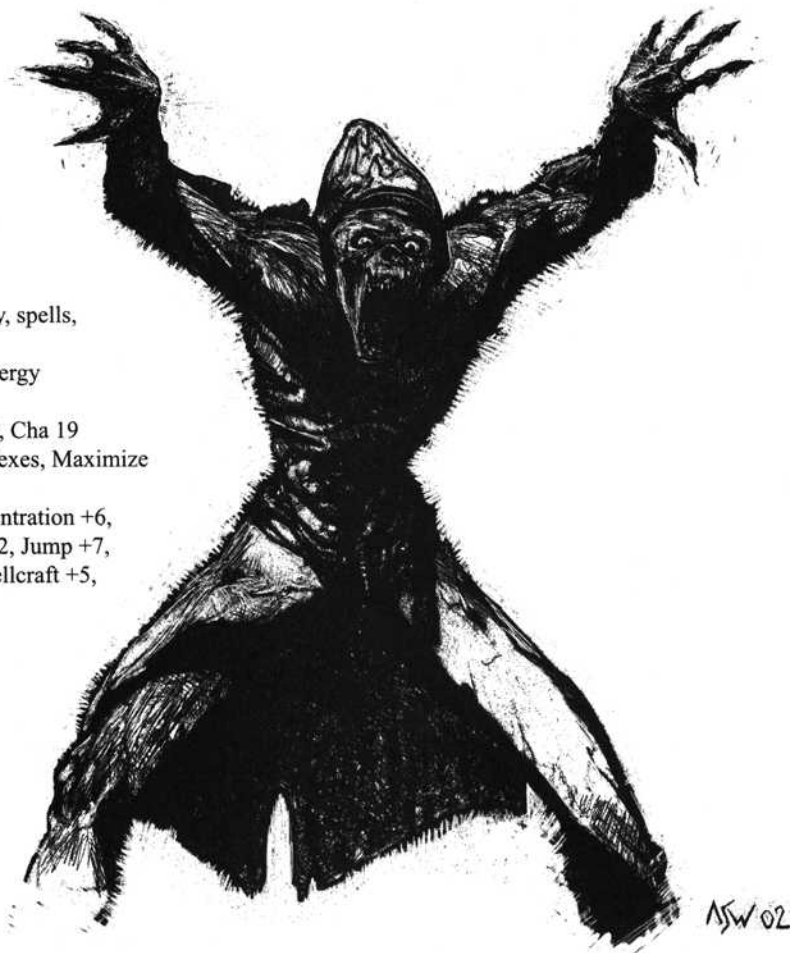
Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Any Evil

Advancement: 11 to 20 HD

Among the rarest of undead creatures, a flayed man is a special form of spell-using undead that can only be created from the body of a dead necromancer. It retains much of its former intelligence but is controlled by forces of darkness and seeks to destroy all living things.

The process for creating a flayed man requires that the body first be skinned, revealing the musculature underneath, and then treated to prevent quick decay. As a consequence of this process, the flayed man's touch and footprints are not bloody; a flayed man does not bleed. The bones and muscles of a flayed man are all visible; every smile and twitch is grisly to watch. It can still speak in its former voice, gesture as fluidly as a living creature, and of course cast spells. A flayed man can speak all its former languages, typically Common, Elvish, Dwarvish, and so on.



Combat

A flayed man uses its link to the Negative Energy Plane both intelligently and ruthlessly to destroy the living, especially other spellcasters. It initially fights from the rear with spells behind a wall of lesser undead, then engages in hand-to-hand combat with whatever weapon is at hand when its spells run out.

Grisly Face: A flayed man's horrific appearance and seemingly normal voice and demeanor are extremely unnerving. Creatures viewing a flayed man must make a Will save (DC 19) or suffer the effects of a *fear* spell.

Negative Energy Ray: A flayed man can cast *negative energy ray*† four times per day, for 5d6 hp damage, as a 10th level necromancer.

Command Undead: A flayed man automatically rebukes all undead within line of sight as if the flayed man were a cleric of 10th level. Undead it successfully awes obey the flayed man's commands without question.

Necromancer: A flayed man is an even more powerful conduit for energies from the negative plane as an undead creature than it was as a living arcane spellcaster; it suffers from none of the limitations of the flesh. As a result, it acts as a 1d6+5 level necromancer, casting spells at normal but never requiring rest before regaining spells the next day. Furthermore, the flayed man needs only verbal components for all its spellcasting (as if it had memorized all its spells with the Still Spell feat without having to expend higher-level spell slots to do so).

Dying Energies: Killing a flayed man in melee is dangerous; when it "dies," it releases a *negative energy burst*† in all directions with itself as the center point. The circular effect has a 20 foot radius and inflicts 1d8+10 damage to all creatures that fail a Will saving throw (which reduces damage by half). Undead in the radius gain 1d8+10 hp (either repairing previous damage, or as temporary hit points if they are uninjured), no save required.

Undead Immunities: 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.

† indicates a spell from *Tome & Blood*.

Ghost Hound

Small-size Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 3d12+3 (22 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 40 feet, fly 30 ft.

Armor Class: 16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 deflection)

Attacks: 1 bite +5 melee

Damage: 1d8+3 incorporeal bite

Special Attacks: Trip

Special Qualities: Pack turn resistance, incorporeal, undead immunities

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3

Abilities: Str —, Dex 18, Con —, Int 5, Wis 6, Cha 9

Skills: Jump +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Spot +3

Feats: Iron Will, Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Pack (6–24)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Lawful Evil or Lawful Neutral

Advancement: 4 to 10 HD

Ghost hounds are dogs that serve the priests of death, hunting both the dead and the living who have offended the God of Death. They are always grey-furred, with blazing eyes, black tongues, and black teeth. Most ghost hounds are members of a pack; they are rarely found alone.

Combat

A pack of ghost hounds will work together to pull opponents down from the saddle and knock standing victims to the ground. They are faster than most undead and smarter than living hounds, retaining all their hunting instincts in undeath.

Incorporeal: Immune to nonmagical attacks, 50% miss chance from magical attacks (except force effects and ghost touch weapons). See *MM* page 6.

Trip: A ghost hound that hits with its incorporeal bite can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see *PH* page 139, but a ghost hound uses its Dexterity instead of Strength) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the ghost hound.



Pack Turn Resistance: A pack of ghost hounds is much more difficult to turn or rebuke than a single hound. For each ghost hound after the first, add 1 to the difficulty of turning the pack. Note, however, that ghost hounds are always turned in a body: either all are turned or rebuked, or none are.

Undead Immunities: 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.

Golem — Blood, Bone, Rot

Medium-size Construct

	Blood	Bone	Rot
Hit Dice:	5d10 (27 hp)	11d10 (61 hp)	15d10 (83 hp)
Initiative:	-1 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	20 feet	30 feet	40 feet
Armor Class:	20 (-1 Dex, +11 natural)	27 (+1 Dex, +16 natural)	31 (+1 Dex, +20 natural)
Attacks:	slam +9 melee	claw spike +15 melee	slam +19 melee
Damage:	1d8+6	2d8+7	2d10+8
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Poison blood	Impale	Rotting touch
Special Qualities:	Construct, immune to piercing	Construct, immune to piercing	Construct, immune to piercing
Saving Throws:	Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4	Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 22, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1	Str 24, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 1	Str 27, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 4
Climate/Terrain:	Any Land	Any Land	Any Land
Organization:	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	5	9	14
Treasure:	None	None	None
Alignment:	Always neutral	Always neutral	Always neutral
Advancement Range:	6 to 9 HD	12 to 22 HD	16 to 30 HD

The blood, bone, and rot golems are all constructs animated by necromantic means using a framework of flesh, bone, and/or skin. Unlike clay, iron, or stone golems, necromantic golems are relatively inexpensive to produce; however, they are also not as long-lasting and require more frequent repair. The flesh golem is of the same general type as these golems, although they can also be created by non-necromancer wizards or sorcerers.

Like all constructs, necromantic golems are fearless, unable to imagine defeat and thus easily lured into traps. A necromantic golem obeys its creator as long as she lives. Her commands need not be verbal to be effective—any mental command given within a 1 mile radius of the necromancer will be received and acted on. They can operate as well by daylight as by night (darkvision 60 ft.).

Bone Golem

The bone golem can take many forms, most often a short, powerful humanoid shape with an angular set of machine-like levers, pulleys, and bone spikes. Its arms and fingers are spikes of fortified, almost metallic bone, perfectly designed to impale victims. Its knees and elbows are often spiked as well, enabling it to impale on kicks, elbow jabs, and the like.

Impale: A bone golem's many spiky protrusions are ideal for delivering critical hits (in this case, impalements); any attack by a bone golem with its natural weaponry has a crit. range of 15–20 and delivers double damage on a confirmed crit.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to anything requiring a Fortitude save, unless it also affects objects. Immune to piercing weapons.

Rot Golem

The rot golem is a pile of decaying flesh and skin, often flayed from living victims. Its stench makes it almost impossible for it to surprise any creature with a sense of smell. Its very touch is corrupting to all living things.

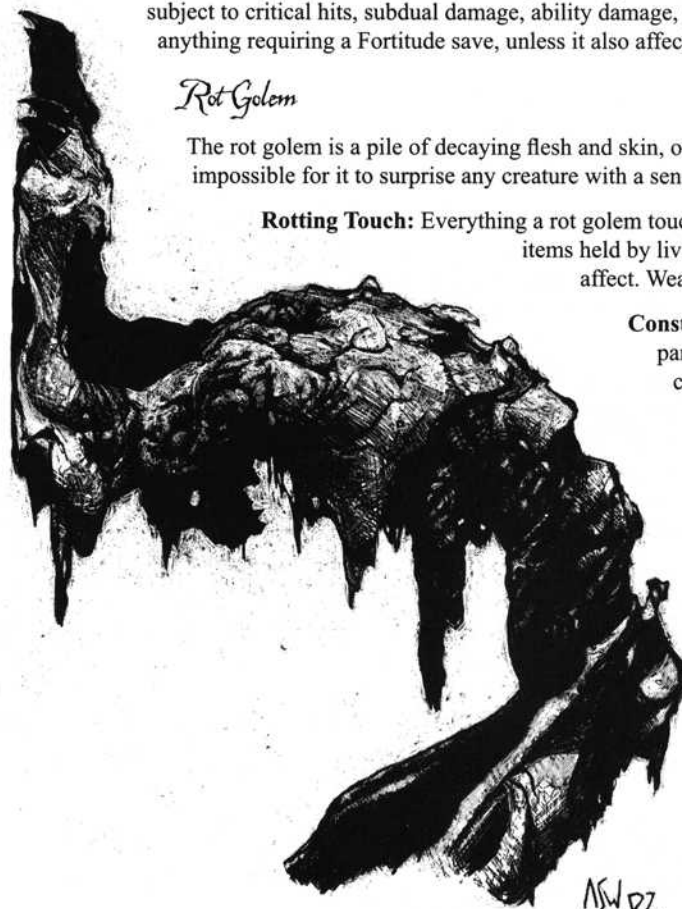
Rotting Touch: Everything a rot golem touches rots, rusts, and decays into foulness. Magical items and items held by living creatures gain a Reflex saving throw (DC 25) to avoid the affect. Weapons used to strike the rot golem gain no saving throw.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to anything requiring a Fortitude save, unless it also affects objects. Immune to piercing weapons.

Blood Golem

The blood golem is a complete skeleton infused and fortified with hundreds of gallons of blood, typically human but sometimes from cattle, sheep, or other sources. The strength and resilience of the blood used increases the strength, size, and cohesion of the final product. The form is always that of a seven-foot-tall humanoid skeleton of dark red, with rough facial features, a darkly gleaming polished bald skull, and swirling scabrous patterns of dried blood on its crimson bones.

Blood Poisoning: A bone golem's touch creates blood poisoning in any victim failing a Fort save (DC 20).



The victim suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws; he or she also loses all Dexterity bonuses to Armor Class. These effects last for 24 hours, unless removed by a *heal* spell.

After 24 hours, a character who makes his or her Fort save (DC 15) throws off the effects and returns to normal. Anyone who fails this second save suffers 1d3 points of Constitution damage and remains tainted until he or she makes the save or he or she dies (i.e., the Constitution score reaches zero). Once the taint has been thrown off, ability score damage heals at the rate of 1 point per day (see *DMG* page 72).

Immunity to poisoning works normally against this ability.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage. Immune to anything requiring a Fortitude save, unless it also affects objects. Immune to piercing weapons.

Necromantic Siege Engine

Huge or Gargantuan Construct [Necromantic Siege Engine]

	Zombie Ram	Ether Tower
Hit Dice:	16d10 (104 hp)	22d10 (121 hp)
Initiative:	+0 (Dex)	-2 (Dex)
Speed:	40 feet	10 feet
Armor Class:	27 (-2 size, +19 natural)	20 (-4 size, +14 natural)
Attacks:	1 slam +17 melee	2 grabs per 5 feet +16 melee
Damage:	slam 4d6+7	claw 2d4
Face/Reach:	10 ft. by 40 ft./10 ft.	20 ft. by 20 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Ram charge, grabbling claws, trample	Grabbling claws, Pulverize
Special Qualities:	Construct immunities, disincorporate	Construct immunities, zone of provide cover, darkness
Saves:	Fort +5 (immune), Ref +5, Will +3	Fort +7 (immune), Ref +5, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 25, Dex 10, Con —, Int 4, Wis 7, Cha 9	Str 21, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 8, Cha 8
Climate/Terrain:	Any land	Any land
Organization:	Solitary	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	9	12
Treasure:	None	None
Alignment:	Always neutral	Always neutral
Advancement:	17 to 33 HD (Gargantuan)	23 to 46 HD (Colossal)

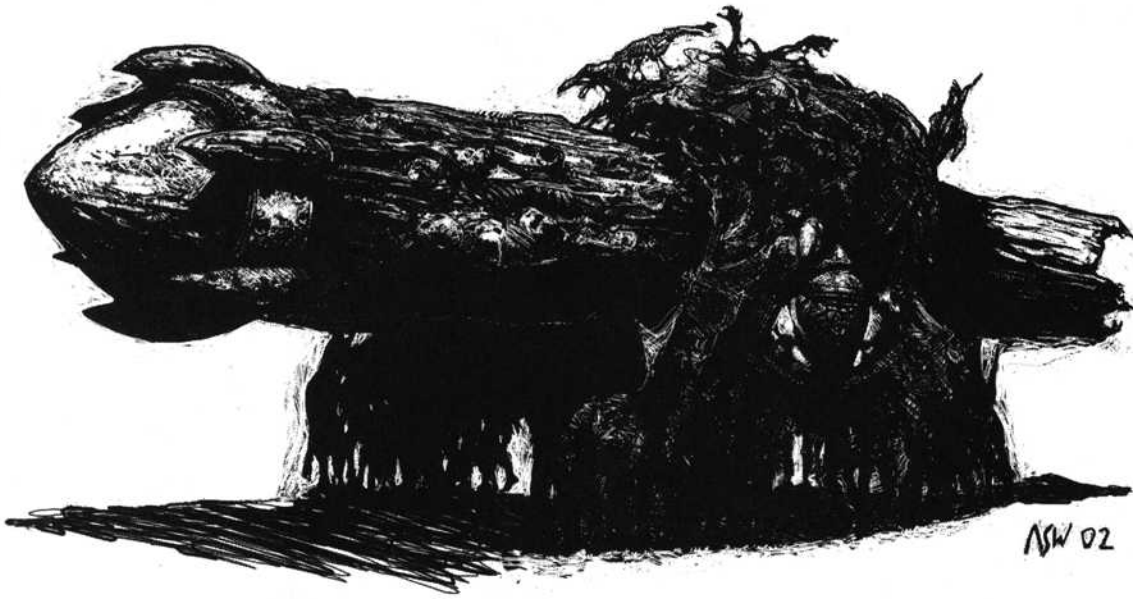
Necromantic siege engines are creations built from the flesh, skin, and bones of dead soldiers, sculpted into towers or rams and sent into battle. They are powered by the legs and withered muscles of undead humanoids, and their carapaces are made of bones or of skulls layered as if they were shingles. Hundreds of bodies are used in their construction and animation of a ram; thousands in the construction of a tower.

A zombie ram is built to take down a gate or wall; it is essentially a gigantic bone-and-iron ram with dozens of heads located on either side of the central ram. The bones are fused with iron, steel, and brass to strengthen them, and the skin and muscle of the corpses are strengthened with shadow essences to harden them. The point of the iron ram is traditionally a skull, but ram's heads, horned demons, and other designs are also common. Arms often stick out of the side as leftovers of the fusing of iron and flesh. A zombie ram always marches accompanied with a rhythmic drumming of feet marching in perfect unison—the motion of its two hundred legs resembles the synchronous slither of an enormous centipede.

Ether towers provide a way to pass over city walls or onto upper levels of a fortified manor or keep—they are named for the curling fog and mist that bubbles from the rollers they move on, a byproduct of the arcane energies that move the enormous structures. They are uniformly huge, often 50 tall and 20 feet on a side, with five interior floors, thick armor plates on front and sides (and sometimes the back), plus three or four steamroller-like wheels made of metal drums that are filled with blood. The bone interior of a siege tower protects any creatures riding within it. Some towers are fitted with expanding bone bridges (to assault enemy walls), cauldrons of boiling oil or flame projectors (to set fire to rooftops), and even small catapults or ballistae on the top deck.

Combat

While rams have a minimal intelligence and are eager to smash their foes, mist towers are mindless and can only follow the orders of those who made them. Ether towers often Disincorporate just as they reach a wall or fortification, becoming mist for a moment and then reappearing on the far side.



Both necromantic siege engines are large, clumsy, and powerful attackers suited to destroying fortifications rather than creatures. These are almost always encountered as parts of undead hosts, not as independent creatures. Even getting to encounter one of these fearsome constructs could be an adventure in itself.

Grabbing Claws (Ex): The sides of a zombie ram and an ether tower are both lined with dozens or hundreds of arms and clawed hands. Getting close to one can be dangerous, because the hands attempt to grab and hold anyone coming near them. Treat this as a free grappling attack whenever the ram or tower is subjected to a melee attack with a reach of 5 feet or less. This does not draw entitle an armed target to make an attack of opportunity. The zombie ram can inflict 1d4+7 points of damage per round on a grappled target for each grabbing claw that gets a hold (typically 1d12 on a Medium-sized opponent); the ether tower inflicts 1d4+5 damage per claw.

Construct Immunities (Ex): Both zombies rams and ether towers are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralyzation, stunning, and disease; not subject to critical hits, ability damage, subdual damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Zombie Ram

Trample: The massive size and bulk of a zombie ram allows it to trample Large or smaller foes for automatic claw damage; see *MM* page 9.

Ram Charge: When the zombie ram can get a running start (at least 80 feet in a straight line), it gains a +4 bonus on its ram attack. Since a ram is specially built just for such attacks, it suffers no Armor Class penalty when making its ram charge attack. Structures hit by a ram take damage normally (see *PH* pages 135–136); any creature caught at the end of a charge—for example, one pinned between the ram and a wall—suffers 6d8+7 damage, as do any items such as shields and armor carried by that unfortunate.

Zone of Darkness: Darkness always shrouds the vicinity of a zombie ram. A zombie ram always generates a 60-foot-diameter circle of *deeper darkness* while in combat. Undead, necromancers, and constructs can see normally within this darkness.

Ether Tower

Pulverize (Ex): Any creatures size Large or smaller grabbed by a tower on the side in which it is moving and held for a single round will be run over by the tower's rollers the next round. Creatures run over by a ether tower must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid Death by Massive Damage (see *PH* page 129), as the tower typically weighs on the order of 5 to 10 tons. Those who succeed suffer 10d10 points of crushing damage.

Provide Cover (Ex): An ether tower is large enough to provide cover to creatures sheltering in its interior, and offers arrow slits to return fire against attackers. Treat this as 90% cover.

Discorporate (Su): Ether towers can become momentarily insubstantial, disappearing in a wispy puff of smoke or sand. They can do this up to 32 times per day. Any creatures they entirely enclose are likewise momentarily out of phase with the material world. They must return to material form the following round but may have moved in the meantime.

Skin Cloak

Small Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp)
Initiative: +2 (Dex)
Speed: 20 feet
Armor Class: 16 (+1 size, +3 natural, +2 Dex)
Attacks: 1 slam +3 melee
Damage: 1d8+1 slam
Special Attacks: Change shape, smother
Special Qualities: Undead immunities, immune to crushing, dying energy
Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, W 12, Cha 9
Skills: Climb +5, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move +9, Spellcraft +5, Spot +8, Tumble +7
Feats: Alertness, Dodge.
Climate/Terrain: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: None
Alignment: Any Evil
Advancement: 5 to 10 HD

Also called a hollow man, a skin cloak is a man made from the skin of a dead necromancer. It has the former intelligence but is controlled by force to destroy all living things.

The process for creating a skin cloak requires that the body first be skinned (the corpse is often used to create a flayed man; see page 61). The detached skin is tanned, tattooed, and enchanted with various spells (including *animate dead* and *death mask*). A skin cloak can speak only in a whisper and knows only the languages it spoke when alive; it cannot learn a new language in undeath (the exception is a skin cloak serving as a necromancer's familiar, which will always be able to speak the necromancer's native language).

Combat

A skin cloak patiently stalks prey, using its change shape ability to appear like a harmless but attractive article of clothing (typically a finely embroidered cloak). If anyone is so unwise as to put it on, the skin cloak at once attempts to smother its hapless wearer. The only time a skin cloak refrains from its ceaseless efforts to destroy the living is when it is bound as a familiar to a necromancer, obeying her commands instead.

Change Shape: A skin cloak can alter its appearance to look like an ordinary article of clothing. When worn, it enables its master to alter her appearance (see *Necromantic Familiars*, page 8, and *Necromantic Magic Items*, page 45).

Smother: If worn by someone who is not its master, a skin cloak wraps itself like a second skin around its wearer, cutting off all orifices. A character so trapped cannot breathe and suffocates within minutes (see "Suffocation" in the *DMG*, page 88). The skin cloak bonds to the skin so tightly that it cannot be pulled off by brute strength, and attempts to cut it off inflict damage jointly to both skin cloak and its victim (e.g., both take full damage from piercing or slashing weapons, while bludgeoning weapons hurt only the victim, not the cloak). It typically stays in place for several days even after the victim's demise, complicating attempts to raise the unfortunate.

Immune to Crushing: A skin cloak is light and leathery, but so thin that it cannot be harmed by crushing attacks of any kind. It is therefore immune to bludgeoning weapons.

Dying Energies: Killing a skin cloak in melee is dangerous; when it dies, it releases a *negative energy burst*† in all directions with itself as the center point. The circular effect has a 20-foot radius, and inflicts 1d8+10 damage to all creatures who fail a Will saving throw (which reduces damage by half). Undead in the radius gain 1d8+10 hp, (either repairing previous damage, or as temporary hit points if they are uninjured), no save required.

Undead Immunities: 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.

† indicates spell from *Tome & Blood*



Undead War Elephant

Huge Undead

Hit Dice: 11d12 (71 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: 30 feet, 20 feet with extreme half-plate barding

Armor Class: 17 (-2 size, +9 natural) or 27 (-2 size, +9 natural, +10 extreme half-plate barding)

Attacks: 1 slam +10 melee, 2 stamps +5 melee, or gore +10 melee

Damage: slam 2d6+7, stamp 2d6+3, gore 2d8+10

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft/10 ft.

Special Attacks: Fiery feet, trample
2d8+10 (+5 fire)

Special Qualities: Undead immunities, provide cover

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +8

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 10, Con —, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 9

Skills: Jump +9, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Swim +9

Feats: Cleave, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 12 to 33 HD (Gargantuan)

Undead war elephants are enormous undead raised from the bones of a mammoth, mastodon, or elephant killed in battle or sacrificed to the Gods of Death. The thick hide of these elephants is covered with necromantic sigils and brandings, their ivory tusks blackened as if by extreme age. Their eye sockets glow as if lit from within by fiery lanterns, and their flopping ears are often little more than shredded leather.

These creatures' spirits are angry at being trapped in a dead body, and they sometimes seek to wander off to the Elephant's Graveyard if not carefully controlled by their makers. More often, though, they are titanic centerpoints of undead armies, or command posts and observation platforms for generals commanding undead cavalry. While they are not quite as fast as ghost horses, they are virtually impregnable when fitted with full armor and actually faster than encumbered undead warhorses.

The bone ribcage of an undead war elephant is sometimes used by lesser undead as a strange chariot or sort of Trojan Horse, allowing them to spill out when they reach their destination. Even more common is the placement of a howdah made of wood and covered in green leather on top of the undead war elephant, a fitting perch for its necromantic master. Wealthy undead generals often commission barding for their undead war elephants; this amounts to a wall of iron plating that makes the elephant a most effective battering ram.

Combat

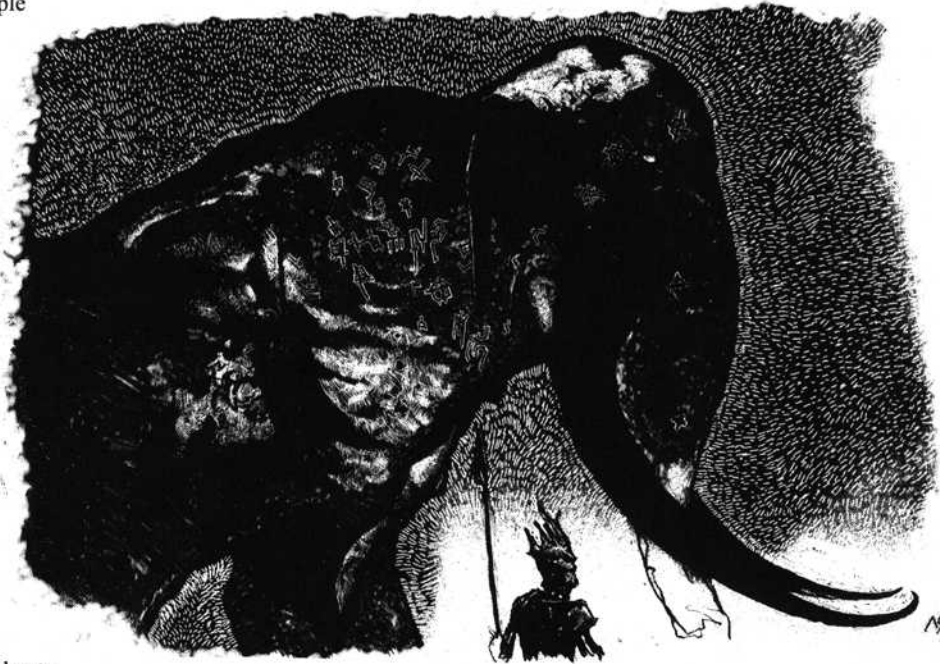
War elephants are relatively clever for undead mounts; they can think and act on their own when necessary, though their typical reaction to any attack is furious assault. In herds, however, undead war elephants have been known to encircle, stampede, or even ambush their foes.

Trample: An undead war elephant can trample Medium or smaller foes for automatic gore damage; see *MM* page 197.

Fiery Feet (Su): In life, elephants fear fire—a fact armies faced by elephants often take advantage of to drive them off the battlefield. In undeath, this fear disappears, replaced with the ability set everything they trample on fire. An undead war elephant confer an additional 5 points of fire damage to trample victims. Their fiery feet also set combustible materials alight, meaning that a charge is often accompanied by a wave of wildfire.

Provide Cover (Ex): An undead war elephant is large enough to provide cover to creatures sheltering in its ribcage or howdah. Treat this cover as 75% for the howdah; for the ribcage, the undead war elephant provides 90% cover when fitted with extreme half-plate barding and just 50% cover when only its bones and leathery skin protect the occupants.

Undead Immunities (Ex): Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease; not subject to critical hits, ability damage, subdual damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage.





Chapter Five: A History of the Secret College

They are everywhere. Strolling through the sun-misted pastures on the edge of the city. Dozing among the gold-burnished stacks of their patron's libraries. Lurking in the dank pre-dawn alleys of the slums. Experimenting in nitrous-caked catacombs that lie forgotten beneath the streets. They are necromancers. They are the Secret College. They are a network, a loose association dedicated to the art of necromancy.

Like their name, they are secretive and hidden, carefully guarding their identities and activities. They have no formal badge or guildhall, no advisor to the Lord Mayor, no banner to display at civic festivals, no monuments or public works, no official academies or research towers or workshops. If you do not look, you will not see them; if you look, you will not find them. They do not exist except in whispers, uncertain glances, and the frightened stories of the poor.

For GM and player alike, the Secret College is an exercise in imagination. It exists in an uncertain city—possibly Freeport or some other metropolis, perhaps the base for your own campaign or a place your players have yet to visit. The details are firmly vague. What is here describes how a group of necromancers might work, but anything here can be changed to suit the character of time, place, personality, and fancy of your world. The setting, locations, and characters described here are essentially ideas and guidelines; one imagining out of many possibilities. The Secret College is not the only way to add and use necromancers in your campaign, just one that is hopefully fertile with ideas to stimulate your own adventures and imagination.

Why the Necromancers?

Perhaps this is an obvious question, but the obvious is often the best place to start. Why are there necromancers? Considering the abhorrence held by most people, lands, and lords for practitioners of the art, why would any sane wizard choose necromancy as her forte? It would be far wiser, after all, to choose a school one could practice openly, without risk of being hunted by an enraged populace or sent to the torture chambers of the Inquisition by local authorities. There must be some gain to make the risk worthwhile.

Fame

Of the traditional motives—fame, money, and power—only the last makes sense here. True, one might become an *infamous* necromancer, but it is a fame based on fear and hatred. Infamous necromancers tend to attract enemies and trouble. Other arcane spellcasters—nonspecialist wizards and most sorcerers—shun them as being, well, a bit loony. Paladins seek to redress the necromancer's wrongs—generally by chopping her head off, or at least delivering her to the tender mercies of the Inquisition. Good clerics tend to be the ones urging on the paladins to remove the necromancer in the first place. Druids abhor them as “unnatural” for violating the natural cycle of life and death with a third element: undeath. Bards find necromancer unwholesome to be with, the aura of death being generally bad for business. Monks share no common ground with them and want nothing to do with them. Barbarians and their straightforward approach do not mesh well with a necromancer's subtlety. Rogues and fighters may consort with necromancers, but always with a jaundiced eye—

after all, nobody likes the prospect of becoming raw material for their boss's next spell or experiment if they should happen to die on the job. Evil clerics may welcome a necromancer, but most would consider this at best a mixed blessing. No, nobody is likely to raise a monument to their favorite necromancer, name a building after her, or sing her praises in the centuries to come.

If a necromancer seeks fame, it will only come from her fellows in the Art. These she can impress with her latest creation, her daring research, her newest discovery. It follows that to impress each other, the necromancers must be organized in some way.

Money

As for money, how does a struggling young necromancer use her powers for gain without becoming infamous? Ghouls and zombies may be a cheap manpower solution, but somebody is certain to notice that dead Aunt Berthilde is being used to haul bricks at the local construction site. Thus, there are few instances of necromancers profiting financially from their skills. True, the local lord may keep a necromancer in his household, especially if said lord has a less-than-sterling character. And some necromancers have managed to create unsavory protection rackets using their undead minions as their thugs. But these schemes are usually short-lived, either brought down by the authorities or rival gang-lords.

In some case the rare successful moneymaking scheme transforms the proud necromancer into a tawdry medium,

using her powers to conjure up departed loved ones for grieving and hopefully wealthy customers. Aside from the indignities often encountered in such a lowly racket, such necromancers often walk a fine line between what is considered acceptable by polite society and what lies beyond the pale. It is one thing to contact your dead mother's departed spirit and speak with her; it is quite another to see her dead and rotting corpse heave itself forth from the grave for a little *tête-a-tête*.

On the whole, a necromancer is not likely to get rich selling her services to others—or least not rich and long-lived. Luckily, few if any necromancers are in it for the cash. A necromancer who indulges in grave-robbing is after the corpse, not the accompanying trinkets. To make money as a necromancer requires protection and patrons. In other words, organization.

Some Background on the College

Before you can go into how necromancers of the Secret College organize and operate, you first have to know what conditions, obstacles, and hazards they operate under—where they live, something of the history of their homeland, the people who surround them, and the prejudices, hatreds, and laws that constrain them. They cannot be described in a vacuum since so much of what they are depends on the world around them. Just as you can't have tomb raiders without knowing something about the people who built the tombs, similarly you can't have necromancers without putting some thought into the past whose secrets they so diligently plunder.

At the same time what works for your campaign may not work for another. Flexibility is necessary here, and you are encouraged to take what you like and modify the rest.

The Assumptions

The Secret College is mostly set within the City and its immediate surroundings. The city might be Freeport, Atlantis, Londinium, or Varsal on the Black River. The name is unimportant and hereafter it will only be called the City. It is a place of between 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants (a small city, large city, or metropolis—see *DMG* page 137) somewhere near, but not quite on, the frontier, a few days' ride from unsettled lands. The weather is temperate—sunny and damp in summer, cold and snowy in winter. It sits on the banks of a good-sized body of water (a large river or a lake or arm of the sea), and a bleak dankness creeps up from the water on autumn nights. It is sufficient to say there is a port with a steady flow of trade. The surrounding land is farmland broken by wild tangles of woods of oak, chestnut, and fir. Further away are low, nestling mountains where some desultory mines and quarries allow miners to chisel out poor existences.

These details are unimportant except to create a sense of place, a foundation for the imagination to build upon.

The local noble is a Lord of some importance. He does not have the freedom to dictate at his whim, but neither is he so constrained by outside forces that he cannot interpret justice according to his will. The City is part of a greater kingdom or empire, but the reins are slack and so long as the taxes are

Power

Finally, there is power. If someone doesn't care how he or she becomes powerful, what he or she must sacrifice or who gets hurt, then necromancy might be a good career path. The greatest necromancers can gain truly awesome power over life and death itself. It is a precarious power, though; power based on fear and terror. It is not respect but craven obedience from the living or mindless servitude from the dead. Given such a choice, confronted by such evil, it is natural for folk to rebel, to seek out their oppressor and destroy her. Those who see no wrong in the evil nature of the choice—foul priests, sinister cultists, certain Outsiders, and those who aspire to undeath—are far from trustworthy. As allies, their aid is limited by their self-interests. Those necromancers seeking power must take care lest their power wane and their enemies close in or their subjects rebel.

paid, trade flows, the people remain calm, and complaints are few or far between, those with greater authority do not interfere. The Lord's subjects generally consider him fair and just, but not kind. He is stern and unforgiving toward his enemies, generous and watchful of his allies. He is ambitious, but prudent.

Lurking in the Shadows

Within the City are all classes and groups of people—mostly peaceful and law-abiding, but with a underworld of beggars, thieves, and scoundrels. At night, most folk sleep with little fear but wisely avoid certain dark places. Evil cults are not tolerated, but their shrines and temples can be found nonetheless. Wizards and sorcerers are welcome so long as they mind their spells. The population is mostly human, with significant dwarf, elf, halfling, and gnome minorities, but there is also a smattering of others: half-orc adventurers, gnoll traders, ogre bodyguards, and more. The countryside is not perfectly at peace. There are bandits and brigands. There are madmen and rebels. Plots are hatched against the Lord and the Empire, but few go anywhere. Everything focuses on the City, it being the intellectual center of the region. It has produced many notable scholars, poets, scholars, and lords. There is no shame in being from the City.

This then is the world of the Secret College—neither light nor dark, good nor unkind.

A History of Necromancy

As important as knowing the place is to know what has shaped it; history ancient to modern that has played its role too in shaping the Secret College. Why, after all, is the College "secret" unless events in the past had required it? No one goes underground just for the fun of it. The past shapes the present, defines who may be friend and who may be foe, what may be done openly and what must be kept hidden.

The history here is meant to be a source of ideas. Names, places, circumstances, and all are intended to be flexible, subject to whatever changes you, the gamemaster, wish, provided you even make use of them at all.



Ancient Times (and Before)

The first reanimation of dead flesh occurred in a time before memory, in the prehistory when the power of magic was first harnessed. Some scholars believe necromancy was the first school mastered, predating even divination. The first ones—be they elves, humans, or some older, long-lost race—gathered around their fires and in the darkness. There were some who sought out spells of beauty and wonder, and then there were others who sought to know forbidden lore. Perhaps it was a bereaved mother willing to do anything to revive her dead child. Perhaps an ancient shaman, denied by the spirits, set out on his own to delay his passing by mastering the secrets of life and death. Perhaps a people now lost to history, their god slain, who turned to dark necromancy to fill the void and seek to recall him. Curiously enough, the most common legends for necromancy's origin all place the blame soundly on humans. The other races point out that the majority of the undead are human in origin. Ergo, the argument goes, humans must have some special affinity to the dark art and have been the first to dabble in necromancy.

Against the Natural Order

Whatever the cause, noble or vile, the manipulation of death defied the natural order and could not avoid being viewed as evil by those who accepted the cycle of life and death. Necromancy was an affront to the power of the gods, the sanctity of life, the souls of the dead. Thus even from the dimmest past, necromancy carried associations of impiety that over time grew to be a mantle of evil and corruption, something best unspoken of, pretended not to exist.

But wizards and their thirsts for knowledge were not to be denied, no matter what dark paths that knowledge took them down. Antediluvian texts, spells, items, and artifacts carry with

them the names of some of these necromancers, the signs of their deeds, accomplishments, and terrors.

The Empire of Ashes

The most infamous of these was a wizard known only as The Ghoul. What he was and his true name are unknown: he is only called The Ghoul in the histories that come down to us from that era. There it is said The Ghoul—despite his name, a living man, at least to appearances—came out of the desert, promising armies and power to one Duke Hamur. Ambitious and fearful of his rivals, the Duke accepted. That night a great spell flowed out from the palace, and the dead walked. The buried clawed their way up out of the graveyards, the drowned rose from the lakes, and silently they stumbled back to their homes to embrace their families and take them into the land of death. When the dawn came, the Duke had his armies—legions of undead created from the slaughter of his own people. Furious at the betrayal, the Duke attacked The Ghoul himself—to no avail. Before that day ended, the Duke joined his own armies as another mindless soldier.

The Ghoul Marches

With his new legions, The Ghoul struck at neighboring baronies, counties, and duchies. As soldiers went, his undead were poor warriors: uncreative, inflexible, and slow. But they did not flee and for every man they killed a new creature joined their ranks. Every land they conquered was harvested for more bodies to mindlessly serve. The Ghoul's armies had no concerns for casualties, food, disease, or comforts.

The Ghoul had other powers, too. In the wake of his armies came a night blackness that clung to the land and swallowed out the sun. The cold eyes of the stars looked down day and night. Plants weakened and grew pallid, light-strangled into ghastly forms. The most sinister night creatures stalked the land, freed

from the fear of sunlight. Cults of murder and death found comfort in the gloom. These The Ghoul welcomed as human agents he could use to carry out tasks his undead minions could not. His land grew to swallow whole nations and became known as the Empire of Ashes.

A Gruesome Bid for Power

But conquest was only a means, not the necromancer's goal. He conquered merely for unlimited access to raw materials and freedom to pursue his ultimate goal, not earthly power. The Ghoul was creating an artifact, a ziggurat of flesh, blood, and bone that would focus magic of world-spanning power. Its exact purpose unknown but deeply feared, it slowly rose at the center of his black empire, damp and rotting, constructed by those he conquered and built with the raw materials of their own kin.

But before his purpose could be realized, The Ghoul was slain by the great elven hero Windgrass. His body was cut into pieces, which were cast into the flames. Then his scorched bones were ground to dust and scattered in the darkest realms of Hell. Every piece of his handiwork—his incomplete ziggurat, his laboratories, his experiments, his spellbooks, his notes, and his legions—was destroyed. Slowly the cursed ground regrew until no man could say for certain where The Ghoul had once reigned.

The Ghoul's Legacy

Ancient though he was, The Ghoul's deeds still resonate today. Forever after necromancers, even the most good-hearted, would be tinged with an aura of revulsion. Stories of The Ghoul are told to terrify children to this very day. The truly unwholesome (by art or madness) are dubbed "The Ghoul's progeny"—a name applied by some to all corporeal undead. Political ramifications exist as well. Diplomatically, to raise armies of the dead, even a single legion, is a violation of the proper conduct of war and is certain to sway opinion against the transgressor.

Remnants of Evil

Secondly, there are those though who say that not all The Ghoul's handiwork was destroyed, that bits and pieces escaped the cleansing wrath. Local legend says the site of The Ghoul's ziggurat was somewhere in mountains outside the City (some say within the City itself)—but there are tales like this all throughout the land. The Ghoul's ziggurat is as elusive as lost dwarven gold mines or fairy rings. However, sometimes dry, brittle undead with great powers are found in the area's most ancient ruins, those that date back to that dark time. These undead are like no others that can be created at this day. So perhaps the tales are not completely wrong.

Scribbles of a Fiend

It is also said that scraps of The Ghoul's notebooks escaped the flames. Filled with crabbed notes and strange diagrams, these sheets are more precious than life itself (since possession of them is a capital crime) to some necromancers, even though the skin-parchments seem to possess no magical powers themselves. Nonetheless, The Ghoul's writings were mad genius that guide and direct research into undiscovered new areas. Those who use these notes almost always create new spells of great power. But more than a few of these researchers have also gone mad, making these relics a dubious possession.

An Abomination's Ashes

Finally, there are his ashes. Although his spirit has proven beyond recall or resurrection, necromancers believe The Ghoul's ashes are the key component to recreating some of his most powerful spells, particularly the black sky of undeath that created his legions. Getting his ashes is the trick though, since they were scattered in the depths of Hell, where they are said to now be in the possession of an infernal lord (or two). Every decade or so another necromancer goes "ash-hunting." Most never return. Some return broken and terrified. A few come back triumphant—and crazed. Certain they are destined to regain The Ghoul's glory, they only succeed in wild, reckless displays of power that hasten their own destruction (this is the price paid for trusting devils—after all, should any necromancer succeed, no more ambitious supplicants will come to their infernal palace doors).

The Necro-Kings

With the fall of the necromantic monster came a time of troubles and naked ambition as the surrounding lands rushed in to seize the spoils. Almost instantly several Necro-Kings proclaimed their dynasties, all claiming the mantle of the mighty Ghoul. Some said they were his apprentice (he trained none), some his heir (he sired none). At least one, the moderately successful Molocai I, claimed he was the undead general of The Ghoul's armies, a pretense he maintained for several years before he was unmasked. Like the Ptolemies and others who set up their own domains after Alexander the Great's death, the Necro-Kings carved out petty kingdoms from the corpse of The Ghoul's empire.

The Weakness of Mortal Minds

But the Necro-Kings were weak and petty, mere mortals compared to The Ghoul's unholy might. None knew the secrets to raise The Ghoul's legions, although the secrets of creating the Flayed Men and skin cloaks (see pages 61 and 66) were discovered by Baltos Corpse-Hand. Furthermore, the lands they fought over were dead, barren wastelands. Although the darkness had receded with the Ghoul's death, what was left was a blighted landscape. Crops did not grow, trees were twisted in death agonies, livestock—where it could be found—was barren or gave birth to monstrosities.

It was a time of constant warfare as the Necro-Kings fought each other for supremacy. The barren land was ravaged further as the Living Kings (those who spurned the necromantic goals) united and marched to wipe these scourges from the land. One by one, the Necro-Kings fell, victim to their own experiments, treachery from their fellow Necro-Kings, or the vengeance of the Living Kings, until the land was at last cleansed of the undead yoke.

The Mark of the Kings

Though dim in power compared to The Ghoul, the Necro-Kings left more to mark their passing. The remnants of several ancient stronghold palaces have been discovered, though not well explored, and more are rumored to exist. Several spells of the Art, such as *puppet master*, *bone machine*, and the various *legion spells* (*legion of skeletons*, *legion of zombies*, *legion of shadows*, *legion of ghouls*, *legion of wights*, *legion of mummies*)

are from those days. More than a few magical devices suitable only for necromancers date from that time. It is accepted wisdom that these were looted from the tombs of these Necro-Kings—and that more than a few of these items carry their maker's curse.

In the abstract, the Necro-Kings and the damage they caused have ingrained an abhorrence for the art among the royal households of today—certainly as far as their own kin are concerned. Any study of necromancy would be disgraceful, an act below the proper standing of a nobleman. Necromancy is for the lower classes, definitely not proper for any scion of the Living Kings. Yet, although they will not admit it, the nobles with their intrigues and ambitions occasionally need the dark arts of the necromancer. Consequently, most noble households have a "pet" necromancer as a retainer, often some ambitious and unscrupulous commoner who has seized a quick path to fortune. Needless to say, as much as they need them, most noblemen have no trust or even respect for these opportunists. They may need necromancers, but they do not love them.

The Inquisition and Expulsion

The victory of the Living Kings marked the beginnings of dark times—at least for those few surviving necromancers. Peace did not come immediately; who would be sole king of the victors required more years of war and intrigue, but eventually peace and unity came to the land. And with peace came judgment and retribution. At the insistence of the high priests and bishops of the Council of Harmony (a synod of the good-aligned temples) King Chaldris I issued the first Necromantic Censure, a sweeping set of laws and edicts to outlaw the practice of necromancy from land. The practice and teaching of necromancy was prohibited. Possession of animated dead was forbidden. Trading in mortal remains was subject to imprisonment. The purchase, sale, trade, and even possession of various magical and non-magical items of a necromantic nature (scrolls, books, wands, grave earth, salts, potions, etc.) was forbidden. Even undertakers had to tread carefully, lest they be accused and condemned as "necromancers."

The Inquisition

The task of detecting and discovering necromancers, who were assumed to be hiding throughout the land, was given to the Royal Arcane, the minister in charge of magical affairs. He in turn selected Seven High Inquisitors, one from every other School of Magic (see *PH* page 54), to root out the entrenched foe. Their powers of arrest and interrogation could only be challenged by the Royal Arcane, the Council of Harmony, or the king himself. The sentences for necromancy were handed down in the Magus Court by the Merciful and Just Lord Judges of the Arcane—all Inquisitor-Mages.

The Magus Court

The Magus Court was a subdepartment in the Imperial bureaucracy, under the command of the Seven High Inquisitors. Since the Seven did not have time to prosecute and hear all necromancy cases themselves, various secondary offices were created beneath them that collectively became known as the Magus Court. There was the Office of Indictments headed by the Inquisitor-General, who oversaw the work of the calificadoros (wizard-barristers who formally tried cases of necromancy in the name of the Emperor), their clerks, and the Censors. The

Pleadings was a lesser court for hearing simple cases involving commoners. It was judged by Commissioners, wizards appointed to the post, who often used it as a stepping stone to a greater career in politics. Greatly feared, and rightly so, was the Warden of the Granite Tower, since he was responsible for the uglier parts of the Inquisition—imprisonment, extracting confessions, compelling witnesses to speak, and carrying out sentences. Under him were the Deputy Inquisitors, torturers, and executioners. Finally, there was the Chancellery Court where the Seven High Inquisitors sat and heard cases involving the nobility and others of exceptional notoriety.

Paranoia Strikes Deep

A simple accusation by a neighbor was all that was needed to arrest a man. Those arrested were automatically presumed guilty unless evidence came forward during their interrogation (by words, torture, and spells) that demonstrated innocence. For the guilty the sentences were simple—death, followed by destruction of the body and a scattering of the remains so that little or no hope of resurrection remained. Thousands of suspected necromancers—sages, madmen, fiends, evil high priests with a sorcerous bent, hedge wizards, seers, the misunderstood, and the unfortunate innocents were all dragged before the courts and summarily sentenced. Thousands died, their bodies burnt and their bones ground to dust.

A Time of Turmoil

The Inquisition lasted for two hundred years, give or take some decades. Kings and then emperors reaffirmed the laws of Censure, strengthening and expanding them. Finally, Emperor Auvas II issued the Decree of Hadris. The Inquisition, which for all its power had always been "temporary," became official. No necromancer was to be tolerated within the borders of the Empire. Those practicing the Art were given a brief period to



leave, a small kindness forced out of recognition that some hidden necromancers were still powerful enough to cause trouble. After this grace period elapsed, any who remained were automatically condemned to death.

The Expulsion

This was the Expulsion. More than a few families, great and small, quickly packed and left; some guilty, some innocent but fearful of being falsely condemned like so many before them. The exiles found homes other lands, for the most part taking care to vanish behind false names and false professions lest they invite more trouble. This was wise, as it proved, for Inquisitors made careful note of who departed and, after the grace period expired, dispatched many a paladin to follow and dispatch the refugees, when they could locate them. A few places made exiled necromancers welcome, though in an unwholesome way—theocracies of dark religions, ambitious and immoral princelings, and grim non-human tribes who wanted their secrets. In other places, they were only marginally welcome, tolerated so long as they did not display or admit to their arts. The City, at that time a freehold, was one of these.

Scars of Fanaticism

While the Magus Court was greatly feared in its time, its power and influence has waned immensely in the years since the Enthronement of Reason (see below). Most of the offices still exist but are titular only, with little authority. Today the High Inquisitor offices are sinecures, granted by the Emperor to favorite nobles who show only the vaguest of magical skill, and the Chancellery Court simply rubberstamps the judgments of the Censors. The calificadors of the Office of Indictments are little more than a collection of musty scholars who hairsplit necromantic definitions and ancient law while the Commissioners of the Pleadings now deal with all manner of petty magical disputes. The Warden of the Granite Tower remains feared, as with all jailers, since her prison is the notorious end for the Emperor's enemies and not just necromancers. But the true power lies with the Inquisitor-General, now chosen by tradition from the Censors. The Censors have expanded their role and now seek out all internal enemies of the Empire. Only a fool would cross the Inquisitor-General, the master of the Emperor's secret police.

A Legacy of Persecution

More than ancient events like The Ghoul and the Necro-Kings, the Inquisition and Expulsion has shaped the Secret College and made it what it is. To this day, in the heartland of the Empire the public instruction of necromancy—through the Arcanums (approved colleges of magical learning) or private tutors—is a capital crime. Public practice of necromancy can be punished by imprisonment or bondage as a slave on the imperial galleys. Those who own censured texts without an imperial license can have their properties seized and given over to the emperor.

The people, in turn, have created elaborate customs, superstitions, spells, and prejudices around death, the dead, the undead, and all things necromantic. While those of the City do not share these harsh traditions, visitors from the old lands of the Empire do—and many of them are officials in the service of the Emperor and have the power to force their views on the citizens of the City.

The Enthronement of Reason

With the Expulsion, the fear that the Necro-Kings would return faded. Freed from war and internal strife, the Empire entered a golden age of growth and learning, known as the Enthronement of Reason. Its borders grew, swallowing up neighbors and expanding into uncharted lands.

As the world did not remain static, the City, once a freehold, eventually came under the sway of the Empire. It was (and is) a distant outpost—large enough to be important to the empire, but far enough away to retain a sense of independence. The Empire's laws arrived with her legions, but the laws were tempered by custom, culture, and common sense. The exiles who had lived for centuries in relative peace were once again under the harsh laws of the Empire, but it was a harshness tempered by time and distance. And so the past reaches today.

After all, the Inquisition and Expulsion are more than 300 years in the past. Vigilance has gone lax, bigotry has lessened. The land and the threats facing it changed. These changes are reflected today. Every noble has a necromancer in his livery or knows where he can lay his hands on one. The various arcane colleges have a few rare necromantic tomes, some saved from the fires of the Inquisitors and others imported at great expense. There are merchants who can, for a price, obtain the salts, earths, bones, and ashes needed for the Dark Art. It's all done with a wink and a nod. Everybody *knows* there are necromancers, but as long as they mind their place, no one greatly minds. It is the Enthronement of Reason.

Reason's Price

While the City must abide by the laws of the Empire with its bans on necromantic study and display, it balances those laws against its own history of sheltering the exiles in the past. Necromancers can live and work in the City, but it is a wary calling, filled with the risk of denunciation and arrest. Tolerance has its limits and cannot defend a necromancer from the law. Hence, most necromancers do not openly advertise their calling.

The Taint of Necromancy

Old prejudices die hard. Calling a wizard a necromancer is a grave insult. Rumors of necromancy can destroy a career and more than one ambitious wizard has been brought down by these vile whispering campaigns. The mere taint of necromancy is scandalous to upper-class society, particularly if one has ambitions for a career in the Empire. Only barbaric foreign emissaries admit to being necromancers or having one in their retinue. Thus, most necromancers to this day conceal their activities and pose as non-specialized wizards, sorcerers, or even as unmagical merchants. Necromantic texts, scrolls, and magical devices remain exorbitantly expensive, given the hazards involved. Spell components can only be purchased by those with connections to the black market (see the section of Graverobbing, beginning on page 48).

The Founding of the College

During this self-proclaimed "renaissance of reason," the necromancers of the City, safely outside the Empire's borders, began to experiment with new freedoms, allowing themselves to be bolder and more outspoken, daring to once again

reassert themselves in the world. Then the Empire arrived, and to express such boldness was to invite death. Still, the necromancers were not willing to surrender their hard-won progress and return to the threat of the Inquisition and the laws of Censure. It was then that a wizard named Zerbus, unwilling to return to those dark ages, gathered his friends and vanished. Some turned up dead shortly thereafter. Others were never seen again. All were known or suspected necromancers. Suddenly, in a single stroke, it seemed the necromancers of the City were no more.

The Secret College is Born

In truth, Zerbus and his comrades had not vanished but gone to ground, the “deaths” having been easy for necromancers to stage. They were still in the City, transformed in face and manner, but necromancers still. They still needed laboratories, libraries, materials, and fresh bodies—the gruesome requirements of their art. At first it was a room here, a cellar there, a trunk full of books, and midnight raids to the cemeteries. With time the rooms became suites, the cellars were secretly dug into catacombs, and the midnight raids turned over to the professional grave robbers. Quietly and discretely word of their efforts got around to other necromancers, those whose true profession had never been suspected by outsiders, some of whom petitioned for access to these hidden resources. Without anyone having planned it, the Secret College was born.

In the century and a half since, the Secret College has adopted more formalized rules, acquired arcane customs, and weathered treachery and disaster. Through all of this, it has become wiser, stronger, and more resourceful.

Recent Events

The past few decades have seen a number of notable necromantic events, many quite notorious. The creation of a new spell is a matter of importance to necromancers only. Acts of grotesque murder, grave robbing, and other depravities gain far greater and less desirable attention and are remembered for years to come. Thus, most of the publicly known recent events worth noting are notorious, since these are the ones that affect the members of the Secret College’s standing in the outside world.

The Death Mist

The most notorious of these events is fortunately the oldest in recent memory. Forty years ago the City woke to a terrifying discovery—several blocks of a seedy district near the waterfront lay under a dismal green-black haze. Within it there was no sign of life. Those curious and intrepid souls who ventured into the mystery collapsed after a dozen or so yards and had to be dragged to safety by others at the risk of their own lives. For some it was too late, while others barely lived, weak and pallid. They described the mist as bone-chilling, a miasma that seemed to suck the very life from their souls. Adventuring types fared better than normal citizens, but most suffered as if touched by a negative energy drain. The mist clung to the area for several hours before a hastily assembled team of wizards and sorcerers determined it was magical in origin and managed to *dispel* it away.

The Zone of Death

Within the area of the cloud, all was dead—people, cats, rats, beetles, even lice. There was no violence save the expressions of grim repose on their corpses. The cause of this mass death has remained a mystery to this day. However, those in the know are certain it was the work of Voscond d’Aersuel, a necromancer who lived in the dead zone. Although he died in the mist, officials seized his notes and materials and have kept them locked up ever since. Unconfirmed reports say he was experimenting to distill the essences of life and death when something went wrong, releasing the draining mist. There are even rumors that Voscond had partially succeeded before the disaster and that a potion, the very bottled essence of life itself, was also seized by the lords. Just what went wrong and what exactly was created no one will say, but many a necromancer has since sought a way to recreate Voscond’s accident under more controlled circumstances. The ability to conjure up a life-draining cloud—and possibly bottle the raw energy of life it drained is a grim but wondrous prize.

A Lingering Taint

Today, the death zone has been repopulated. Never a fashionable district, its ill repute has clung to it and it has become even seedier than before. Nonetheless, it is a popular district for necromancers who seek to unravel the mystery of Voscond’s creation.

The Festering Hand

Eighteen years ago, one Count Albersis of Farland, a barbaric place well outside the Empire, arrived in the City. Vigorous and personable, if somewhat rough around the edges, the count quickly ingratiated himself into the highest circles of nobility. He had the right credentials; breeding (albeit exotic), money, good looks, bachelorhood, bravado, and a generous purse. For several seasons he was at the heart of the social whirl.

Noble Prey

At the same time there was a rise in the mortality rate among the nobility. Some deaths were no more than expected. The one-hundred and twenty-eight year-old Baron of Guisse passed quietly in his sleep. The young Viscount of Tourlaine was thrown from his horse and died before the clergy could be summoned. Other deaths were not so ordinary. Sir Varenfeld of the Inner Chamber contracted a wasting disease that resisted all incantations and prayers for its cure. Lady Hornsby, a woman who had been an icon of moral stability for thirty-eight years, became deranged, insisting that spirits were persecuting her, until she finally hurled herself from the North Tower to the rocks below. All were important members of the court.

Even these deaths would not have raised suspicions except for one alarming fact. No matter what resources of church or arcane arts were brought to bear, no matter how faithful the departed had been in life, no effort succeeded in returning them to life. Their souls were lost and could not be rejoined to the mortal world. Investigations were launched and “the Festering Hand” came to light. The Hand was a society of sorcerous assassins, trained in the crudest of necromantic arts. It was an insult to call these killers necromancers, just as no man would call a plowhorse a steeplechase champion.

Guilty As Charged

In the end, the trail led to Count Albersis. He was not just a charming dilettante, he was the organizer of the Festering Hand and a necromancer of some skill. He trained the others, provided them with scrolls and potions, and assigned them their targets. Before the constables could arrest him, Albersis fled, no doubt back to his homeland and to the honors of his barbaric king. In his wake, the Empire cracked down on the lords of the City, demanding greater vigilance against the necromantic threat. It was a dark time for the Secret College. Many old arrangements and understandings—the blind eye here, the quiet payment there—were abruptly cancelled. Various minor or unpopular members were arrested, accused, and executed; the more powerful warned not to make any mistakes or they would be next. A few of the College's carefully gathered libraries were burned, the less well-guarded of their secret laboratories smashed. Worst of all, rumors of the Secret College's existence began to spread amongst the populace, creating an atmosphere of fear and mistrust. Every strange character renting a lonely room or who kept a trunkload of books was now suspect. It is a suspicion that lurks to this day."

The Factor of Varnow

The most recent event of note occurred three years ago, but it has remained so secret that the full story is known only to the members of the Secret College itself, and not even to all of them. It happened in the Varnow Quarter, a once fashionable district discreetly sliding into disrepair and penury. Its inhabitants were a collection of émigrés of all different races, ethnicities, and national backgrounds who barely had the means to make ends meet. Foreigners to the City, many of them only haltingly acquainted with the Common tongue, they elected one of their number as their representative in dealing with the city government and other local groups. This representative (or "Factor"), Herisc Skaerscaj, was no ordinary man, but was a member of the Secret College. Quiet and reclusive, a man who shunned the bloody or cruel path of more ruthless necromancers, his fascination was the metaphysics of life and death, the abstract and the theoretical.

Just Reasons, Rash Actions

As Factor, Herisc was responsible for his neighbors. Foreigners to the City, they were the prey of thugs, thieves, and bigots. Unable to interest the constables in the plight of his people, Herisc decided he must put his theories to practice. Inexperienced in the practical business of necromancy, especially the business of obtaining the necessary bodies and parts, the Factor took all the tasks upon himself. He selected the specimens, tracked them down, and killed them, making sure first that every one was worthy of death (in his eyes, at least). With his raw materials gathered—blood, flesh, and bone—the Factor set to work. He had the inspiration that only an impractical man could have, one whose theories were at last to be put to the test. He created a force, a thing that was unnamed. It might have been a golem, except it was not solid, instead changing shape to suit its task. It was an animated shapeshifter filled with a burning passion to judge and, having judged, to pass sentence.

The Nightstalker

At first his creation pleased Herisc, patrolling the nighttime streets and carrying out its sentences on the criminals who preyed on the quarter. But then once they were destroyed, the

creation expanded its sights on the folk who lived there. There were no innocents in by its inflexible, inhuman standards—the cold logic of a construct that the living are unworthy of life itself. Hence it found all living things guilty of some crime, and punished the "guilty" harshly and cruelly. As the innocent deaths mounted, the Factor, alarmed, confronted his creation, certain that he could control what he had made. The creation was not so easily contained and, judging the Factor to be guilty, it condemned him to death. The pair struggled, the Factor seeking to unbind the forces he had bound, the creation seeking to fulfill its twisted logic. In the end the old philosopher was no match for the powers of death he had assembled. The creature exacted the harshest of all its judgments, tearing him to shreds and splattering his remains about the laboratory where it was born.

Hunting the Hunter

Herisc's death moved the Secret College to action. Alarmed that the authorities would discover his handiwork and so bring ruin on them all, the necromancers went to hunt. For weeks they stalked the night and it stalked them. There were clashes, traps, near-captures, and close escapes. Several members of the College were gravely wounded in the hunt and more innocent victims fell before the creation was captured. The College wanted the creation alive, for no matter how terrible it had been its uniqueness made it precious to them. The Factor had created something never seen before, something of great power. His notes perished with him, so the creation was the only clue that remained to what he had done and how he did it. If its creation could be unraveled and improved, it would be a powerful spell and a grand instrument for terror or revenge or justice.

So it is that to this day Herisc's creation remains sealed in one of the most secure hidden laboratories of the College. There is coldly waits, plotting the day when it can be free once more to exact its judgments on those who have wronged it.

Local Attitudes

Although the Secret College is not known to the majority of the populace, everyone has opinions about necromancers. Few if any of these opinions can be considered good. From simple superstitious fear to calculating opportunism, necromancers see the darkest sides of those around them.

The Peasantry

For the peasants who live outside the city, the attitude is fear, a strong, simple fear that feeds suspicion and hatred and can erupt into violence. The peasants for the most part sullenly avoid necromancers whenever possible and want nothing to do with them. A person doesn't even have to be a necromancer, only look and act the way the average peasant thinks a necromancer should, to provoke this reaction. A cadaverous countenance, skulking about at night, strange noises from a tower or manor-house, and mysterious disturbances at the local cemetery are all enough evidence to brand any stranger as a necromancer. Once so branded, the stranger almost never gains the trust of the villagers. After all, no one wants his or her parents reanimated and wandering the village at night.

More important, if avoidance won't work or if there is an opportunity, a group of peasants may take matters in their

own hands and eliminate the necromancer. Ambush and murder are favored over the colorful but more suicidal pitchforks-and-torches march on the spellcaster's stronghold. A wounded necromancer or one lulled off-guard by the timidity of the locals is often an opportunity for removal. Denied such an opportunity, the local peasants may indulge in a spot of arson if the necromancer unwisely leaves her tower unguarded for extended periods (as, historically, happened to Dr. John Dee, the associate of the necromancer Edward Kelly, whose estate and library at Mortlake were ransacked by his neighbors during his absence abroad).

The Townsfolk

The citizens of the City like to believe they're more urbane than their country cousins. They point to their tolerance of necromancers, their understanding that it takes all types, their sophistication. In truth, they fear necromancers no less than the rural folks. Meeting one brings on the shivers and a profound desire to be elsewhere. Unlike the peasantry, however, the townsfolk can get themselves elsewhere. It's not tolerance, it's just easier to avoid the unpleasant in the crowds of the city. It's easier for the necromancer to disappear and easier for other people to let her. Besides, in the City you never know who might be necromancer's friends. There are always rogues, evil clerics, barbarians, and mercenaries ready to take her side. Of course, a necromancer should remember that for every scoundrel there's a hero and those who hate her have their resources, too. She cannot be too invisible in the City. Discretion is the better part on not getting run through by a too-enthusiastic do-gooder.

The Clergy

Accepted knowledge says the clerics of the good gods hate necromancers, while those of evil gods approve of them. Of course, it is not as simple as that. While it is true for good, the evil gods (and their factotums) are not so united. The God of Orcs has little need for such weaklings. The God of Slaughter finds them amusing in the short term, but essentially opposed to the chaos he is so fond of spreading—the restoring of even unlife is a form of order, after all. The God of Tyranny welcomes necromancers as a tool for war, support his armies in their ultimate triumph. The God of Secrets, presumed by some to be undead himself, has no special care for necromancers, who after all pry into the secrets of the grave. Of all the major evil gods, only the God of Death and the Goddess of Death and Magic welcome necromancers and encourage their clerics to aid and ally with them.

Fellow Arcane Spellcasters

There is no uniformity of opinion among the wizard community, as might be expected from a group notorious for their willful independence. Some despise necromancers on moral principles—meddling with the forces of life and death is wrong and will only lead to disaster. Some respect the quest for knowledge no matter how distasteful the path—for them, necromancy is science and all science must be explored. Moral qualms are just the constructs of the superstitious, not the realm of rational men. Some share the lust for power at whatever price—necromancy is but a way, though maybe not the most effective way, to gain power and wealth. It's a dangerous path

but can yield great rewards. Some just don't care—the affairs of others, even the concerns of the world, never enter into their thoughts.

Sorcerers tend to be a little more sympathetic in the abstract, having experienced what it's like to be viewed with suspicion by an entrenched hierarchy. This does not make them approve of what necromancers do; it simply makes them more likely to judge on a case-by-case basis.

Bards, with their focus on interaction with others and interpersonal skills, think necromancers are crazy to stay away from adoring crowds to muck about with body parts in clammy crypts. Bards and necromancers have no innate hostility, they simply completely fail to understand each other, as each places little importance on what the other values most.

The Authorities

In the City, the nobles are of two minds concerning necromancers.

The Bureaucracy

Officials of the Empire are charged with finding and arresting these dangerous spellcasters. It's their job to enforce the laws of the Empire, and neglecting that duty is bad for an official career. Nonetheless, the level of diligence varies. Ambitious Censors (the office most responsible for rooting out necromancers) rely on spies and snitches, raid the exotic shops where magical tools are sold, burn suspicious books, patrol the cemeteries, and employ diviners to sniff out the auras of necromancy. Others are content to file reports and keep a watchful eye on the City, lumbering into action only when there is a need to show that the Empire is vigilant against all threats. Their attitude is to leave well enough alone. Why stir up trouble? Let the town seem peaceful, which will only please their superiors. Finally, there are those whose blind eyes have a price. Pay it—yearly, monthly, or whatever—and these officials see no necromancers. That is at least the theory. The trouble with corrupt officials is they are all too willing to betray those they serve, whether it be the Empire or those who have bought their services. The best protection against possible double-dealing is for the necromancer to make sure there she has evidence of their treachery, so that her exposure would ruin them as well. The Secret College makes regular bribes to several authorities, local and imperial, and it holds evidence of all their corruption. The Secret College was not founded by fools, after all.

The Old Money

The other set of nobles, the old families who control large portions of the City but are not officials of the Empire, have an entirely different attitude. For centuries, necromancers have lived semi-openly among them. The old families all had a necromancer or two in their pocket, sometimes the same one for generations, and they're not about to give up the family necromancer just because the Empire arrived and thinks it's now calling the shots. These old families still have their connections to members of the Secret College and still call upon their services from time to time. Of course, should any necromancer become too dangerous or too independent, these same nobles have no qualms about eliminating the risk. Better to lose a useful necromancer than risk the attention of the Censors and the wrath of the Emperor.

Friends in High Places

A few lords and ladies of the upper classes are also members of the Secret College. While some of these are honorary—powerful nobles having no necromantic talents but being allowed to indulge their interests as a special considerations by the College—a few are practicing members. These few take great pains to keep their true identities hidden, even from their fellow necromancers. They have much further to fall should their activities ever be exposed. They are also among the most powerful members of the College and have great influence over the activities of all the members.

Punishments

So far the descriptions of the Secret College may make them seem like some pleasantly fraternal country club. This view overlooks the real power and potential malevolence of the organization. The Secret College is composed of necromancers, and necromancers deal in death. Many of its members are nothing less than a collection of evil, death-loving, murderous wizards. They shun the traditional reverence for the dead and think nothing of committing blasphemous deeds for their own profit, amusement, or curiosity. If faced with a shortage of materials, many of them will harvest their own. They inflict pain, drain energy, and create horrors—it is their nature, their need. A few of its members are neither evil nor destructive, but even they are dangerous to a high degree because of the forces they meddle with as part of their researches.

Consequently, although necromancers are tolerated in the City, there is no love for them. There are punishments for necromancy, Secret College or no Secret College. The punishments include all the following types.



Dissolution

The necromancer is cast into the Positive Energy Plane, where her body is dissolved into particles and spread throughout the plane. The juxtaposition of life energy and the accumulated death aura of the necromancer generally makes resurrection an impossibility (although it may just be the difficulty in gathering sufficient mortal remains to raise). This is generally the worst possible punishment, reserved for only the most egregious offenders.

Imprisonment

Killing necromancers can be a dicey thing, since this may only activate a *clone* spell or some other contingency. Therefore it is sometimes better to trap them alive for eternity, or at least a very long time. In severe cases a wizard may be called upon to cast *imprisonment* on the necromancer and hold her trapped, while the court destroys all records that contain the information necessary for her release (see *PH* page 217).

Execution and soul bind

A quick solution sometimes used by the Secret College against treasonous members is a simple execution or murder followed by the almost immediate casting of *soul bind*. The gem containing the necromancer's soul is then often sent to another (random) plane, making its recovery extremely difficult. Of course, the executioners are gambling that the victim does not have some other means of restoration or revenge in place (see *PH* page 254).

Bonding

A *geas* or *quest* is placed upon the necromancer to refrain from the practice, study, or pursuit of the art of necromancy. So long as the necromancer abides by the terms, no harm comes to her. However, if she attempts to learn necromantic spells, cast those spells, or use a necromantic item, she suffers the effects of the *geas*. This is generally considered a temporary punishment, since a *geas* can be undone (though not easily). Sometimes a second *geas* is placed on the first that restricts the necromancer from seeking release from the first *geas*. This punishment is often used when the necromancer has sufficient influence to avoid the death penalty, perhaps being the daughter of an important lord or wealthy merchant.

Branding

The prisoner may be branded with a gothic N on the cheek or forehead. The brand is then treated with a magical salve against transformation to prevent the mark from being hidden by magical means (such as *change self*). This punishment is usually reserved for lesser necromancers and lesser crimes.

Maiming

Though painful and grim, this punishment is meant as a deterrent and is considered relatively mild. Sometimes only a finger is removed, occasionally every other finger (the index and fourth from one hand and the thumb, middle, and little fingers from the other), sometimes a hand, and rarely both eyes are gouged out. It is well known that the lost limbs can be restored, but it is hoped that the pain of the process will convince the necromancer to change her ways in the future. Besides, the crowd loves it.

Chapter Six: The Secret College at Work

So much for the background into the history surrounding the Secret College; it is time to learn just how it works within the city. Who are the members? How are they recruited? Where do they meet? What resources do they have? These are the practical questions that must be answered before you, the DM, can introduce the Secret College (or something like it) into your campaign.

This material works equally well two ways. It can serve as the description of an NPC group, one that will serve as a foil to heroes, create plots they must foil, and provide a shadowy threat that is always good for atmosphere. Or it can be an organization player characters aspire to join, acceptance into which serves as a sign that they have “arrived” as forces to be reckoned with in the power structure of the city.

Rumor and Truth

It seems that when the Secret College is named every citizen in the City knows just what it is, but no two descriptions agree. For some it is just an evil collection of murderous cultists bent on the overthrow of the Empire. Others believe the tales of murder are exaggerated and that it is nothing more than a collection of doddering wizards with a taste for melodrama. Some liken it to a guild rather like that of the alchemists, others to the more sinister Thieves' Guild. Some even believe the Secret College is a fake, created by the Censors as a straw man—some nonexistent group that could be blamed for any mishap or disaster and thus justify the Censors' demands for ever more power.

Just what the Secret College is depends partly on your point of view—after all, its members regard it differently than the Censors. Fundamentally, it is a loose organization of clandestine necromancers who have pooled their resources for easier work and greater self-protection. The Secret College provides the members a way to share spellbooks, secure hidden laboratories, efficiently bribe officials, threaten citizens, enforce a code of silence, and alert each other of danger. The Secret College is also, surprisingly enough, a beneficent society, lending aid to the poor and oppressed, keeping the community quiet through both fear and generosity.

In some ways it is rather like the Mob—everyone is certain of its existence, but that existence is very difficult to prove. People fear it; no normal citizen wants to make an enemy of these necromancers. On the other hand, they turn to it in times of trouble because the Secret College can do things the authorities can't or won't. Having trouble with a greedy landlord? Cheated by an unloved merchant? Threatened by a corrupt constable? A word, a little gift, a favor owed—and the suddenly your problem is solved. Who, how, and why, no one asks but everyone knows. Itself oppressed, it aids others who are oppressed. Through these acts, the Secret College buys silence and cooperation from its neighbors.

The Censors, for their part, view the Secret College as an unwholesome if not blasphemous criminal organization that really should be uncovered and smashed for the good of the people. From their point of view, they are right—this cabal of necromancers is unhealthy for the City. Because of the Secret College, people get hurt, monsters lurk in dark places, and sometimes even important nobles are assassinated. The City would be healthier without them—but the poor and oppressed might not.

Membership

If the Secret College operates in the City, who are they? How do you recognize a member of this sinister group? How does one become a member? In fact, how do members even recognize each other? After all what good is a secret society if it is so secret that nobody can join or work together? Certainly there has to be a way, otherwise the Secret College would just be a legend and not a reality.

Who Can Join

The Secret College is not like a country club with card-carrying members who fork over annual dues. They don't all wear the old school tie and gather every Thursday for drinks and dinner. They don't publish an association newsletter or maintain an

alumni list. They don't even have a formal membership list—that would be too dangerous if the Censors ever discovered it. Members simply know who belongs and who does not.

Requirements for Membership

Obviously, a member of the Secret College meets certain requirements. First and foremost, it helps to be a necromancer. A secret society for necromancy has an inclination to include necromancers in its ranks. Currently there are between twenty and forty-five necromancers in the group. The exact number is impossible to determine, since there are many inactive (and possibly defunct) members, while others only participate in Secret College activities or projects at rare intervals. At least

two members have joined under different names and guises at different times, maintaining separate personae to make it harder for others to track their projects and identities. Factors such as these make a precise tally unrealistic.

However, the rule that one be a necromancer is not always an absolute one. An organization as darkly influential as this one attracts both many hangers-on and many useful allies, and from time to time the Secret College has taken into its fold other character types. Those of noteworthy accomplishments in areas useful to necromancers can also gain acceptance. Currently in addition to its necromancer members, the group includes a deposed warlord, a wealthy merchant, a liaison to the local thieves guild, and an out-of-favor prince of the Empire. It has also bestowed honorary memberships on two death knights (disguised as bodyguards of member necromancers) and a (semi-retired) assassin who maintains a residence in the City.

These non-necromancer members, though, are always on the periphery of all decisions regarding the Secret College. They cannot directly convene the Conclave (a full meeting of all members) and are typically excluded from laboratory sessions and research work. As such they do not know the full activities of the Secret College, although the honorary members are more fully informed than the others.

The Undesirable Element

Of course, certain types are never members of the College—good clerics, paladins, Censors, and other authorities from the Empire (no matter how corrupt). Wizards specializing in any of the seven other major Schools of magic are automatically excluded due to the traditional rivalry between different magics (every specialist wizard believes at heart that his secrets are superior to those of other schools and that other schools' specialists secretly covet his lore). Nonspecialist wizards could join, theoretically, although to date none has done so. The College has had several dark sorcerers as members at various times, although only one is believed to be currently active.

Even low-level necromancers are not fully trusted in the cabal, although the reasons here are decidedly different. Junior necromancers must earn access to the libraries and labs through hard work, study, advancement, and service. The jobs they are assigned to prove themselves are apt to be dangerous—they start as expendable errand boys, as it were. Necromancers are not sentimental, so there is little love or sympathy wasted here; surviving and proving oneself is an important part of gaining the respect of the higher-level necromancers of the group.

Rites of Passage

A junior member ("student") only gains full acceptance (and becomes a "fellow") upon completion of a major task. This is different for each candidate but usually requires to creation of some new spell, potion, or creature type. Once tested, the formula for the work is entered into the library of the Secret College. Most of these creations are minor and forgotten—an undead homunculi, a potion to detect the strongest life forces in an area, or a spell to hasten bodily decay—but a few entrants have created notable results such as the *spiritwall* spell.

Recruitment

Being a necromancer does not automatically makes one a member of the Secret College. It wouldn't be much of a secret society if anybody could join. Only select persons are invited to attend, and before the invitation they are carefully vetted without their knowledge. The Secret College has every reason to be cautious; it is their best defense against spies and informers.

An Exclusive Club

The first thing to know is that the Secret College seldom takes in novice necromancers. They are not an academy, after all, taking on students for training and nurturing. The Secret College members are mostly seasoned spellcasters who want to research and create, not instruct and hand-hold. Of those beginning necromancers who do join its ranks, most are already related to an existing member. A father may sponsor his daughter, an uncle bring in an aspiring nephew, or one sister watch over her younger sibling.

In very rare instances, a stranger may so impress a senior member with his dark ambition and talent that one of the cabal decides to sponsor him. These low-level necromancers are kept to the periphery of the cabal as lab assistants and errand-runners until they have sufficient skills to undertake the final test.

The majority of recruits are already necromancers well on their way to becoming master arcane spellcasters. Typically they are seasoned in their chosen career (4th to 6th level), have reached the point where they are ready to research and create in earnest, and now have need of the resources the Secret College can provide, particularly laboratories and libraries. They may already have a touch of notoriety, although truly notorious necromancers are seldom invited to join (they draw too much attention from the authorities). Of course once in, such notoriety is moot.

Joining Up

Regardless of rank, one does not just knock on some door and ask to join up. All members need to be sponsored by someone already in the Secret College. Hence necromancers in the know drop hints about their desire to join, hoping word reaches the right ears and leads to an invitation, rather in the same way one hires a thief or an assassin. Others may do some flashy bit of spellwork (say, animating the dead of the Pauper's Field to attack a rival), figuring this will gain the Secret College's attention. Some necromancers are just oblivious to the Secret College's existence until tapped to be admitted. More often than not, though, the sponsor selects a candidate, observing her from a distance for a time before risking an invitation to the group.

Simply having a patron does not guarantee membership. The candidate must be carefully vetted before acceptance. She will be watched. Where she goes, whom she talks to, who her friends (if any) and lovers (if any) are, what she eats, what she reads, anything that might reveal her true nature will be noted. If possible spells will be furtively cast to detect her moral character, read her thoughts, and reveal any enchantments. Only after these things are done and the candidate is considered "safe" will she finally be approached.

Finally, the patron invites the candidate to a small gathering of friends, never directly stating the purpose. All attending these gatherings, except the candidate herself, are members of the Secret College. A typical gathering might feature a few members meeting to discuss some latest work, events of the day, and the like. Sometimes necromantic issues are discussed, sometimes not. On the surface it seems nothing more than an informal gathering of like-minded people. The invitation may be extended several times as the members get to know the candidate and slowly bring her into their midst. In fact, the candidate may not even realize she has entered into the Secret College until some time after the others have agreed she would be a good addition to their little group.

A Loose Organization

For, unlike a university or a guild, there is no clear member status or privileges in the Secret College. Those who belong simply know they do. There is no handbook, nobody gives a tour of the facilities, no one issues a membership card. In fact, the only sure sign of acceptance is to be summoned to a Grand Conclave. Otherwise, most issues are handled on the basis of a “friend of a friend” knows where to find this particular book or might know of a little space where you could dissect a corpse, etc. What membership confers is admittance to a network of like-minded people.

Identification

So, if there are no rosters or uniforms, just how do the members of the Secret College recognize each other? How do you know if that pallid little wizard in the corner with the buzzard-like expression is one of you or one of them? The answer is you don’t for sure.

Most member know at most a handful of their fellows, those they associate with most often—their initial patron and few friends. However, revealing one’s true identity is a matter of choice and many necromancers prefer to remain anonymous, even in the meetings of the Conclave. Some are only seen hooded and masked, others have their features hidden behind magical facades or, most perversely, altered to look like people they are not (as a Censor or noted paladin, for example). Some never speak, some use spells to alter their voices. A few are even so paranoid that they will attempt to murder anyone who they think has learned their true identity—even if these victims are fellow members of the Secret College!

Shadows and Masks

So how do you know who’s who? Intuition mostly. There may be no badge or secret handshake, but necromancers and fellow cabalists share certain attitudes, opinions, and even catchphrases. Only by talking to each other, dropping veiled hints and listening to the answers, do members sense who might or might not be one of them (even this is not a sure discovery, especially for those determined to conceal their identities; more than one necromancer pretends hatred for her own kind, just to throw suspicions off).

Not knowing who is and who isn’t a member is also one of the strengths of the Secret College. Should one of the group be caught and forced to confess, he can at best only reveal a small part of the circle. Mass arrests are rare, and when a few of their number are suddenly taken the rest of the Secret College suddenly and mysteriously vanish into nothingness, changing names, appearances, and identities. Some maintain several identities, so as to have an immediately available fall-back in case of emergencies (and to avoid gaffs like having one wizard disappear and another appear in town the same day).

Facilities and Locations

Given that the elusive Secret College exists, where does it meet? It certainly doesn’t maintain a hall on Guild Street or have chambers at the Council Hall. Its libraries are not part of the Imperial Arcanum, and its abattoirs aren’t among the butchers of Meat Lane. None of it, in fact, is where anybody can seem to find it. So just where is it?

Here, there, and everywhere. Diffusion and invisibility are the Secret College’s strengths. Strike one cell of members and the others survive; discover one stash of forbidden texts and there are still others to be accessed. The Secret College has no central location, no academy (even one hidden away), no official buildings. It is tucked in the dark corners of the city—a hidden study in a set of apartments, a private banquet room in a seedy inn, an old crypt chamber in a haunted section of the catacombs. These bits and pieces make up the “campus” of the Secret College.

Meeting Rooms

The locations of all these bits of the College depend upon the use and need of the necromancers. The most common places used are the homes and suites of various members. They gather in garret rooms, well-paneled studies, and around kitchen

tables. These are the causal meetings of the like-minded, the small gatherings where new candidates are introduced, theories discussed, drinks shared, and vile goods (dried bloods, shriveled hands, old mummy wrappings, and more) traded.

Gianfal’s Salon

The best known—in that he seldom keeps his interests secret—of the Secret College’s meeting places are the rooms of Gianfal d’Apprezia, the black sheep of the d’Apprezia merchant family. A dilettante interested in necromancers and all things relating to death, Gianfal maintains a salon devoted to the darker side of human nature. Death priests, travelers with tales of strange murder cults, vampire hunters, suspected necromancers, planar travelers, titillated nobles, and even Censors (to add a little spice to things) are all guests at his regular soirees.

Generous with his time and drink, Gianfal has created a regular meeting place for the Secret College, although no serious business is ever transacted here. If ever accused by authorities of having invited a real necromancer or death knight, he would simply confess that he never checks into the bonafides of his guests but just asks folks he thinks will be “interesting” to his little soirees.

Floating Cabals

Gainfal's salon aside, most of the College's meeting places are chosen with an eye toward not attracting attention and move frequently. With gatherings so informal, it's impossible for the Censors to hunt these places down efficiently. Stamp one out and a new meeting place appears down the street. Such is the futility of it; the Censors do not even attempt to close down these little groups (with the possible exception of Gianfal's salon; they would *love* to incriminate him).

Watering Holes

When a cramped set of rooms is not enough—say, when a member wishes to present a speech on his latest work—members will gather in the private rooms of one of the more disreputable taverns in the City. These include the Hanged Man, near Lorenzo Prison; the Water King, alongside the Mud Docks; and the Star and Half-Moon, just up from the Imperial Arcanum. All these share several features. They are quiet, slowly dwindling places, where few notice those who come and go. They have convenient side doors, private courts, and back alleys for entering and leaving without notice. Most important of all, their landlords are willing to be blind and forgetful for a few coins. They have never met a necromancer, don't remember any gatherings in their back rooms, and would *never, ever* condone that sort of thing.

The Libraries

Private rooms and public taverns are well and good for gatherings to theorize and discuss, but for serious work the Secret College needs far more secure locations. Since virtually every book of necromantic study, from *Animus Necrotius* to the *Wormatia*, is banned within the Empire, the libraries needed to research everything from the preservation of dead flesh to a horrible bone-melting contagion must be carefully concealed from discovery. While a lone necromancer might change the cover on a book or two and hide them on shelves in plain sight, that technique will not do when there are hundreds of volumes to be concealed.

The Secret College maintains two libraries for its necromancers, both assembled by donations, thefts, and the occasional murder: the Script House and the Black Chamber.

Script House

This principal collection, simply known as the Script House, is the larger, but more common, of the two. This library is open for use by virtually all necromancers of the Secret College. New members are brought to it only after they have proven themselves, but after that they are free to use it any time.

Rules and Regulations

Given the peculiar nature of necromancers, with their mania for secrecy and their midnight hours, the Script House has no hours and no librarian. Those who use it are expected to keep things somewhat orderly—which ensures it is not. All the tomes are spell-trapped and alarmed with triggers that activate if they are removed from the Script House. The traps do not destroy the books but release painfully damaging, possibly even

fatal, curses on the thief (it is something of a sport to dupe a new member into carrying a book out the library—preferable a dangerous one—as a means of teaching them the rules. Necromancers have cruel senses of humor, if any).

The most popular traps are curses that inflict grotesque diseases or summon up terrifying haunts. For example, a new inductee named Wilmer was once struck down with green-bile boils, a seeping plague that covered his face and hands [blindness after 8 hours, -1 Str every 4 hours, -1 Con every 8 hours, -1 Int every 12 hours, until cured or death occurs]. Another well-remembered incident was the strangling spectre that seized a daring thief the instant she stepped out the door. Its summoning was easy enough to cancel; all the thief had to do was toss the volume back through the doorframe and the spectre would dissipate. Too bad her aim was off . . .

Beyond these conditions, there are no other rules regarding the Script House.

Finding the Script House

Finding the Script House is no easy matter, since if it could be easily found, the authorities would have done so long ago. There are several different entrances to it, each disguised by a different means. No one knows for sure the total number of entrances, and it is not unusual for two members to know completely different ways to reach the library. Some of the entrances include:

- An illusory wall at the end of a first floor hallway at Chase House conceals a doorway with an inset latch. Beyond the door, stairs lead down.
- In Pigeon Alley, pressing a sequence of enchanted bricks set on one of the walls opens a teleport to the Script House. Pressing the wrong sequence opens a portal to somewhere else.
- There is rumored to be a secret passage somewhere in the city's Charnel House that leads to the library. Of course, there are rumors of all manner of things necromantic at the Charnel House.
- Chanting a particular phrase along Cemetery Walk opens a passwall in the ground that swallows the chanter up and drops her into dark passages underground that lead, eventually, to the hidden library.
- Several old mansions currently or formerly used by necromancers have secret hinged doors in fireplaces, closets, and other chambers. Most of the old ones have been sealed off, but a few have been forgotten and can still be used to access Script House.

Whatever entrance is used, the path is not clear to the Script House just yet. The entrances only lead into a labyrinth of secret tunnels beneath the City. Old cisterns lead to forgotten catacombs, smuggler's tunnels to cellars overbuilt a century or more before. These interconnect, terminate in dead-ends, or lead to far worse dangers for those who do not know how to recognize the landmarks beneath the City.

Eventually the seeker might find his or her way to Script House: a stone wall carved with a grim sigil of death. Here is the final barrier—those wishing to enter must utter the right incantation

whilst tracing through the pattern of the sigil in just the correct way. Success causes the wall to melt away for just a few moments, long enough for the opener to pass through. Fail and the supplicant feels the chilling touch of an *enervation* spell (automatic hit).

The Interior

Inside, the Script House is cluttered and gloomy but well-furnished, if somewhat gruesomely eccentric. It consists of a single reading room and three small wings where the stacks are located. Although there are not a lot of books, there is not a lot of space either, so tables and floor are heaped with books, piled among the bone heaps, scraps of mummified flesh, and bowls of dried blood.

The Collection

The books of the Script House are primarily necromantic. There is a 75% chance of the collection here having any non-magical book on the subject, including exotic research notes, body charts, necro-anatomical drawings, books on funereal customs, etc. New acquisitions—rare texts and newly written treatises—trickle in, so if a given text was not present on one visit, the check can be made again after a few months. However, the Script House does not have any magical texts. Those are reserved for the Black Chamber.

The Black Chamber

The Black Chamber is the other library of the Secret College. It is a collection of vile, potent, and magical texts gathered at great expense and great risk. It is a collection so secret that even most members of the Secret College are unaware of its existence. Only the most select members—the cold, the powerful, and the malevolent—know of the Black Chamber.

Blasphemous Guardian

Like the Script House, this second library is hidden in the catacombs beneath the city and it is not far from the Script House itself. The entrance is warded by a wall of flesh—a soft mass of putrefying muscle that can extrude limbs to seize victims and drag them into its mass where they become raw material for its form. Only the select necromancers know the incantation needed to cause the wall to putridly part and let them enter the room beyond.

The Black Chamber

The Black Chamber is small, with barely space for a pair of readers. This is not a problem, however, as it rarely has more than one visitor at a time. It has only a small bookcase of books and scrolls, all carefully shelved in immaculate condition. Here one can find a copy of *Corpus Diabolicus* (considered the masterwork of the blackguard necromancer Stomos dur Malcudar) or the banned *Corruption of Flesh* by the excommunicated Bishop of Trengate. Most of the books in the Black Chamber are magical, although most don't confer immediate benefits. They contain permanent formulae for creating creatures, contagions, debilitating vapors, and vampiric dream sendings. Many spell formulae may be found here as well, all necromantic.

The Workshops

Books and talk do not a necromancer make: blood, scalpels, grave earth, and corpses are required. The work of a full-fledged necromancer is not neat and orderly. It's a messy and very gruesome affair—from mummy-wrapping a living victim to the disinterment of the dead, necromantic work is not something that can be done in the attic or well-furnished



study. Blood, entrails, organs, and miscellaneous body parts tend to get splattered around. And then there's the screaming . . . unavoidable, really, since some work requires living tissue, whether animal, human, or humanoid.

The Secret College's laboratories reflect these unique needs. There must be ways to receive fresh corpses, suppress the cries and screams of victims and creations, vent gruesome odors, wash down the worktables, securely cage undead experiments, and dispose of dismembered corpses. All these concerns have dictated the locations of the workshops. Ultimately everything hinges on secrecy, for if the workshops are found no amount of bribery will keep the Censors from rooting the Secret College out of the City.

The college maintains three formal workshops, known respectively as Winter Manor, the Waterport, and the Charnel House. While minor work is done in home kitchens or cellars, the workshops are the only safe places to undertake major experiments and constructions. Generally the workshops are idle, and it is an unspoken rule of the College that no more than two can be in use at any given time. Too many bodies gone missing or too many cries in the night runs the risk of arousing suspicions. The Secret College's longevity is due in no small part to its paranoia—and with the Censors about, it's a well-justified paranoia.

There is no formal scheduling for the workshops, but junior members are expected to yield to their seniors and certainly the more villainous have no qualms about threatening any upstart who presumes to use "his" laboratory. Generally, if a laboratory is available, a member can use it for as long as she can claim it against all comers. Finally, the darkest and most powerful members of this fraternity typically prefer to work in their private workshops, even if this means the inconvenience of additional bribes or long stays in the countryside. This way no one else need know what they are up to.

Winter Manor

The House of the family Hiero-Burchwasser d'Gras, better known as Winter Manor, is not technically part of the City, standing just outside the margins where the City sprawl subtly shifts to the open lands of the country estates. Indeed, in its heyday Winter Manor was a prestigious and well-landed estate, the property of the d'Gras family and one of the oldest of the gentry retreats. Its downfall came during the No-Man Uprising, when humanoid hordes overrun the countryside. Although they could not break the defenses, normal and magical, that protected the manor house itself, the beasts ravaged the estate's fields and barns, slaughtering all the d'Gras family they could catch. For centuries since, the house has been haunted by bloodthirsty spirits, spirits powerful enough to resist the attempts of the most devout exorcists. The d'Gras manor fell into slow slumbering ruin. Grey, bleak, and chill, it eventually became known as Winter Manor.

A Perfect Refuge

Abandoned through fear, Winter Manor is an ideal place for the Secret College. The manor is now rich with vengeful ghosts—the original d'Gras haunts and newly tormented spirits, victims of the Secret College and their cold-blooded experiments. They would kill the necromancers working there (many of them responsible for these spirits' deaths) if they could, but they

cannot. At great cost and effort, the Secret College has created a *soul binder*, a powerful magical construct that holds the spirits at bay (see page 47).

The *soul binder* only protects those designated by the owner and the current "owner" is the caretaker of the workshops in Winter House, a gnome sorcerer named Glimpot. He is depraved and more than a little deranged, a gnome who loves to be among the blood and bodies. It fills him with pleasure so that he chortles, mutters to himself, and skips about as he tends to his tasks. His greatest pleasure is to find new ways to torment the spirits that whirl all about him. They would dearly love to shred him and drain the soulblood from his body but the power of the *soul binder* keeps them at bay. Glimpot's cruelty extends to others, even the necromancers who are his masters. He cannot kill them, he cannot hurt them, he cannot even disobey them, but the little gnome has all manner of inventive tricks to irritate, irk, and exasperate. As much as they might like to kill him, Glimpot holds the secret of the *soul binder* and they need him as much as he wants the corpses and blood they provide.

Getting In

Getting into Winter Manor is simple for members of the Secret College; they only need to stand at the gate and notify Glimpot. Since he is almost always in the cellars and never leaves the manor, a *message* or similar spell is the best way to get word to him (some members simply send their undead familiars to fetch him). Of course Glimpot won't admit anyone he does not know already, so a new member requires an introduction through a member already known to the gnome. Once he decides everything is in order (and this can take bribes and pleading, depending on the capricious gnome's mood), Glimpot will use his power to let the necromancer pass safely.

Of course for others, those not approved by Glimpot or those who would rather not alert him, getting in is a far different matter. These intruders are not protected from the spirits, and the life-hating undead will set upon them with a vengeance. And if that is not enough, the workshops are carefully hidden behind secret panels, just in case.

The Basement Workshop

There are two main workshops in the Manor. The main one, at the end of a damp staircase down to the old cellars, consists of a dissection hall, vat tanks, pharmacopoeia, and quicklime pits. The dissection hall is the largest room here, able to hold ten people in addition to the massive metal table in the center. Straps and buckles dangle from the edge of the brown-stained table and the whole thing is set on trolley-like tracks, allowing it to be easily wheeled to the vats, quicklime pits, or a creaky lift shaft set in one wall. In the central position (where the table normally resides) carved floor channels drain any excess fluids into an old well shaft. Tiered seats along one wall allow provide attendees with a clear view of whatever work is being done on the table.

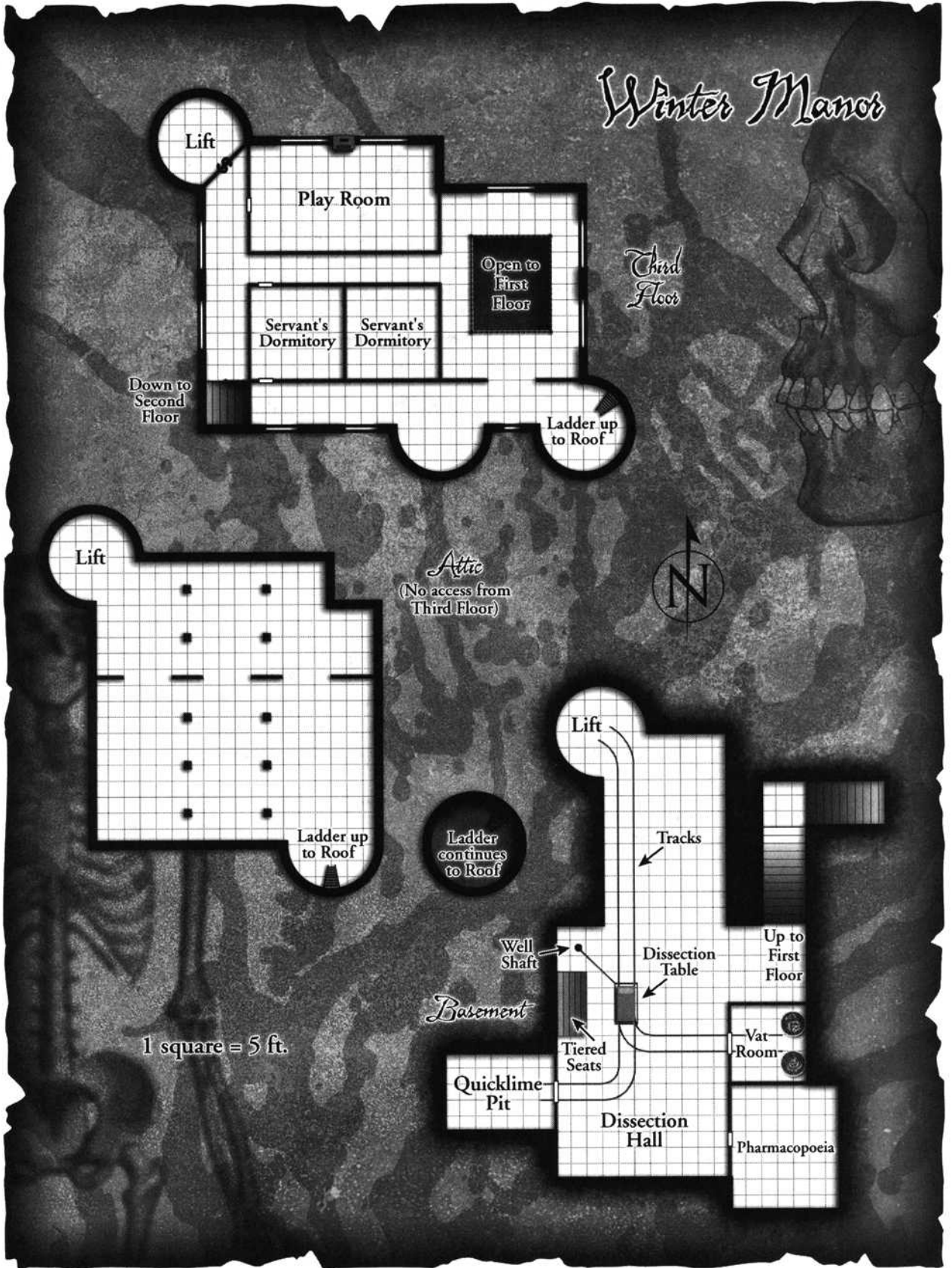
The Vats

The vat room consists of two large glass-sided tanks to either side of the tracks for the table. One is filled with a murky yellow liquid that glows from within; the other is filled with a greenish gel that flaccidly bubbles and burps out noxious fumes. Overhead is a frame with a series of straps and belts onto which a body can be fastened and the whole thing can be raised, lowered and moved from side to side—over either vat or the central track.

Winter Manor



1 square = 5 ft.



The Corpse Disposal Chamber

Opposite the vat chamber is a heavy wood and iron door, covered with a thick coat of black rubbery tar. Opening the door releases a cloud of stinging vapor and a sourly bitter stench. The table tracks go into the room and stop at the edge of a pit filled with a gray-white mud. A stop and ratchet mechanism at the end of the track automatically causes the table to pitch toward the pit, effectively letting whatever is on it slide into the muck. The muck is a morass of potent quicklime, a fearsome reagent that can strip flesh from bones—and then dissolve the bones—in a short time. The quicklime causes 1d6 points of damage each round of contact. Quicklime damage heals at half the normal rate and the effectiveness of healing spells are reduced by 50% until damage equal to that caused by the quicklime has been healed. The pit is 10 feet deep.

The Pharmacopoeia

Across from the corpse disposal chamber is a normal door. This leads to the pharmacopoeia, the storeroom where useful substances are stored: natron salts, dried mandrake roots, linen bandages, oils, balms, and powdered ores among other things. Strange bottles, jars, baskets, and boxes fill the shelves, and on one wall hang various bloodstained tools (flaying knives, saws, clamps, metal gags, picks, and overly large needles).

The Lift

The final branch of the track leads to an alcove that is actually the bottom of a shaft. Cabled hooks dangling here can be attached to whatever is on the table and then the corpse (or construction) can be hoisted by turning the giant winch along the wall. The shaft leads all the way to the attic chamber of the Manor.

The Attic

The attic chamber is the second workshop in the house, accessed by a secret door in one of the tower rooms. From there one climbs a winding staircase to the highest part of the manor, the gabled attic over the main hall. The attic chamber is used for special procedures where the powers of the sky (be it sun, rain, lightning, or moon) are required. Again, the central feature is a table, although smaller than the dissecting tray in the basement. This table is mounted on an accordion-like pedestal and sits directly beneath a hinged panel in the roof. One set of cabled weights along the wall swings open the roof-panels; another set causes the pedestal to expand, until its top rises a full 5 feet above the roof of the house. Mountings on the table allow metal rods, arcane weathervanes, focusing lenses, and other paraphernalia to be raised with the table (and anything that might be laying on it).

Ladders lead to a walkway around the outside of the roof-panels, where a necromancer could stand beneath the open sky and fuss over her experiment. The pitch of the roof is such that the table and necromancer are sheltered from casual view. There have been occasional reports from travelers that on dark, stormy nights they have seen a macabre figure on the roof silhouetted in a lightning flash. However, since everyone knows Winter Manor is haunted, these sightings are assumed to be the ghostly terrors that inhabit the place.

The rest of the chamber is filled with what seems junk to the uninformed—metal cones, coils of wire, lenses with weird distortions ground into their angles, deep-blue sapphire orbs

that reflect the whole world, and cones the size of cornucopias made of delicate blown glass. Most are worthless except to an experimental mage or a junk dealer but the orbs are a treasure (the few flawless ones are worth some 3,000 gp each; the majority are cracked from the magics that have coursed through them; while still usable they are worth only 300 to 500 gp each), while the glass cones are of low value.

The Waterport

The second facility maintained by the Secret College is a small pair of underground vaults in the Pierside district. These crypts are primarily used to cage the various constructs of the necromancers, both undead and automatons.

The Waterport is located near the end of an abandoned smuggler's tunnel, although "tunnel" does not do this grand passage justice. In more ambitious days, a group of rogues and blackguards laid in an entire secret canal underneath the streets of the City. It ran from a hidden entrance on the waterfront all the way to the old receiving hall of the Thieves Guild. When the guild was forced to relocate, the upper entrance to the canal was sealed before the authorities could discover the passage (and so learn the true scope of the Thieves Guild's ambitions). The canal itself, however, was never completely filled in, since it had always been the intention of the guild to extend the waterway to its new headquarters. However, time caught up with good intentions (or bad ones in this case), and the project was abandoned in favor of other schemes.

With the thieves having relinquished their claim, the Secret College moved in, refitting the secret basement halls of the old guildhall to their own purposes. Where the thieves had used these crypts for their ransom cells and guild court, the Secret College now used them as the holding cages and training hall for their necromantic creations.

The Waterside Entrance

The waterside entrance to the secret passage is carefully hidden at the base of the old Long-Sailor's Dock, where the large merchant ships tie up. A steady flow of small dinghies and scows scuttling between the great ships ensures that no one notices a boat here or there that slips through the pilings and does not reappear. Depending on the tide, small boats are rowed or poled along the canal to the chambers at the upper end. Cistern covers and vent grates along the route allow the canal to be reached at various points; steps or a ladder descend to mooring points where a rowboat or punt is tied. Since the full canal is almost a half-mile in length, most necromancers who use the Waterport provide their own transportation and usually leave it moored at a convenient entry point rather than paddle in from the mouth of the canal every time they wish to use it.

A few rogues still make use of the canal as a secret pathway beneath the City, so convenient to their work, but they like the necromancers desire secrecy and do not interfere with others. And whereas other sewer tunnels and catacombs seem to acquire an odd assortment of humanoid squatters, the Waterport canal has a bad reputation among the low classes. People hear ominous echoes over the water and more than a few who linger there have disappeared, never to be seen again. Local gossip among the beggars is that there are "things in the water" that it's best not to trouble.

The Lagoon Chamber

The canal appears to stop at a solid cavern wall of unfinished stone, but the reality is quite different. A secret latch lies just below the waterline at low tide (a long reach at high tide) that, when released, raises the wall and reveals a small lagoon on the other side. This is where the Secret College hides the Waterport creature pens.

The lagoon partially fills a vaulted chamber. The walls are built from blocks of stone, now thickly crusted with damp lime. Strands of pale white fungi dangle from the cracks in the arches and twine around the stones. Where there would normally be blind cave lizards, rats, and other such creatures there are none; they have all been shredded and drained by the necromantic creations in the Waterport.

Products of Research

There is a yearning hunger for life within these chambers. In the side wings from the lagoon are the masterworks (and some failures) of the Secret College. The panoply of creatures is ever-changing, but typically it includes the usual assortment of skeletons, ghouls, zombies, and the like, although some are bizarre variations on the normal form. Then there are the oddities—e.g., a semi-bodak, created by a diabolist necromancer's search for pure evil. There may be enslaved mohrgs (a coveted prize among necromancers) or an imprisoned nightshade, kept for study (and possible dissection), or even a tamed wight, allowed to prowl on moonless nights for a little harvesting.

The North Wing

The north wing consists of single corridor flanked by small, dark cells, once the ransom-prison of the Thieves Guild. The doors to the cells are heavy ironwood, bound in silver-plated steel; good for the Thieves Guild's noble victims and just as good for undead occupants. There are a total of 20 cells down this wing.

The South Wing

The south wing is a large pillared room, the receiving dock for the old smuggler operations. Its use has not changed much. There are shipments the cabal doesn't want seen—sarcophagi from distant lands, urns of putrid liquids, writhing bags of death beetles, even undead agents come to negotiate dark deals. These shipments are stored in the south wing until arrangements can be made to move them elsewhere, if at all.

Since the Secret College's storage needs are small, the pillared room is also used as a discipline chamber. Creating obedient undead requires fear—not for the undead, since they are beyond that, but for those who will become undead. It is a tenant of the Secret College's necromancers that terror and fear, inflicted in life and properly done, carries over into death. In short, a man who fears in life fears the same in death.

Servants of Death

Since few of the sadistic necromancers who work on this principle have time or interest in minding their victims around the clock, they are assisted in their work by Lur and Kal, twin half-orcs. Lur is an assassin devoted to the God of Death; Kal, a shadowdancer with a taste for brutality. Exiled from the

City under pain of death for murderous crimes, the pair has no intention of leaving until their revenge is served and have taken up the Secret College's offer of sanctuary. They mind the undead-to-be captives, casually torturing these poor souls as the whim seizes them, and watch over the creations of the other wing.

Their revenge is slow and exquisite. Every year, on the anniversary of their exile, Lur and Kal kill one of those who judged them and leave behind a warning for the survivors. So far, three have died and three more are targeted. Each year, the paranoia and precautions taken by their potential victims has increases; each year another of them dies. For Lur and Kal, the terror they create is as satisfying as the actual kill. With this mindset it is clear they are well-suited to their jobs for the Secret College.

The Charnel House

The last workshop maintained by the Secret College is known as the Charnel House by the members. To everyone else, it is the Aletham Street Hospice for the Bereft, a charitable mission for the poor. Located across the street from the burial yard of the Temple of the Sun God, the Charnel House is cunningly disguised.

Hiding in Plain Sight

To the public, it is a charity where the homeless can find food, shelter, and care, and many do. A staff of good-hearted folks—initiates of the God of the Sun, civic-minded matrons, and reformed gutter trash—work to feed and house the needy who come asking for aid. They are all, save one, unaware of the true purpose of the place. Only Malcolm Drosmiter, master of the house, knows who really funds the Hospice or why. A necromancer and esteemed member of the Secret College, Malcolm carefully conceals his powers and predilections while posing as a devout street savior, one of those earnest do-gooders who, although not affiliated with any god or temple nor possessing any ordained powers, preaches salvation and virtue through hard work, charity, and kindness to one's fellows.

A Fiendish Secret

For the Secret College, the Hospice is a testing ground. Dealing with life and death, the only way many of their experiments can be proven is through testing on living subjects. For years, this was a matter left to the individual and chance—it was assumed that if you had a new spell to test, you went out into the night and tested it on some unfortunate stranger. As systems went, however, this method had a high degree of risk. There might be witnesses who could identify the necromancer. The victim's friends might seek revenge. The victim himself might be too strong for the test. Or, since these were experiments after all, the spell or item might simply fail, leaving the necromancer in a very awkward position. Necromantic attacks in the streets created pressure for the Censors to do something, and that was not good for the Secret College.

It was Drosmiter who proposed the solution. There were forgotten people within the City—the homeless, orphans, war cripples, and the like; people who are never counted and never missed, making them ideal subjects for such experiments. If there were a way to find these people and screen them, as it were, to make sure they were truly forgotten, then the Secret

College would have an abundant supply of test subjects for their spells, creations, and magical items. What Drosmiter proposed was the funding of the mission. Instead of stalking the streets for their victims, the Secret College should bring their victims into their bosom.

Unholy Benefactors

So it is that the Hospice is funded by the Secret College from subscriptions levied upon the members. The subscriptions are not simple door fees. You cannot come with a spell to test, drop some coins in the charity box, and cast away. Subscriptions are only offered annually and then only during the City's Festival of the Dead. If you want to use the Hospice, you must plan ahead, for each year once the Festival ends no more subscriptions are offered until next year. Although the method seems severe, it does ensure there is a flood of contributions every year, since few members want to come up short later in the year. If you hope to use the Hospice to test your latest ointment for creating suppurating boils, then you better have paid your subscription to support the Hospice well in advance.

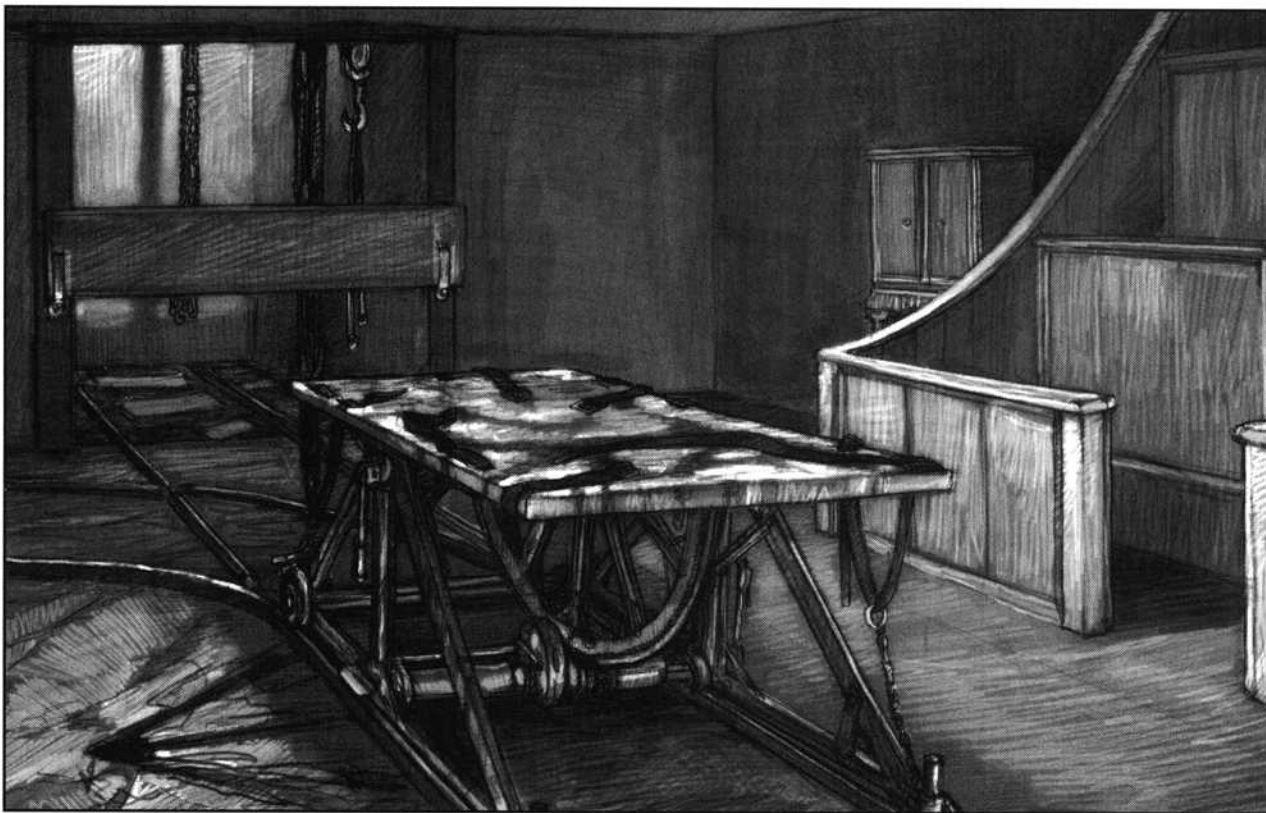
Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

The location of the Hospice just across from a major temple of good may seem like a mistake, but it was no accident; Drosmiter chose the location carefully. No one would suspect a pit of evil so close to the temple, and the comfort it creates helps draw the poor to the location. Of course, operating so close to a group of good priests (who if they ever knew what really happened within the Hospice walls would descend armed with the wrath of their god) is a fool's risk—but Drosmiter is no fool. A good deal of effort and Secret College funds were spent ensuring their activities would never be detected. Woven through the very structure of the Hospice are powerful wards, a larger and more powerful version of the *dweomer* used to create

a *ring of stolen alignment* (see page 46). When the Hospice was built, Drosmiter researched and created the effect, binding it into the Charnel House's walls by grinding the bones of eleven goodly men to make the lime for the mortar; their good alignment now masks the evil within. Not only do these wards block the detection of evil or magic, they actually return false responses to the caster. In essence, all divinations tell that there is no evil detected within the walls of the Hospice—all that can be detected is good, no matter the true nature of the target. Even auras from evilly aligned magic items are cloaked. Once taken within the walls of the Hospice, it is as if these items do not exist, so far as divinations are concerned.

Of course, Drosmiter is prepared with smooth answers if the site's peculiar properties are noticed. Say, perhaps, that someone uses a *detect evil* spell on a known evil person and is surprised at the "good" response from the spell. Drosmiter quickly offers that the positive aura of the hospice is so strong that it overrides the spell—not an unusual effect, after all, in truly holy or beneficent places. As for the lack of magical detection, Drosmiter explains that he tried to place powerful anti-magical wards during the construction, for the protection of helpless, but these have only been moderately successful and that the suppression of *detect magic* was one of the curious side effects.

Of course, outside the Hospice, Drosmiter or any other necromancer is no longer shielded by the wards. Drosmiter solves this problem with a specially constructed *ring of false alignment* (see page 46), a useful item that cloaks his true nature behind an aura of lawful goodness. As for other necromancers, Drosmiter has strict rules about how they can come and go from the Charnel House, not out of any concern for his fellow members but only to ensure the hospice's secret is not discovered. Several secret entrances are provided into the place: a secret door in the wall running along a back alley; a hidden staircase leading to a tunnel and the catacombs beneath the city;



and a distinctive locked attic chamber accessible by a portal, the location of the other end of which is a closely guarded secret known only to a few senior members of the Secret College (it was created for them by a wizard who owed Drosmiter an exceptionally big favor). Wizards are not allowed to use the same entrance twice in a row (just in case someone notices them about). They are encouraged to disguise themselves, magically or otherwise, when they enter and leave. Finally, not just any necromancer can walk in, even if she is a member of the Secret College. Arrangements must be made in advance in meetings that are conducted elsewhere. Although inconvenient in some ways, it does allow Drosmiter to have everything ready for the experiment when the time comes.

Inside the Hospice

Inside, the necromancers are discouraged from mingling with the unfortunates or the staff of the place. Since the secret entrances only open into storerooms of the Hospice, this is seldom a problem. If these special guests do come in through the front door, Drosmiter quickly conducts them to the back of the house and into one of the secret workshop rooms.

Most experiments are conducted in secret. At night the homeless are put up in small monk's cells, austere but private, and a "lights-out" curfew is enforced (ostensibly to protect the helpless from bullies or molesters). The victim is then whisked out of his cell into one of the hidden rooms where terrible things are done to him. Appropriate spells and soundproofing ensure any screams go unheard. Spells and potions are used to blank any memory from survivors. When all is done, depending on the condition, the victim may be returned to his cell. In the morning there may be an inexplicable but unfortunate death to report or the victim may complain of a strange weakness or disease, but nothing more. These things happen to the poor all the time and no one considers it particularly alarming or strange.

Special Arrangements

At times a more public test is needed—a field trial of a spell or summoning, as it were. In these cases, arrangements are made for staffers to be elsewhere, especially if the test requires mass death. Disposing of the bodies is never a problem; necromancers always need fresh corpses. Usually most are taken away and distributed where needed. In extreme cases, the wily necromancer has faked an outbreak of contagious disease, even going so far as to call in the priests to cleanse the Hospice afterwards.

Should an experiment require several nights of testing and observation, the victim or victims are moved to the attic floor of the Hospice, a section isolated from the rest of the building. If explanation is needed, the staff are told that these unfortunates are ill from some contagious malady or being watched to break some vile habit that is destroying their lives. Of course, it's true that they are under observation, just not for kindly and benign reasons.

The Gathering Hall

The last set of rooms maintained by the Secret College is neither a library nor workshop but is the formal ceremonial hall of this unholy fraternity. Just because the Secret College is not a religious group, do not assume they have no need of the pomp and trappings of power. The necromancers of the Secret College are no less vain than any other guild, brotherhood, or even temple, and so they maintain, at some effort and cost,

a secret ceremonial banquet hall large enough to seat all the members of the College, those living and more than a few who are technically but not effectively dead.

Now, the Secret College could just hire a large banquet hall in the City under some bogus name, show up, do their business, and leave, but this would lack a certain dignity. Even if they can't boast about the fine workmanship and furnishings of their Gathering Hall, even if they can't show it off to visitors (without killing them afterwards, at least), not having a hall of their own seems, well, unthinkable. It would be a blow to their pride and make the Secret College seem lessened.

A Place of Privacy

Like many banquet rooms in the City, the Gathering Hall is seldom used. It is not a place for casual gathering or even weekly meetings. It is only opened for important occasions—the yearly seating of new members, a summoning of the Traitor's Court, an emergency meeting of the Grand Conclave, and a calling out of the dead. All of these are significant events. The first is solemn but joyful, the second grim and often bloody, and the last two are so rare and fraught with danger that few members even recall attending one.

Of course, the Secret College could not just build the Gathering Hall in the center of the city. A large, empty building decorated inside with necromantic scripts and skeletal candelabras and minded by skeleton and zombie servants would certainly have attracted attention. Like all other Secret College locations, the Gathering Hall had to be secret and hidden. However, because of the need for size, they could not just take over a few empty crypts in the basement of some old house; they needed something appropriately grand. Their problem wasn't solved until word got around that a dwarf had discovered an ancient cavern far below the City. It took a liberal amount of drink, but eventually a select group of necromancers (those with the most impressive beards who could best hold their liquor) got the adventuring dwarf to spill his secret. Once the necromancers saw the chamber and were satisfied, the dwarf was seen no more.

Six (Hundred) Feet Under

Located several hundred feet below the City, the Gathering Hall is a damp limestone cavern of significant natural beauty. The curious limestone and marble strata in the walls are smoothed and polished by water. Naturally striped columns dot the periphery of the chamber. The ceiling is vaulted while the floor is remarkably level for a natural cave. To this the wizards have added their own touch. Rows of stone tables fill the main area of the floor with a dais and table at one end. Lower platforms flank this one. Several chandeliers made from interwoven skeletal arms hang from the ceiling. In each bony hand is a black orb that glows with light upon command. Sconces in the same style jut from the walls and columns. Carved around the walls is a band of arcane symbols, quotes (in the same script used to fashion scrolls) concerning the powers of life and death. In the center of the tables is a carved fire grate topped by a massive spit. Red-brown stains are splashed on the stone all around it, and the roof overhead is blackened with soot. Finally, lining the wall are a hundred skeletons, all at absolute attention. They guard the cavern when it is empty and serve the necromancers during sessions held there.

Getting Down Below

There are two natural passages entering the cavern. One leads eventually to the catacombs above along a difficult route with many branches. The other plunges further into the cave network that lies far beneath the surface. These caverns are not "tamed"; on the contrary, all manner of underground denizens lurk here. The necromancers have added their own traps along the way, especially closer to the Gathering Hall; animated dead, spelltraps, and other surprises for interlopers. It is not an easy journey to reach the Gathering Hall, nor one that is likely to happen by accident.

Because of its location, few necromancers venture to the cavern on foot, preferring instead to arrive by magical device or by spirit-projection (although the latter is dissatisfying for physical camaraderie). In return for access to some of the new spells created by members of the Secret College, a friendly lich created a portal from a secure location within the City to just outside the Gathering Hall; the portal opens only when a spell employing negative energy is cast upon it. Traitor's Courts or emergency sessions are usually held here because it's distance and isolation grants it a security other Secret College locales lack.

Traitor's Court

Traitor's Court is the most dire convocation the College can visit upon its own members, reserved for those instances when a member has broken secrecy and revealed more than she should about the College to outsiders. When the Court is called, all available members come to the Gathering Hall to hear the charges and the accused's defense (in reaction to their grim experience with the Inquisition's summary judgments, necromancers allow even the most blatantly guilty her day in court and a trial before her peers). The defendant's bearing before the Court bears almost as much weight as the evidence. Those who are dragged kicking and screaming before the Court

or who cravenly plead are more likely to face harsh sentences, while a necromancer who bears herself with dignity may not save her own life but at least spares herself a truly horrid death. Once the case is heard, any punishment and how it is carried out is decided by the consensus of the body; neither the principal accuser nor the defendant has any say in this phase of the proceedings.

Past sentences of the Traitor's Court have included forced transformation into an allip, being used as an experimental subject (sometimes fatal, sometimes not), being fed to one of the elder undead members, flayed alive, skeletonized, transformed into a mummy, mercifully executed and then reanimated as a servant of the Hall for a period of years, permanent disfigurement, and affliction with a slow, incurable, rotting disease. On occasion the accused has been exonerated, in which case the Court immediately begins the trial of the accuser. The necromancers of the Secret College are proud of the fact that in all the years since their organization began, no necromancer has betrayed another to the Inquisition; the existence of the Traitor's Court allows them to keep such matters "within the family," so to speak.

Calling Out the Dead

As for Calling Out the Dead, this event has never yet occurred, to the City's great good fortune. Details are, accordingly, sparse, but rumor says it is a potent spell that can only be cast by the entire Secret College, or at least a goodly portion of its members, working together and pooling their powers. The result would be to animate every corpse within a 30-mile radius of the City, no matter how long it had been dead, and send them all into a killing frenzy against the living. The Call also releases any previously controlled undead from their bonds, sending them out to join the massacre. Even the necromancers who called them up the newly animated undead could not control them, but they would at least have time to flee or prepare refuges until the killing fury passed (typically 13 days).

Escape Routes and Safe Harbors

For all its cleverness and precautions, things can still go very badly for the Secret College, and very easily. For starters, it is an illegal organization, officially condemned by the Empire, no matter what local attitudes toward it might be. Second, it has only a loose grip on its members—members who are, by their nature, for the most part evil. There is no telling when a fellow collegian like Arvand might decide to unleash a horde of wights on the streets or begin a campaign of murderous terror sure to bring unwanted attention to his fellow necromancers.

If too many corpses go missing, there comes a hue and cry. If it is discovered that the orcs of Farwood are plotting with agents in the City, a witch hunt for traitors begins. Even the economy going sour can make people look for someone to blame. And since nobody *really* likes a necromancer, and since it's illegal to be one, then the Secret College becomes an easy target.

Essentially, things could blow up at any given minute. Thus, if one is going to be a member of the Secret College, it is useful to have a few escape routes ready.

Safe Houses

In times of crisis, the college evaporates. No one seems to know of it, hear of it, or belong to it, so nobody should expect any help from it either. In general, it is every necromancer for herself. However, the Secret College does provide some tools, and there are people in the city a necromancer can turn to for protection.

The Secret College helps by being prepared. It maintains several safe houses throughout the City, places that are run by friends of uncles of friends of college members but are actually owned and funded by the College through agents and false partnerships. All are absolutely pure of any necromantic taint. In good times, the dark wizards steer clear of these houses and businesses. The "owners" are left to mind their own shops, make what profits they can, and conduct their lives as they see fit—so long as they don't betray the Secret College's trust. In bad times, these same owners are expected to take in and hide necromancers who come for shelter. Passwords and identification signs are all set in advance, and once the signs are exchanged the stranger is whisked away to a safe place. One of the advantages of joining

the Secret College is learning the location of a safe house and the password necessary to use it.

Currently there are two safe houses in the city. Both have the same goal: to hide necromancers while they are in the City and to get them safely out and away from danger. Behind their facades of normalcy, each is a collection of secrets: hidden garrets, false walls at the backs of closets, *passwalls* to extra basement rooms, and more. The object is not just to take the necromancers in but make it seem as if they had never been there. Far more important, the two safe houses both have means for getting out of the City.

The Westwick Tunnel

The Hope Wind Inn is on a quiet street against the outer city wall. From it a tunnel runs under the fortifications (and the moat) to a quiet back garden of one of the outlying houses of Westwick, the neighborhood outside the City walls (this house is also financed by the Secret College). Under cover of darkness, a necromancer should be able to slip out through the streets of Westwick and disappear, no matter how vigilant the guards on the walls.

The Stillhouse Route

The other escape route is by water and starts at the Admiral Horrance Stillhouse. Built on the edge of the waterfront, a trap in the floor of the back storeroom gives a drop to dark water below. A trio of lacedons (aquatic ghouls), bound to serve the Secret College, wait under the surface. They catch whatever drops through and either kill and it eat (handy for disposing of evidence) or, if given the proper sign, seize the "package" and swim it past the boom (the chain drawn across the river to stop ships) to safety on a shore further downstream. Those escaping by this route are, of course, responsible for their own *water-breathing* potions.

Safe Harbors

In desperate times even the safe houses of the Secret College may fail. There is no surety that the Censors do not know this secret or may not discover it through torturing captured necromancers who fall into their net. The Imperial eye is ever-watchful and remorseless, after all. There even may well come a time when all the resources of the Secret College come to naught, when all the plans, safe houses, and bribes cannot protect its members. If that comes to pass, a necromancer better have other friends, powerful and influential friends who can resist even the greatest pressure the Empire can bring to bear. The best of these are found among the nobles and temples of the City.

Refuge Among the Nobility

While many a noble house keeps a necromancer or two on the payroll, usually on the sly, few are willing to risk their reputation and property by sheltering a hunted criminal. Only a fool thinks her master will protect her from the Imperial hounds when the crisis comes. It takes a nobleman with both powerful influence and overweening pride to stand that defiant. Within the City there are only two patrons who fit that bill: Count Caro of the D'argent and Ambassador Narrisa.

Count Caro of the D'argent

Count Caro is, quite simply, a fiend, a monster in human guise. Half-brother to the current emperor, the count was exiled to the City after his crimes and depravities became too great for the capitol to bear. There he lives under the watchful eye of the local governor and the Censors. Knowing full well that his half-brother cannot or will not have him executed, as would have happened to any other man, the Count flaunts his de facto immunity in the face of his wardens. He has reigned in the worst of his excesses, more out of smart political sense than any moderation of his desires.

The count keeps several necromancers in his household and is well known to many others who have fulfilled his grotesque commissions. He will help those who have served him well and takes delight in sheltering a hated criminal from the agents of his hated half-brother. Though evil, he has an odd loyalty to those who share and support his debauched ways.

The governor and the Censors are not without their little ways, however. Those under Caro's protection must take care not to cross the line. Caro can protect a man for being a necromancer, but not if he continues the outrages that got him in trouble in the first place. Caro's protection is also more abstract than physical. Unlike the sanctuary of a church, which is fixed to an absolute place, those sheltered by Caro can move about the City if they want, although to do so is to take a risk. Venture too long or too far from Caro's influence and things might happen.

Ambassador Narrisa

The ambassador is an entirely different matter. Lady Narrisa Pinos Reguza os Valmore, Emissary of the Golden Court, Dame of the Inner Household, of the Perfect Kingdom of the West, is currently ambassador in the City. As such, she is more or less on the loose to do as she pleases in the service of her king, with all the immunities due an ambassador of a foreign state.

Lady Narrisa is not corrupt like Count Caro, at least not in the same way. She does not care for necromancers, rogues, or mercenaries. They are uncouth and unsavory. But, the Perfect Kingdom is no match for the Empire, so its survival depends on diplomacy, trickery, and intrigue. Lady Narrisa will use whatever advantage she can get in her cat-and-mouse world of politics. There are secrets to be learned and people who must die. That means consorting with necromancers and using them in her schemes. The ambassador has her contacts among the Secret College and through them sends word of "little tasks" she needs done.

Her door is not open to everyone—being an experienced diplomat, she prefers to associate with necromancers of culture, courtly manners, or at least attractive faces and bodies—but in times of trouble necromancers who have served her well can take shelter at her palazzo. She cannot and will not extend her protection to hordes of necromancers, no matter how helpful they have been, only one or two who she thinks are most useful and sympathetic to the Perfect Kingdom. Her protection is no minor thing, though. Backed by her own guards and the force of diplomatic convention, Lady Narrisa will go to war before any Imperial crosses her threshold uninvited. Within her embassy compound, a lucky necromancer is outside imperial jurisdiction. Of course, those under her protection can't go wandering about town; once outside her doors they are fair game for arrest.

Temples

When you have no other friends, there's always the church. It's true for the poor folks and it's true for necromancers, too. When things get truly desperate, a necromancer can always turn to the Temple of the Lady or the Dark Shrine to the God of Death. Both are public and well-known, if infamous. Evil or not, they are still gods and no one, not even the Emperor, can risk angering an ill-tempered but potent deity. As temples go, there are others far more popular and better loved, but that does not matter.

At the same time, the death gods' clerics have to live in the City and fear of divine retribution only goes so far. An individual necromancer wanted for some monstrous crime had better be in good with the high priest, otherwise the clergy are apt to shut the doors on her. There is no law that says the temple grounds

are forbidden to Imperial troops or angry mobs hunting a killer. Even if the doors do open, there may be a price: a *quest* to fulfill now or in the future, and not an easy one.

The two temples provide their best sanctuary during the occasional purges when the Censors decide the City must be cleansed. Then it is not uncommon to see groups of necromancers take shelter in the temple grounds. After all, if the Censors were to destroy the Secret College they just might set their sights on driving out the death-gods' clergy too.

And if things become too dangerous for priests and necromancers alike, the temples have the resources to get large numbers of people out of town and to safety. The departure may be open (a defiant exodus) or secret (through temple's network of followers). Once outside the City, necromancers wanting to stay under religious protection will be sheltered throughout the many temples and shrines of the province.

Profiteering From The Dead

The Secret College or any other necromancer does not function in a vacuum. Spellcasting requires components; spell research access to books and ancient scrolls; potion blending and item-crafting all sorts of exotic materials; golem construction fresh bodies. While a necromancer with time on her hands (and a willingness to take risks) can gather some of these things on her own, other must be bought from those who make a living trading in such dark goods.

Graverobbers

By far the most common need for necromancers is flesh and bone, preferably entire bodies and skeletons. It's true, a necromancer can go collect her own fresh bodies. Some do. They stalk dark alleys and assassinate lone victims by spell, noose, and poisoned dagger. It's a risky business though, and if every necromancer was out slaughtering folks for her spell components the resulting murder spree would automatically trigger a crackdown by the Censors. Furthermore, there are times when a necromancer has specific needs—the body of a left-handed dwarf, a woman freshly drowned, or Johan the Blacksmith from down the street—that make the task harder, if not impossible. The solution, then, is to hire someone else with better connections and skills to do the job.

The Unholy Trio

Within the City operates a small group, mostly rogues, who specialize in the occasional procurement for the Secret College. Some only do graverobbing, and of these the best is a trio: Marchan, Coalfoot, and Nyx (a tiefling, dwarf, and halfling respectively). The three work as a team. Marchan, the tiefling, handles most of the arrangements. Coalfoot does most of the digging and hauling. Nyx specializes in entering crypts and defusing the various wards and traps set to keep graverobbers at bay. None of the three actually kill people—that's where they draw the line. They only steal the bodies of those already dead.

The trio keep track on who has died in the city recently, along with when and where they are to be buried. From this they

develop a list of available specimens—race, sex, age, general condition of the body, and risk. When a necromancer passes word that she is looking for a body, Marchan is likely to show up and work out the details of type, price, and delivery point, if a matching corpse is available. Once the money is placed into the hands of Ludwe the Moneylender (a go-between), Coalfoot arrives with the package at the pre-arranged meeting place and the deal is done. During the negotiations and delivery, Nyx is always somewhere around, surreptitiously watching things in case of treachery.

Gundar Half-Blind

Of course, this unholy three cannot fill every need since they are limited by who died within the City. Exotic corpses are the specialty of Gundar Half-Blind. Need the body of a gnoll or the head of a frost giant? The womb of a succubus? Gundar is the man. Over the decades he has built up a network of friends and adventurers in the surrounding countryside, folks who bring or tell him about odd corpses they come across. If the corpse is unusual, Gundar is likely to gather it for storage, keeping it until it is sold or can't be stored any longer. After all, a giant's skeleton is almost as valuable as the whole huge corpse and a lot easier to store.

Gundar's dealings aren't just with necromancers. There are plenty of other folks—wizards, sorcerers, even armorers who need things like unicorn horn, hippogriff feathers, and bulette hide. The work may be unsavory and disreputable, but with few exceptions it is not illegal. He must be careful, though; in addition to the bans on dealing in human and near-human parts, there are other restrictions on dealing in the bodies of some humanoid tribes settled in the area, in order to keep the peace, and Gundar must avoid too openly defying those strictures.

Murderers

If the right body just doesn't show up in the graveyards, what is a necromancer to do then? Give up?

Of course not. When a particular body is needed or even just a particular body type, sometimes it is necessary to hasten nature along.

The Night Creepers

That's when it is time to turn to Rebekh and Nivnee, the Night Creepers. This elvish couple has no qualms about killing, provided the price is right and target is not too powerful. They're not fools—they're not about to take a job to kill the governor or one of the Censors, for example. Other than that there is little they will not consider. Providing bodies, custom-ordered, is their livelihood. When a specific victim isn't required, just a general type, the pair scout out the easiest target that matches the profile (no point in taking unnecessary chances). However, if by chance an order happens to match someone who has crossed the duo, say same race or body size, then it's two problems solved at once.

Other Predators

Not everyone can afford the prices Rebekh and Nivnee command, but there are other killers in the City—Zel One-Eye, Timor Halburton, Leese, and Warden Jones, to name a few. Their skills range from back-alley thug to accomplished duelist to seductive slayer to cold-hearted contract killer. It's simply a matter of knowing the right people, or at least asking around until the right name and contact information is whispered in the necromancer's ear. Of course, the necromancer (or anyone looking to hire a killer) had better be

careful the authorities, some paladin, or other do-gooder does not get wind of things...

Importers and Tradesmen

Not everything a necromancer needs is so dire. All manner of goods, great and small, are needed in the study of necromancy: mummy powder, salts, resins, oils, distilled essences, incense, exotic herbs, and balms from distant lands. None of these items are illegal, but none are common, either, and their open purchase in bulk can attract suspicion.

A few of the arcane suppliers in town stock these necromantic goods, though none of them specialize in these materials. Fat Mandy the herbalist carries camphor wood, tannis leaves, belladonna extracts, and other exotic spices and woods. Master Corso the importer brings in canopic jars of mummy organs, dried cakes of natron salt, cinnabar ore, and other bulky goods. For extra money he will import the jars of bloods, ground bones, mummy dust, and other items not on the approved lists. Meanwhile on Cutler's Alley, Madame Comb-Silver, a dwarf, fashions and enchants needles of silver, gold, and bone, ideal for stitching corpse-parts together. Two streets over, Durgle sells threads of sinew, dried skins, and braided hair—all under the counter of course. It takes a little shopping around, but all the necessary supplies for their practice of a necromancer's craft can be found in the City.

Plots and Plans of the Secret College

So, what is it all for? What are the goals of the Secret College? Just what are these necromancers up to? Simply labeling them "evil," as the Censors do, only begs the question. Evil alone is not a motive. The members of the Secret College have their projects and their ambitions. Some are driven by the thirst for knowledge, most for power, and a few for the blackest of reasons.

The Convivium

The most significant project of the Secret College, or at least the project most widely known among the members, is the Convivium. The project was begun two decades ago by Marrogan, necromancer on a secret retainer to the governor himself, from an idea hatched by the governor himself.

The Convivium is meant to pool the life energy (hit points) of those it affects. As the governor and Marrogan conceived it, it was to be used by the city guards. In essence, the guards would all draw from a common pool of health. As long as there was at least 1 hit point in the pool for every guard affected, no guard would die. If there were 100 guards and 500 hit points in the pool, no guard would die until the pool dropped below 100 hit points (at 99, one would die, at 90, ten, and so forth). Thus as a group the city guard would survive longer, although once the limit was reached they would start dropping en masse.

This has been an immense project, a combination of spells, wards, and magical devices strategically placed throughout the City. The project has progressed in three stages and is nearly complete. The spells that unite the individuals have been

completed; the channeling wards that direct the life force into the main pool have been placed throughout the City. All that remains is to finish the Accumulator—the massive magical device at the heart of the Convivium, a receptor where the life energy is gathered and held. Completing it is the main goal of the necromancers currently involved in the project. When completed, it will be moved into the heart of the city, hidden under the Governor's Palace, and activated.

Not all the necromancers are united behind Marrogan's vision. A few have outright refused, uncomfortable about revealing themselves to authorities. Others have been helpful, but far more sinister in enthusiasm. It didn't take much for them to see that what was meant to benefit the city guard could be twisted to their own benefit. A few alterations to the spells, some extra sigils in the wards, and a few extra materials in the Accumulator is all it took to subvert the project. When the Convivium is finished, it is not the city guard who will benefit—it is a cabal of necromancers within the Secret College. With their alterations, when the Accumulator is activated it will not create a pool of health but instead drain all those touched by the binding spell, transferring all their life to the members of the cabal. These necromancers believe they will be filled with stolen life energy, making them powerful beyond all their peers.

To date, the cabal has kept their plots secret, but as the project enters into the final stages the risks are increasing. To complete their perversion of the Accumulator, they must make significant changes, each of which runs the risk of detection by Marrogan or one of his allies working on the project. New elements must be added and new materials must be substituted on the sly. Already the cabal, led by the charming Belfleur, have been suggesting "improvements" on the design and raising doubts

about other parts, all so they can make the changes to the device to suit their goals. As for the components, the plan currently calls for a drop of blood from each participating guard; the cabal must switch this blood with samples of their own without anyone noticing. As a result they have been forced to bring a master thief into their confidence, promising him the same reward they seek to gain themselves. Villains and thieves being what they are, neither side trusts the other (and with good reason).

Of late, Marrogan has been troubled by nagging suspicions. He does not know what the cabal is planning or what they have already accomplished, or even that a cabal exists. However, gossip, chance observation, and little things that don't add up quite right have made him wonder. Something is afoot in the Secret College, and he wants to know what. He has quietly consulted a senior necromancer not involved with the project and asked her to check the theoretical projections to see if any of the changes might have an unforeseen effect, but this will take time, and there is precious little time left before the project goes "live."

So troubled is he that he is willing to turn to outsiders—say a discreet group of resourceful gentleman-adventurers (and gentlewoman, too)—to discover if there is any truth to his suspicions. Should he discover Belfleur's machinations, he will have her hauled before the Traitor's Court (see page 91) on charges of sabotaging his project to win all necromancers a more secure place in the City's favor. Naturally, if Belfleur and the cabal learn of this, they will take steps to see that such prying eyes are closed forever.

Summoning the Earth Mother

Necromancy is not an obsession with death; it is an obsession with the forces of life and death. It is the ability to give life or take it away at will. Of all the forces studied and analyzed by the Secret College, the most potent and the most controllable appears to be the powerful Earth Mother.

Now necromancers are not theologians or priests and are smart enough, generally, to leave the deities to others. It's not like they could summon a god and magically bind it to their will—or could they? That is precisely the goal of Counselor Ludo. A former druid, Ludo has spent most of his life studying the powers of the Earth Mother, the life force of nature. She decides whose goats are fertile and whose are barren, which orchards will bear in abundance and which will not; all this and more. Although she has no temples, not priests proper, the rural folk all know, pray, and sacrifice to her. To the druids she is both more than a god and less. She is a proto-god, the underlying power, impersonal and remote.

Although standard belief holds that the Earth Mother has no true form or aspect, Ludo believes it may be possible to draw her to a single vessel and bind her within it. Once bound, the Earth Mother's power—the power to create life or take it away—would belong to any who knew the right incantations. It would be an immense power, one any necromancer would lust after.

For years, Ludo has preached his idea to the junior members of the college, showing them the secret rites of his druidic years. Mostly his idea has met with scorn and ridicule, but like a true zealot he has ignored that and has managed to gain two assistants, old Melkroth (affectionately nicknamed "The Green



Mold”) and young Hadrin (universally known as “Horrid”). The three of them have researched and experimented, trying out one approach and then another, sometimes getting little closer to the goal, but usually not.

Their latest and most promising plan requires a maiden, fertile and of childbearing age, to serve as their vessel. Through spells and rites they plan to pull at least some of the power of the Earth Mother into this woman and then bind that fearsome might into the flesh. For the maiden, the raw power of the Earth Mother will at best destroy her mind and more than likely burn her out like a candle in a matter of hours. Hardly a perfect solution, but Ludo figures he should be able to impose several commands before the link is broken (i.e. the girl dies), and success would mark a significant breakthrough in his work.

So what Ludo needs right now is a young woman with certain moral and physical properties. She must be alive, but willing does not matter. He and his assistants have already tried a few test subjects, but they were less than suitable and the summoning process less than successful. Most died horribly, their bodies disintegrated by the divine force briefly trapped within, while others dissolved into a mass of spontaneously generated minute lifeforms and a few simply died without any apparent cause. A very few lived but were driven mad (unknown to Ludo, these women now spontaneously conceive once a month, carrying the child to term in a single week, but eventually die in childbirth from sheer exhaustion). Having no need for corpses or madwomen, Ludo has dumped both back into the streets of the city.

Convinced the flaw lies in the vessel and not his spells, Ludo now seeks a young woman of breeding for his experiment. Word has got out, in the way it always does, to the kidnappers and slavers of the City that good money will be paid for this job but the requirements must be exactly met. She must be of noble blood, unmarried and untouched. Nothing less will do. Already the daughters of several minor officials have been snatched, but none have met Ludo’s measure. As for the unfortunate women, Ludo cares not what happens to them next; for the time being, he has locked them up to keep them out of the way until he thinks of a use for them or thinks of a convenient method of disposal.

To date, the watch has been trying to keep the situation quiet while they investigate. Unless they make progress soon, however, the news will break. There may be panic and certainly worse the watch will take the blame. Since the Chief Investigator has no desire to face a recall to the capitol he is looking for any means to break this mystery. Meantime, worried families has started offering rewards for the return of their lost daughters and are quietly sending out word of their need to hire reliable adventurers.

The Spirit Generator

The other grand project of the Secret College is the assembly of the Spirit Generator. This device is to be used by the necromancers of the group to raise the spirits of the dead throughout the entire region. These incorporeal spirits, powerful forces of negative energy, will be under the sway of the necromancers who gathered them, and through them the Secret College hopes to transform the City and the surrounding lands into a necromancer’s paradise, free of the difficult laws and interference of the Empire.

The Spirit Generator has the general support of the Secret College. What the members do not agree upon is to what use the summoned spirits will be put. The less bloodthirsty merely envision a spiritual guard that will protect them from Imperial forces but otherwise leave the people undisturbed. The truly naïve even believe the people will not mind ghosts and spectres freely among them. At the other extreme, the true villains among the collegians dream of ruling through fear and terror, of having their revenge on every person who ever slighted them. No one will be spared. The spirits will enforce their every whim. Darkness and terror will be on the land.

So, the Secret College is dividing, and both sides fear there will be battle when the Generator is finished. Yet such is their ambition, and such the potential of the device, that neither side can give up the project. They are determined to build the device that could destroy the fabric of the college itself. In preparation for this, both sides are recruiting allies for the day when the Generator is finished. Of course, these allies only need to know who the enemy is, not the reasons. Adventurers are being recruited through promises, half-lies, and lies. It is a dangerous game, all around, and the few neutrals are quietly preparing to withdraw from the City.

The Blood of Death

This is the personal project of Jervis Mascombe, one of the more theoretical members of the college. He is working to create a spell that will turn a person’s blood into a killer. His goal is create a means to animate blood after death. If he succeeds, the blood will creep and flow with a life of its own, seeking out revenge on the enemies of the departed. To date Jervis has managed to animate blood and instill it with a murderous ability and desire. He is still trying to perfect its killing intentions. Right now the blood flows and slithers across the floor toward the nearest living thing—although he has at least stopped it from hunting and killing roaches, mice, and cats and gotten it to turn toward larger targets, including himself.

Jervis’ tests require humans. First he needs someone to provide the blood. Since it only becomes active with their death, he generally doesn’t get volunteers. Second, he needs living subjects for the blood to seek. Here he has been able to lure a few dupes by the promise of drink or gold, to their short-lived horror, but again generally volunteers are hard to come by. Therefore, Jervis needs a supply of live bodies. His needs are simple; they only need to be alive (conscious is purely optional). Those who supply him bring beggars, drunkards, and derelicts who are seldom missed from the streets. There is a chance that a boisterous adventurer with a bad hangover might be mistaken for human flotsam and lured into an encounter with Jervis.

Return of The Ghoul

The darkest and most sinister of all the personal projects is one even the Secret College will not sanction—resurrecting The Ghoul. His name is feared even among necromancers, for he brooked no rivals. Nonetheless, one of the most evil members of the Secret College, Johann Mikel, is determined to return this monster to life. The impossibility of the task only whets his desire.

So far, Johann's work has only been research. After all, great efforts were taken to make sure The Ghoul never would, never could be resurrected. Johann, however, is an extremely resourceful wizard and learned far more than others ever could. He is now ready to move to the next stage—gathering materials. Johann is looking for a group of adventurers to escort him to various dangerous locations in the wasteland. Of course, Johann is not about to confide in his escorts just what he is up to or explain why he needs to linger at each location until a particular day of the month. In addition, during the trip he will be consulting ancient books, insisting they navigate by ancient maps whose landmarks have changed, and reading the heavens with arcane instruments. Several pack mules of crates filled with strange gear and accouterments will complete his traveling set. So long as the adventurers mind their own business he will keep

his bargains, paying them well for their services. Any questions are going to be met with cold glares and a clear indication that what he does is none of the hired help's business. Nosing into his private things could trigger an attack, especially since he has no qualms about killing a guide or two to terrify the others. At the end of his journey he may even discover it is necessary to offer a blood sacrifice to unlock the final goal. Clearly he is not about to use himself for this task.

Finally, although it may seem like a wild goose chase, Johann has accomplished what no other person has managed, though many have tried. His research has revealed a clone of The Ghoul that may still be intact to this day. Even if found, though, he must still discover why it has lain inert for all these centuries, and that may lead to further complications and adventures.

Using the Secret College in Freeport

The Secret College can easily find a home in Freeport, with a few minor tweaks to its background and history. As Freeport Game Masters will have noticed, the conceit of the City as a distant imperial outpost is at odds with Freeport's nature as a pirate haven gone legit. A few key changes are thus necessary. First, the Ghoul, the Necro-Kings, and Empire must all be understood to have ruled on the Continent in the time after the fall of Valossa. Second, the disappearance of the necromancer Zerbus and his colleagues must be recast. These necromancers did not go underground in the City, they left it behind and made a new home for themselves in Freeport. The attractions of Freeport are clear: It's a major city, a hub of trade, and free of inquisitors. It was here that the Secret College was founded and where it continues to thrive today. If the necromancers of the Secret College have anything to fear, it's the God Squad, a newly constituted department of the Sea Lord's Guard founded to neutralize cultists and other Things Man Was Not Meant to Know. See *Freeport: The City of Adventure* for more info on the God Squad and the threat they might pose to the Secret College. The Tribunal of Arcane Law from *Arcana: Societies of Magic* would also provide an excellent foil to the Secret College.

The locations detailed here can be used as is in Freeport. Some suggestions on their placement follow.

The Black Chamber and the Script House

Both of these secret libraries are located underneath the Merchant District. Several entrances are hidden in the sewers, not to mention the mansions of friendly merchants.

The Charnel House

The Aletham Street Hospice for the Bereft is located, of course, in Scurvytown, the most desperately poor of Freeport's neighborhoods. It sits across the street from the Church of Retribution (location 45 on the Freeport poster map), a faded reminder of the one time the Inquisition had a foothold in Freeport.

The Gathering Hall

This underground chamber lies deep beneath the city. Unbeknownst to the Secret College, the tunnels that lead to the Gathering Hall link up with those used by the degenerate serpent people. The necromancers have not spent much time researching the history of Valossa and one day they may be in for a rude surprise.

The Waterport

Located in the Docks, the Waterport is secreted next to the dilapidated pier on which the Broken Mug is perched (location 8 on the Freeport poster map). The canal was built by the Thieves' Guild during its domination of Freeport's underworld. It was sealed up shortly before Sea Lord Marquetta annihilated the Thieves' Guild in the Back Alley War.

The Winter Manor

The Winter Manor is not in Freeport proper, but on the nearby island of Leeward. The manor was built outside of the ill-fated settlement of Libertyville, a sometime rival of Freeport. The original inhabitants were slain in the sahuagin attack that destroyed one of Libertyville's many incarnations.

Chapter Seven: Personalities of the Secret College

Belfleur

Female human Ftr 10/Nec 7: CR 17; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 10d10+7d4+17; hp 93; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flatfooted 18); Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+5, +3 *greatsword*) or +16/+16 ranged (1d10+2, +2 *heavy crossbow of speed*); SA Control undead, spells, touch of death, undead familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +9, Knowledge (Underdark) +6, Ride +18, Speak Language +6 1/2, Spellcraft +23, Swim +15; [Alertness], [Armor Proficiency (Heavy)], Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (*greatsword*), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, [Martial Weapon Proficiency], Maximize Spell, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Run, [Scribe Scroll], Spell Focus (Necromancy), Toughness, Weapon Specialization (*greatsword*).

Possessions: +3 *greatsword*, +2 *heavy crossbow of speed*, ring of protection +4, bracers of armor +4.

Spells per Day: 5/6/4/3/1.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark, bone hand, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, prestidigitation, read magic, watchful eye.*

1st-level—*blood pact, bone armor, cause fear, chill touch, ray of enfeeblement, sleep, taint the blood.*

2nd-level—*bull's strength, command undead, darkvision, scare, speak with dead.*

3rd-level—*dispel magic, halt undead, negative energy burst, phantom steed, vampiric touch.*

4th level—*eating the black lotus, enervation, hands of death, vampiric dream.*

Sophisticated, charming, and graceful. Hard-as-nails, ambitious, and vicious. Just which description of Miss Belfleur is accurate depends on who you ask. More than likely, both are true, for otherwise one doesn't rise as far or make as many enemies as this woman has. To date, ruthlessness and charm have protected her from harm.

Belfleur (Miss Belfleur on formal occasions) is a well-groomed woman of her mid-thirties. She stands 5 ft. 10 in. with dark hair shot through with silver-gray, a testament to the hard times she has lived through. Her build is athletic but not muscular; when she walks there is a hint of lazy swagger in her stride. While fair she is not a stunning beauty, but her charm and natural energy more than make her a pleasant companion—when she wants to be. Make no mistake, she is ambitious and willing to

crush or cut down anyone and anything who gets in her way. She drove herself to rise quickly as a fighter and now applies that same energy to her advancement as a necromancer. While some may assume the physicality of her early career means intellectual shortcomings, they are dead wrong; only the foolish mock within her hearing. She does not tolerate insults and will cold-bloodedly exact more than ample revenge with both spell and sword.

It is these qualities—charm, drive, and an iron hand in a velvet glove, that have made Belfleur the de facto leader of the cabal to subvert the Convivium. Where others theorized about the possibility of taking control of the device, Belfleur has pushed those theories into action. True, she does not fully understand the theory and the magics behind it, but no one else has been able to hold the plotters to the task and enforce the secrecy needed to pull it off. Fully aware of the consequences if their plot is discovered, she has carefully laid a trail of false evidence implicating an old enemy of hers within the college, should Marrogan need a scapegoat.

Belfleur never goes anywhere without her undead familiar, Pascal, an undead coral snake; being mummified rather than skeletal he usually remains tightly coiled around her neck or wrist like some colorful piece of jewelry.

Bertolo, the Pale Knight

Male Human DKn 12: CR 12; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 12d10+48; hp 112; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (flatfooted 21, touch 12); Atk +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+6, +3 *longsword*) or +15/+10/+5 melee (1d8+3, heavy lance) or +15 ranged (1d10+1, heavy crossbow); SA Unholy aura, touch of death, unholy steed, resist poison, cold, fire, lightning; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Climb +7 (+1 when in armor), Handle Animal +6, Hide +4 (-2 when in armor), Intimidate +11, Jump +5 (-1 when in armor), Knowledge (anatomy) +2, Ride +12, Spot +8; Combat Reflexes, Coup de Grace, Dying Blow, Endurance, Improved Critical, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Trample.

Possessions: +3 *longsword*, +2 *heavy plate*, shield, +1 bolts.

Spells Per Day: 4/3/2/1.

Bertolo is a death knight created and largely controlled by Counselor Ludo, though the knight rarely makes public appearances. Instead, he lives well in Ludo's country estate and is called out for special occasions, such as a meeting in the Gathering Hall or a punitive expedition against swindling graverobbers. His pure white hair, piercing black eyes, and almost transparent skin make him appear more unnatural than most. His armor shines purest silver on the outside, while the

inside is thickly tarnished. His longsword's crossguard is shaped like an ouroboros, the worm biting its own tail.

Bertolo is pleased to serve the Secret College, and when times are difficult he has been known to use *hibernate* in a secret place in the hills, disappearing for months at a time. Rumor has it that Ludo did not create Bertolo at all; instead, the death knight dates from his father's time and has been kept going by judicious application of *longevity* spells. Those who spread these rumors claim that these spells are the source of Bertolo's loyalty to the college.

Bertolo's unholy steed is named Firestarter, a nightmare (54 hp). He often speaks to his steed instead of to others in his presence, using it as a way to intimidate or indirectly threaten. Firestarter's coat is always glossy, and she is often barded in heavy plate (AC 32, including size and natural armor).

Coalfoot

Male Dwarf (Mountain) Ftr1/Rog 3: CR 4; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 1d10 + 3d6 + 16; hp 34; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (flatfooted 13, touch 13); Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, short sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+4, throwing axe); SA Stonecunning, evasion, sneak attack +2d6, uncanny dodge (retain Dex bonus to AC when flatfooted); SQ Darkvision, +2 bonus to saves vs. spells, +4 dodge vs. giants; AL NE; SV Fort +7 (+9 vs. poison), Ref +6, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +7 (+9 on stone or metal items), Craft (Stoneworking) +9, Craft (Trapmaking) +7 (+9 on stonework traps), Decipher Script +4, Disable Device +7, Forgery +7, Listen +3, Open Lock +9, Profession (Graverobbing) +6, Search +4, Spot +6; Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Axe (Throwing)).

Always a disappointment to his clan, Coalfoot has come to the city to escape the repressive life of his dwarven kin. As a youth he earned the name Coalfoot for his slacker ways. Taught to be a guard in his clan's stronghold, Coalfoot bridled at the drill and regimentation of the soldier's life and so bopped his sergeant, scuppered with the company's paychest, and thus began a life of small-time crime. Although he has all the qualities to succeed in life, Coalfoot lacks either ambition or luck. After a series of botched heists and falling out with several gangs, the dark-fortuned dwarf has hooked up with a pair of fellow hard-luck cases and found a niche for himself in the graverobbing and body-snatching trade. It suits him fine—the work isn't too demanding, no one yells at him for being drunk or late and, ultimately, he and his partners are pretty good at it. While Marchan handles the upfront and Nyx does the slippery work, Coalfoot does the heavy lifting, a role for which his strength and quickness make him a natural. So long as his partners treat him right and don't try to cheat him out of his share, the dwarf looks forward to a long and leisurely career as a professional graverobber.

Counselor Ludo

Male human Drd 6/Nec 13: CR 19; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 6d8 + 13d4; hp 60; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 17, flatfooted 15); Atk +13/+8/+3 melee (1d6+2, +2 *ghost touch scimitar*) or +13/+8/+3 ranged (1d4+poison, dart); SA Animal companion, control undead, ghoul touch, grave touch, nature



sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, wildshape 2/day; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +4, Animal Empathy +10, Craft (Construct) +10, Gather Information +14, Handle Animal +14, Hide +15, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Anatomy) +12, Knowledge (Arcana) +12, Knowledge (Law) +14, Knowledge (Nature) +13, Move Silently +7, Ride +12, Spellcraft +20; [Armor Proficiency (Medium)], Brew Potion, Chill Hand, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wand, Improved Critical (Scimitar), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, [Shield Proficiency (Wooden)], Skill Focus (Hide), Spell Focus (Necromancy), Steely Stare, Weapon Focus (Scimitar).

Possessions: *Cloak of displacement (major)*, +2 *ghost touch scimitar*, *goggles of night*, +5 *ring of protection*, *shadow bottle (wraith)*.

Spells per Day: Drd 5/4/4/3; Nec 6/7/7/6/5/4/2/1.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark*, *bone hand*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound*, *maggots*, *partial animation*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *spark*.

1st-level—*ancient wisdom*, *call undead*, *cause fear*, *chill touch*, *dead man's eyes*, *grave claws*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *ray of palsy*, *sleep*.

2nd-level—*darkness*, *disguise undead*, *ghost sight*, *ghoul touch*, *grave rot*, *spectral hand*.

3rd-level—*ancient lore*, *animate dead*, *death knight pact*, *dispel magic*, *incorporeal*, *nondetection*, *vampiric touch*.

4th-level—*contagion*, *eating the black lotus*, *enervation*, *hand of glory*, *pain*, *vampiric dream*.

5th-level—*blood of fire, face of death, spirit self, spiritwall.*

6th-level—*circle of death, extract memory, flesh golem, lightning bolt.*

7th-level—*control undead, finger of death, legion of zombies.*

Counselor Ludo, upstanding member of society, advisor on matters legal and political—who would suspect this respected jurist is also a madman of the first order? Behind his façade as a retired advisor to the Empire, Ludo is a man driven by bitter ambition. Once, long ago, he was a druid, a member of that solemn order, until they unfairly drove him out—or so he maintains. In truth, he became fascinated with life changing into death and decay; even while serving the powers of nature he began his researches into the dark and blasphemous arts of necromancy.

His deeds could not remain unnoticed forever, and when he was unmasked Ludo was turned away by the very forces he was meant to serve. Denied any further role in the heart of the woods (though in their compassion, the druids left him with his powers intact), Ludo turned to the world outside and for a time plunged himself to the cunning arts of the law, all the while continuing his dabbling in necromancy. When his animal companions grew old, he had them stuffed and then animated; he filled his mansion with trophies, from a great cave bear to several fine big cat rugs, and enchanted them to come to life and attack at his command.

After many years of service, where he gained the trust of many, Ludo finally retired and dedicated himself to the full-time study of necromancy. His passion has become a mania and in it he has descended into evil. Others have come to mean nothing to him, only their lives and their deaths and the energies these create and consume. He has no qualms, no moral judgment at all about his actions. He is convinced that



he has transcended petty abstractions of good and evil, law and chaos. All that remains is the goal to seize the power of life and death from the very gods themselves.

Dry Aldegar

Male Half-Elf Mnk 3/Nec 9: CR 12; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 3d8 + 9d4; hp 37; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (touch 15, flatfooted 13); Atk +8/+3 melee (2d4+1, +2 *defending spiked chain*), +9/+4 ranged (1–1, shuriken, usually boosted by *bull's strength*); SQ immune to sleep, save +2 vs. enchantment spells, low-light vision; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy, Balance +8, Climb +5, Concentration +15, Craft (Calligraphy) +5, Craft (Embalming) +12, Intimidate +5, Jump +7, Knowledge (Anatomy) +12, Knowledge (Arcana) +15, Listen +4, Profession (Apothecary) +7, Ride +9, Search +5, Spot +4, Tumble +14; Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, [Deflect Arrows], Empower Spell, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Unarmed Strike, [Scribe Scroll], Skill Focus (Alchemy), Spell Focus (Necromancy).

Possessions: +2 *defending spiked chain, ring of jumping, slippers of spider climbing.*

Spells per Day: 5/6/6/5/3/1.

Spellbook

Cantrips—*arcane mark, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, prestidigitation, read magic, repair minor damage, watchful eye.*

1st-level—*ancient wisdom, bone armor, call undead, chill touch, grave claws, invisibility to undead, ray of enfeeblement, ray of palsy.*

2nd-level—*bull's strength, death knell, ghoulish touch, speak with dead, spectral hand.*

3rd-level—*animate dead, dispel magic, halt undead, phantom steed, puppet master, vampiric touch.*

4th-level—*blood golem, contagion, fear, greater sleep, hands of death, heart ripper.*

5th-level—*face of death, magic jar, quick aging.*

Aldegar Stem-Branch, son of Willow Branch Sun-Dust, is a sallow-faced half-elf. By his wrinkled visage, slow walk, and fragile gestures it would be easy to assume he is a frail old man entering into his final years—Dry Aldegar, indeed. But he is not. Belying his looks, in the lifetimes of half-elves Aldegar is still a relatively young man. His apparent age and decline is a sad cautionary tale for all bold adventurers. As a monk, Aldegar incurred the wrath of the priests of the Goddess of Death, Love, and Magic, and they bestowed on him an unbreakable curse of withering. It was a deliciously wicked curse, one that will not kill him—just leave him as a dried, wispy husk. It is rapidly overtaking his body and within a few years he will essentially be trapped in a living death.

This prospect was more than enough to rattle a young monk's faith, especially when his master denied him any hope. Aldegar sought help from all sources, but none was forthcoming. Determined not to die, he has turned to necromancy and the secret of life, death, and undeath. If he cannot stop the curse, he will force himself to survive beyond it. He will become a lich.

Aldegar has plunged himself into necromancy and is learning all he can before time runs out. He has abandoned the monastery and its strict order and laws and has let himself drift into evil. He did not start out with evil intentions, but in the process of his research has committed unconscionable acts and has no intention of stopping. He knows what he is doing and what he will do and is not deterred.

Glimpot

Male Gnome (Forest) Sor 7: CR 7; Small humanoid; HD 7d4 + 35; hp 56; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 15, flatfooted 14); Atk +4 melee (1d6, sickle), +7 ranged (1d8+2, +2 *light crossbow*); SA Pass without trace (Ex), +1 racial attack bonus against kobolds, goblinoids, orcs, reptilian humanoids SQ Save +2 vs. illusions, +4 dodge vs. giants, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +3, Hide +5 (+9 in woods), Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +11, Listen +1, Move Silently +6, Spellcraft +11; Armor Proficiency (Light), Brew Potion, Combat Casting.

Possessions: +3 *amulet of natural armor*, +2 *light crossbow*, *robe of eyes*.

Spells Per Day: 6/7/7/5.

Spells Known (7/5/3/2)

Cantrips—*arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, mending, prestidigitation.*

1st-level—*identify, magic missile, protection from good, protection from law, sleep.*

2nd-level—*darkness, shatter, web.*

3rd-level—*fireball, vampiric touch.*

Glimpot is a rare bird—a forest gnome who has abandoned the woods, and a complete lunatic besides. A little fellow, mostly bald and with a face dominated by an overly large pocked nose and heavy lidded eyes, Glimpot is a little piece of pure evil. He lives for pain and blood, especially the bestowing of agony on others.

Having abandoned the forest for crimes undisclosed against his kind, Glimpot discovered there is no place for him in the rest of the world either. His only shelter has been in Winter House among the shades of the dead, including more than a few Glimpot sent there himself. Among them he sings and capers, cackles to himself, scars up his arms and obsessively sharpens his knives. Around him the shades swirl, shriek, and moan, howling out the tortures they have waiting for him. It is a morbid but cheerful music for the mad little gnome. While he is not a necromancer himself, he finds those practitioners of the dark art he has met endlessly fascinating, and they humor his antics.

When necromancers visit, Glimpot glowers in the corners, awed and jealous of their power and their familiarity with death. In his mad eyes the necromancers aren't human, halfling, or whatever—they're creations, angelic agents of the powers of death. Someday, someday soon, he will become bold enough to dissect one of these strange creatures and see if it can teach him the secrets he desires to know.



Jerzie the Gray

Male Doppelganger Rog 5/Nec 6: CR 14; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 4d8+5d6+6d4+30; hp 97; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flatfooted 17); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d4+3, *dagger of paralytic venom*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8+2 *light crossbow*/+2 *bolts*); SA Alter self, control undead, detect thoughts, evasion, sneak attack +3d6, uncanny dodge (retain Dex bonus to AC when flatfooted), undead familiar; SQ Immune to sleep and charm effects; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +12, Bluff +13*, Concentration +10, Disguise +21†, Escape Artist +11, Hide +11, Knowledge (Arcana) +12, Knowledge (Local) +12, Listen +18, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +11, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +12, Spot +16; Alertness, Ambidexterity, [Armor Proficiency (Light),] Blind-Fight, Brew Potion, Dodge, [Scribe Scroll,] Silent Spell, Spell Penetration.

*alter self adds +4 circumstance bonus

†detect thoughts adds +4 circumstance bonus, alter self adds +10 circumstance bonus

Possessions: +1 *dagger of paralytic venom* (inflicts damage to Dex, not Con), 21 +2 *bolts*, *boots of levitation*, *cloak of displacement (minor)*, *dust of disappearance (x2)*.

Spells per Day: 4/5/3/3/1.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, partial animation, prestidigitation, read magic, spark, spook, watchful eye.*

1st-level—*cause fear, chill touch, grave claws, invisibility to undead, negative energy ray, ray of enfeeblement, taint the blood.*

2nd-level—*darkness, death knell, ghoul touch, pestilential vapor, spectral hand.*

3rd-level—*gentle repose, incorporeal, nondetection, puppet master, vampiric touch.*

4th-level—*enervation, hand of glory, hands of death.*

If there were ever a monster in human disguise, it would be the doppelganger Jerzie the Gray. This creature is a monster in both flesh and spirit. If he were human, he would be Jack the Ripper. He lives to kill, striking with cunning randomness, taking his victims from the streets to satisfy his twisted desires. For as long as he can remember, Jerzie has done this, in different towns, under different names, and with different faces.

Jerzie is unique. He is no underdwelling creature, skulking in caverns to prey on the lone passing dwarf. He is not a mindless brute. Jerzie is educated. He has transcended his brethren and attained what they have always desired in their imitation of others. He has become himself, an individual. He is Jerzie the Gray, no matter what face he assumes or whose body he mimics.

Having learned and mastered the nuances of human society, Jerzie is to all outward appearances perfectly human. He runs a small apothecary shop, waits on his customers, gossips with his neighbors, and spends his evenings with acquaintances on the town. And after they say farewell for the night, he goes out on the streets and he kills. He does it for pleasure, to satisfy the monster still lurking in his soul—and he does it for curiosity, seeking to learn what makes these humans what they are. He kills, he drains, he diseases, and he animates, always looking for the secret of the human soul. It is the one thing he cannot imitate, and it plagues him.

Jerzie is one of these necromancers the Secret College fears—a dangerous rogue whose actions are as much a mystery to them as to the rest of the world. They know the occasional killings are the work of a necromancer: this can be told by subtle signs only a fellow necromancer would notice—the line of the knife cut, the organs probed, the disposal of the remains. These things cannot be hidden. The fact that they cannot identify this rogue necromancer only heightens their concern. Why can't they find him? What makes him so elusive?

The answer lies clearly in Jerzie's powers. A shapechanging thief is bad enough; a shapechanging murderer with a rogue's powers and a healthy list of spells is even worse.

Jerzie is aware that even he can go too far, create too much hue and cry, but he is ready for that. Already he is working to establish a new identity, one that will let him slip away to another town. Of course there will be a body in his place, one that will look amazingly like him, along with a confession of his crimes. But that lies in the future. For now, there is still the hunt to enjoy...

Johann Mikel

Male human Nec 9: CR 9; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 9d4 + 9; hp 30; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 15, flatfooted 12); Atk +6 melee (1d6-1, staff) or +8 ranged (1d8, crossbow); SA Control undead, touch of death, undead familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (Arcana) +16, Knowledge (Geography) +16, Knowledge (History) +16, Knowledge (Undead) +16, Ride +4, Speak Languages +11, Spellcraft +11; Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, [Scribe Scroll,] Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (Vampiric Touch, Animate Dead).

Possessions: +2 amulet of natural armor, cloak of etherealness, eyes of doom, lesser restoration potion.

Spells per Day: 5/6/6/5/3/1.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark, bone hand, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, partial animation, prestidigitation, read magic, repair minor damage, spark, spook, vermin, watchful eye.*

1st level—*ancient wisdom, blood pact, call undead, cause fear, chill touch, detect undead, ghost writing, hibernate, negative energy ray, sleep.*

2nd-level—*ancient spirit, darkness, familiar pocket, grave rot, scare, spectral hand, undead warding.*

3rd-level—*ancient lore, animate dead, corpse candle, dispel magic, halt undead, phantom steed, repair serious damage, vampiric touch.*

4th-level—*contagion, enervation, fear, fortify familiar, pain.*

5th-level—*plague, quick aging.*

Determination is not a word that does Johann justice. Obsession would be much better. Ever since he heard the story of The Ghoul, Johann has dreamed of that arch-necromancer's return and known it was his life's mission to find and resurrect the monster. There is no sense to his goals. Although he tells himself he can control The Ghoul, that The Ghoul will reward him, that The Ghoul will be weak and vulnerable, in his heart he knows these things are not true. He knows that if The Ghoul is revived, he will die. Nonetheless he must try. That is the nature of his obsession.

Johann seems an unlikely master for The Ghoul anyway. Tall and somewhat overweight, he has spent the better part of his necromantic career poring over books, studying ancient legends, and questioning the long dead. Now he is ready to take his researches into the field. He has the location of several tombs and ancient temples, some of which might hold answers to reviving the monster.

Mikel is now looking for a group of reliable, if somewhat gullible, adventurers to be his escorts. Obviously he will only tell them as much as is needed—where to go, but not why. Any questions about their mission is met with a curt glare. He will keep his bargain with them, so long as it does not become overly inconvenient, but he will not tolerate "insolence" from hired help, and woe betide them if he suddenly discovers a need for human sacrifices to further his goal.

Malcolm Drosmiter

Male human Clr 9/Nec 11: CR 20; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 9d8 + 11d4 + 20; hp 92; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 10, flatfooted 18); Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d8+2, +2 mace of disruption; see below) or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dart); SA divine and arcane spells, rebuke or control undead, undead familiar, touch of death, ghoul touch; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +15; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Diplomacy +14, Heal +14, Knowledge (Anatomy) +17, Knowledge (Arcana) +17, Knowledge (Religion) +17, Profession (Importer) +14, Spellcraft +17; [Alertness.] [Armor Proficiency (Light, Medium, Heavy),] Brew Potion, Cheat Death, Chill Hand, Extra Turning, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative, Improved Mortal Curse, Quicken Spell, [Scribe Scroll,] [Shield Proficiency,] Spell Focus (Necromancy), Still Spell.

Possessions: enhanced *rod of lordly might* (also functions as +2 *mace of disruption*), *robe of scintillating colors*, *hat of disguise*, *ring of stolen alignment*, *bracers of armor* +8, *keoghtom's ointment*.

Spells Per Day: Clr 6/5/5/4/3/2; Nec 6/6/6/5/4/2/1; Deity: God of Death. Domains: Death (can use death touch once per day), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark*, *bone hand*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound*, *partial animation*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *spark*, *spook*, *watchful eye*.

1st-level—*blood pact*, *cause fear*, *chill touch*, *ghost writing*, *negative energy ray*, *ray of palsy*, *repair light damage*, *skull eyes*, *sleep*, *taint the blood*.

2nd-level—*blindness/deafness*, *command undead*, *death knell*, *false life*, *familiar pocket*, *ghoul touch*, *grave warding*, *scare*, *spectral hand*.

3rd-level—*animate dead*, *corpse candle*, *deadly hand*, *death knight pact*, *dispel magic*, *gentle repose*, *halt undead*, *infuse dead flesh*, *vampiric touch*.

4th-level—*contagion*, *eating the black lotus*, *fear*, *greater sleep*, *hands of death*, *heart ripper*.

5th-level—*curse of blood*, *face of death*, *magic jar*, *permanency*.

6th-level—*death angel pact*, *drain life*, *flesh golem*, *rot flesh*.

Perhaps the most powerful spellcaster in the Secret College, though by no means the highest level necromancer, Malcolm hides an evil heart behind a kindly face. By profession a merchant (an importer of cloth, fine linen, silks, and other expensive fabrics), he is a respected, indeed loved, member of the community. He is especially praised for his charity work, most recently by sponsoring and personally overseeing the creation of the Aletham Street Hospice for the Bereft, a shelter for the City's destitute and homeless.

What few know is that beneath this public persona lies a cunning mind and a dark soul. Among his fellow necromancers Drosmiter's pet project, the Hospice, is better known as Charnel House—not a place of refuge for the helpless but a valued resource, a human warehouse from which necromancers of the Secret College can harvest living bodies at need. The people of the City know that Malcolm has a "vocation" or calling, and he is venerated for his tireless efforts to house, cloth, feed, and minister to the ailments of the poor. Only his fellow necromancers know that he is in fact a cleric of the God of Death, callous and cold in the pursuit of his aims.

Drosmiter is the epitome of the "hide in plain sight" tactic. One of the most recognized figures in the City, he is careful to keep his secret life separate from his public one, though his reputation is such that not even the most suspicious Censor or

Inquisitor has ever thought to investigate him. His family seems destined to follow in his footsteps: his son is secretly a cleric of the God of Death just beginning to move into positions of responsibility in that underground church's organization, his eldest daughter a rising young necromancer and member of the Secret College in her own right, and his youngest daughter a neophyte death knight. Even his grandchildren (his son's two sons), while still toddlers, have already been pledged to darkness, much to Malcolm's private glee—when it's time for him to retire into lichdom, there will be strong and willing hands ready to take up his work.

Marchan

Male Tiefling Rog 5: CR 5; Medium-sized humanoid; HD 5d6 + 10; hp 29; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flatfooted 12); Atk +4 melee (1d8, masterwork longsword) or +7 ranged (1d4 throwing dagger); SA *Darkness* (Sp, once per day), evasion, sneak attack +3d6, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Climb +6, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +8, Gather Information +8, Heal +6, Hide +12, Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Profession (Graverobber) +3, Use Magic Device +8; Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight.

Possessions: leather armor, masterwork longsword, masterwork thieves' tools, *potion of invisibility*, 3 throwing daggers.

Tall, smoke-gray, and with hair of overlapping scales, Marchan makes a noticeable though not necessarily appealing figure. He is an up-and-coming player in the City's underworld. For now he has been running small scams and pulling petty jobs, trying to get the notice of the City's bosses. This year his current game is bodies. He's hooked in two small-time thieves—Coalfoot and Nyx—and has them doing the dirty work of grave robbing while he fronts the gang, finding the customers among the necromantic underworld. He doesn't particularly care for the job, though—not because it is immoral (that hardly bothers him) but because it's hardly a respectable trade for a rogue. Still, it gives him a chance to build a network of customers, contacts, and the core of a cohesive gang.

Marchan has no loyalty to his work, his partners or his employers. If things get too hot, the tiefling will bolt if he can and squeal to save his skin if he can't, gleefully turning informant to mitigate his punishments.

Marrogan

Male half-elf Nec 18: CR 18; Medium-size humanoid; HD 18d4+18; hp 63; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 14); Atk +13/+8/+3 melee (1d4+2, *doom dagger*) or +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d4, throwing dagger); SA Create undead familiar, control undead, touch of death, ghoul touch, grave touch, energy drain, touch of undeath. SQ Immune to *sleep*, save +2 vs. enchantment spells, low-light vision; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Craft (Painting) +7, Diplomacy +15, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Arcana) +26, Knowledge (Local) +26, Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +26, Listen +3, Search +6, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +26, Spot +3; Fearful Gaze, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical

(*doom dagger*), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, [Scribe Scroll,] Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Mastery (*animate dead, dust, finger of death, read magic, wish*), Spell Penetration.

Possessions: *doom dagger* (a +2 keen ghost-touch weapon that acts on undead exactly as a *nine lives stealer* affects living targets), *cloak of displacement (major)*, *ring of mind shielding*, *ring of protection +4*.

Spells per Day: 7/8/8/8/8/6/5/3/2.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark, bone hand, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, maggots, partial animation, prestidigitation, read magic, repair minor damage, spark, spook, vermin, watchful eye*.

1st level—*ancient wisdom, bone armor, call undead, chill touch, dead man's eyes, detect undead, ghost light, ghost writing, grave claws, invisibility to undead, negative energy ray, ray of enfeeblement, ray of palsy, repair light damage, skull eyes, taint the blood*.

2nd level—*blindness/deafness, command undead, darkness, darkvision, death knell, disguise undead, false life, ghost sight, grave warding, kiss of the toad, mend corpse, repair moderate damage, shocking grasp, speak with dead, spectral hand, undead warding*.

3rd level—*ancient lore, animate dead, astral dream, corpse candle, dispel magic, feign death, gentle repose, halt undead, incorporeal, infuse dead flesh, leech, negative energy burst, nondetection, phantom steed, puppet master, repair serious damage, vampiric touch*.

4th level—*bolster undead, contagion, death mask, eating the black lotus, enervation, fear, greater sleep, heart ripper, homunculus, negative energy wave, pain, repair critical damage, suspend life function, vampiric dream, wall of bones*.

5th level—*blood of fire, curse of blood, curse of memory, face of death, ghostform, longevity, magic jar, quick aging, permanency, plague, possess, spirit self, spiritwall*.

6th level—*antilife shell, bone machine, circle of death, create undead, drain life, extract memory, flesh golem, lighting bolt, rot flesh, undeath to death*.

7th level—*control undead, dust, finger of death, from the ashes, legion of skeletons, legion of zombies, limited wish, sword of darkness*.

8th-level—*create greater undead, horrid wilting, immortality, legion of shadows, soul switch, symbol*.

9th-level—*energy drain, legion of mummies, mortal strike, soul bind, wish*.

Tall, lithe, and groomed, Marrogan is the image of the refined nobleman. In his fifties, Marrogan is proud that his youthful good looks have held up well over the years (and without magical aid, he will vainly add). His sandy blond hair is always stylishly coiffed, his face clean-shaven, and his robes expertly tailored. He always has the right word and *bon mot* for the occasion and can be devilishly charming with the ladies.

Charm and style are part of the political game, a lesson Marrogan has learned well over the years. Outlawed and banned though necromancers may be, Marrogan makes only minor secret of his skills, instead relying on his influence as the Governor's unofficial court necromancer to protect himself from harm. There he provides valuable and discreet services for the Empire and they, in turn, pretend not to know his true occupation. Although he lacks the official title of someone like the General of the City Garrison, Marrogan has no less influence over official decisions and actions.

Marrogan has used his influence to protect the Secret College—and to rule it. After all, who better than he to guide his fellow necromancers through the treacherous waters of the City? Certainly he cannot imagine anyone more qualified than himself.

Leadership has its challenges, and Marrogan is facing his share of those. He has suspicions about the Convivium and Belfleur, in particular. He is acutely aware that she too knows how to play the game and is ruthless enough to challenge him. In the court, the increasing murders (Jervis' handiwork) have the Governor on edge. To date, Marrogan has managed to keep the necromantic aspect out of these investigations, but it grows increasingly difficult every day. Worst yet, Johann is not the only one to start having dreams about The Ghoul, something sure to stir up trouble and perhaps another wave of repression. And if all this were not enough, Marrogan's rivals in the court have begun a campaign of innuendo, suggesting that the half-elf has become too powerful and ambitious. Knowing he cannot fight slander directly, Marrogan has started using *vampiric dreams* on his critics to unsettle and weaken them before his next move (whatever it may be).

For all his troubles, Marrogan is not about to retire. He has faced similar, and worse, challenges before and triumphed every time (a necromancer does not live to reach 18th level without being a wily survivor). He loves the game and plans to play it until he dies. And beyond.

Nyx

Male Halfling Rog 4: CR 4; Small humanoid; HD 4d6 + 8; hp 22; Init +9; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (16 flatfooted, 16 touch); Atk +4 melee (1d6, short sword) or +10 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Evasion, sneak attack +2d6, uncanny dodge; SQ +2 morale bonus vs. fear; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Reflex +9, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Bluff +6, Climb +8, Craft (Locksmithing) +3, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +12, Hide +16, Jump +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +12; Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: short sword, sling, 20 sling stones, spade, thieves' tools.

The third of the body-snatching trio, Nyx is a drowsy, listless halfling far more interested in down pillows and warm comforters than slipping through casement windows into cold mausoleums and mortuaries. He dislikes dead bodies, fears he will contract some plague, incur the wrath of some spirit, or generally end up on the bad side of some powerful priest. He is clearly unhappy in his job.

Nonetheless, it pays—not particularly well, but it does pay. Relatively new to the City, Nyx needs funds and some jobs to establish a reputation. He views body-snatching as temporary work and his partners as temporary too. Nyx doesn't care for the tiefling Marchan, considering him self-important and bossy. Coalfoot is all right in his book, although a little doltish. As for himself, Nyx is heading for bigger and better things—if he only had the ambition.

Phelbus

Male halfling Nec 4: CR 5; Small undead; HD 4d12; hp 26; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (touch 14, flatfooted 11); Atk +2 melee (1d4-1, dissection scalpels) or +6 ranged (1d4, throwing daggers); SA Create undead familiar; SQ undead immunities, +2 morale bonus vs. fear; AL N; SV Fort +2 (immune), Ref +5, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 9, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy +10, Climb +1, Handle Animal +7 1/2, Heal +3, Hide +7, Jump +1, Knowledge (Arcana) +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +8; Disassemble, Discorporate, False Demise, [Scribe Scroll], Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

Possessions: Assorted scalpels and flaying knives, throwing dagger.

Spells per Day: 4/4/3/1.

Spellbook

Cantrip—*arcane mark, bone hand, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, partial animation, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic, vermin.*

1st-level—*ancient wisdom, chill touch, detect undead, negative energy ray, ray of palsy, repair light damage, skull eyes.*

2nd-level—*blindness/deafness, command undead, disguise undead ghoul touch, grave rot, speak with dead.*

3rd-level—*cannibalize, deadly hand, nondetection, vampiric touch.*

A chubby, balding, and cheerful halfling, Phelbus hardly seems the image of a deadly necromancer, which is just as well because he isn't—deadly at least. He is mild-mannered, squeamish, and prone to attacks of nerves. He is also not evil. This last alone makes Phelbus a rarity among necromancers. He is also, most regrettably, dead—at least in a technical sense.

Formerly, Phelbus was an extremely minor member of the Secret College who owed his membership entirely to family connections (he's an adoptive nephew by marriage to Marrogan himself, the nearest thing the necromancers of the City have to a recognized leader). That changed after an unfortunate lab experiment—in fact, one sabotaged as a prank on the neophyte member—that somehow transformed the halfling into an intelligent, self-willed undead. Various dissections and experiments, including re-enactments with the person responsible for the accident (now deceased) forced to play a leading role, all failed to discover exactly how Phelbus had been transformed.

For his own part, Phelbus is little changed by the odd turn of fate. He remains drawn to the powers of death through pure scientific curiosity, though he now wishes to understand the



secret of his own transformation and replicate it to make more beings like himself. He is fascinated with the concept that each and every life has a spark, spark that could be isolated, extracted, bottled, and molded through magic. Currently he is researching that spark through the creation of constructs, recombining animal body parts in an attempt to perfect the powers of life.

This seems an odd line of research for one so delicate—cutting, sewing and stitching; draining fluids, bottling innards, and the like—but then Phelbus is an odd duck. He cannot bring himself to work on humans, dwarves, or any of the standard supply of corpses, much less fellow halflings, and so limits all his researches to animals. Dogs, cats, rats, even an occasional mule have passed into his workshop, brought in by the street cleaners or caught in live traps Phelbus has throughout the city. These he works on, all the time pitying their sad little lives and their poor fates.

Working in this way, sorrowing to himself, Phelbus has created a score of Frankenstein-like pets cobbled together from what his collectors and traps have brought in. Most just mewl and yip helplessly, barely living little pet golems. Some are almost decent pets, assuming one isn't bothered by Phelbus' crude sutures. A few have become hostile and dangerous, caged in the dark cellars beneath his townhouse. Whatever the result, pride, sympathy, fear, and fellow-feeling keep Phelbus from destroying any of his creations.

The other members of the Secret College regard Phelbus with everything from sympathy to contempt. Most affairs of the Secret College are kept from him, partially to spare his sensitivities but mainly for fear that he is a weak link, easy prey for the Imperial Censors. Even the most hard-hearted members of the Secret College would be loathe to lose him—if only because they wish to discover the secret of Phelbus' creation.

Tanith

Female human Specialist Wizard 17 (Necromancer): CR 17; Medium-sized humanoid (human); HD 17d4-34; hp 15 or 49; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 17, flatfooted 17); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6-1, +2 staff) or +10/+5 ranged (1d4, throwing dagger); SA familiar (Wendell the cat), vessel abilities; AL N; SV Fort +5; Ref +7; Will +11; Str 5, Dex 14, Con 7, Int 20, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Craft (Construct) +15, Craft (Embalming) +15, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Anatomy) +25, Knowledge (Arcana) +25, Knowledge (Mortuary Custom) +25, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Perform (Dance, Rituals) +5, Spellcraft +25, Spot +3; [Alertness], [Brew Potion], Create Wondrous Item, The Dark Lady's Kiss, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Mortal Curse, Leadership, Sense Life, Sense Undead, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Penetration.

Possessions: *bracers of armor* +7, *ring of protection* +5, *bag of holding*, *staff of power*, *The Book of Dead Smiles*, *wand of magic missiles*, *wand of fireballs*, *wand of lightning*, *talisman of the sphere*, *dutiful servant* (nun's robe enchanted with permanent *unseen servant*).

Vessel of the Goddess Abilities: Undead friendship, access to divine necromancy spells (memorize as arcane spell of the same level), Death domain (bonus spells + domain power), Charm domain (bonus spells + domain power), rebuke/command undead (6x/day), unhindered by negative levels.

Spells Per Day: 5/6/6/6/6/6/5/4/3/2. Forbidden School: Illusion.

Spellbook:

Cantrip—*arcane mark*, *bone hand*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mending*, *open/close*, *partial animation*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *repair minor damage*, *resistance*, *spark*, *watchful eye*.

1st-level—*blood pact*, *charm person*, *chill touch*, *dead man's eyes**, *detect undead*, *ghost light*, *ghost writing**, *hypnotism*, *identify*, *magic missile*, *mount*, *negative energy ray*, *repair light damage*, *skull eyes*, *sleep*, *spider climb*, *unseen servant*, “*whistle ceremony*” (=call undead*).

2nd-level—*arcane lock*, *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *command undead*, *darkvision*, “*defer death*” (=false life*), *disguise undead**, *endurance*, *familiar pocket*, *ghost sight*, *ghoul touch*, *grave warding*, *indifference*†*, *knock*, *mend corpse**, *see invisibility*, *speak with dead*, *spectral hand*.

3rd-level—*cannibalize**, *corpse candle**, *dispel magic*, *enhance familiar*†, *feign death**, *fly*, *gentle repose*, *halt undead*, *incorporeal*, *infuse dead flesh**, *leech**, *lightning bolt*, *negative energy burst*, *nondetection*, *phantom steed*, *repair serious damage*, *suggestion*, *vampiric touch*.

4th-level—*acid orb*†, *bolster undead**, *cold orb*†, *dimension door*, *emotion*, *enervation*, *entrap ancestor*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *hand of glory**, *hands of death**, *heart ripper*, *negative energy wave*, *polymorph self*, *repair critical damage*, *suspend life function**, *wall of ice*.

5th-level—*animate dead*, *blood of fire*, *cone of cold*, *curse of blood**, *curse of memory**, *dismissal*, *dominate person*, *ghostform**, *permanency*, *quick aging*, *sending*, *spiritwall**, *teleport*, *temple pact*.

6th-level—*acid fog*, *bone machine*, *circle of death*, *contingency*, *create undead*, *death angel pact*, *disintegrate*, *flesh golem*, *globe of invulnerability*, “*putrefy*” (=rot flesh*), *quest*, *repulsion*, “*trepanning*” (=extract memory*).

7th-level—*banishment*, *control undead*, *Drawmij's instant summons*, *dust**, *energy immunity*†, *finger of death*, *from the ashes**, *limited wish*, *spell turning*, *sword of darkness*.

8th-level—*clone*, *create greater undead*, *etherealness*, *horrid wilting*, *immunity to turning**, *legion of shadows*, *protection from spells*, *sunburst*, *symbol*.

9th-level—*energy drain*, *foresight*, *hide life**, *legion of wraiths*, *mortal strike**, *shapechange*, *wish*.

*indicates a spell created by Tanith herself.

Tanith is small, slender, and very attractive, with long dark hair and pale skin. Her only distinguishing feature is a curious brand on one shoulder, dating from a period of captivity about which she is reluctant to speak. Physically very frail (she typically casts *endurance* upon herself each morning in order to get through the day), she may have been initially attracted to the necromantic arts by her own poor health before being won over by the fascination of the subject. Despite her relative lack of robustness, she shows considerable enthusiasm for physical pleasures, possibly a hold-over from her days of studying enchantments or simply an inheritance from her noble bloodline. Rather unusually for a necromancer, she has formed a number of friendships with good-aligned clerics during her years as an adventurer and at least two long-term attachments to paladins. Nevertheless she has never wavered from the more unpleasant aspects of her chosen profession.

Tanith is completely unsqueamish (“squeamishly challenged,” as one former adventuring partner once put it), often disconcertingly so. She thinks of corpses the way most people think of wood: once-living raw material. To her mind living people are like children that will eventually mature into undead. There's no point in rushing the process—life, like childhood, has charms of its own. Just as it would be evil to force a child to grow up too soon, so too it is wrong to wantonly convert people into corpses. But once someone has gone to join the Great Majority, it doesn't matter what you do with their remains—and she's surprised when others take offense at some of the uses she puts them to. Tanith draws no distinction between a golem (made of inert matter) and corporeal undead (made of deceased beings); each is merely a useful servitor.

Early on in her career, Tanith claimed a ruined castle that had once belonged to a notorious necromancer (in fact, one of the minor Necro-King pretenders to The Ghoul's title), repairing and refurbishing it to make the place fit again for human habitation. Thanks to a special dispensation from the Emperor himself (a gift in return for past favors), she is allowed to live within this remote region on the borders of the Empire, openly practicing her Art without interference from the Inquisition so long as she does not harm ordinary citizens. The Censors pay her quarterly inspection visits but so far have found no evidence that she has violated the terms of her dispensation, much to their disappointment. In addition to a cadre of cohorts, as befits a necromancer of her power and experience—mostly but not all necromancers, sorceresses, or enchantresses themselves, mostly female and a few of noble birth themselves—she maintains a small garrison and acts as overlord for the nearby village.

Some time back, Tanith had a religious experience during one of her more dire adventures that transformed her priorities. She claims to her fellow necromancers to have actually met the Dark Lady—the

Goddess of Death, Love, and Magic herself—and been charged by her with a mission. Infused with the power of the Goddess (see Vessel abilities, above), she has set about winning converts to the faith by stressing death as a peaceful haven after life's toil, deemphasizing its horror and helping people overcome their fear of it. As part of this effort, she transformed part of her castle into a hospice for the dying where the old and ill could be cared for before they peacefully pass away (unlike Drosmiter's "hospice," Tanith's does not help along the dying, merely guide them into accepting death rather than struggling against it). This has had the happy side effect of providing her with a steady stream of research material afterwards, using bodies donated with the permission of the departed. Her good works are viewed with suspicion by the local clergy but they enable her to operate where necromancers would otherwise be persecuted, as do her various charities, missions she undertakes at the behest of the king, and her friendships with various powerful adventurers.

Tanith is in a somewhat unusual position regarding the Secret College, being more of an absentee member than a regular attendee. They honor her for her extensive spell research, which has contributed over a score of new necromancy spells to their repertoire, but feel (rightly) that she does not fully share their outlook and goals. Nevertheless, she has won a following among some of the younger necromancers, who are attracted by her power, her personality, and her mystic blend of arcane spell research with devout worship of the Dark Lady. It is even rumored that the Goddess sometimes takes over Tanith's body and uses it for missions which not even Tanith knows about—the price, perhaps, of surrendering to your deity. Naturally, such rumors make the Censors nervous but only increase Tanith's prestige among her fellow necromancers. The more optimistic members of the Secret College hope her special dispensation to live openly within the Empire is a sign of better times to come; the more cynical believe she will merely provoke renewed intolerance and bring down the wrath of a new Inquisition upon them all.

At home, Tanith is usually surrounded by her cohorts and apprentices, especially "the three ladies", her chief assistants: Tara (an enchantress), Neith (a vampire necromancer), and Genevire (her most accomplished disciple and presumptive heir). When away, she is frequently accompanied by "Bevin," an advanced golem she created from the remains of a close friend, a dwarven paladin comrade. Tanith also owns the animated head of an old foe known only as "The Black Hand," which she generally carries in her *bag of holding*; she granted him this limited continued existence after he tried and failed to kill her one time too many—while he is as disloyal as he dares, she keeps him around to draw on his vast knowledge of constructs. The Hand (CE) has the abilities of a 15th-level Necromancer but cannot access most of them because of his lack of a body to perform somatic gestures and manipulate material components. Finally, Tanith is rumored to have created a Colossus (100 HD flesh golem) several years ago, just to learn how it was done, and buried it somewhere near her castle, ready for use at need.

At home or away, she is rarely parted for long from her familiar, Wendell, a *living* cat of rather surly disposition.

Bevin

Advanced Golem: CR 10; Medium-sized construct; HD 18d6, hp 98; Init -1; Spd 20, can't run; AC 23 (touch 10, flatfooted 23); Atk +13/+13 (2d8+8 slam) or +15/+10 (1d10+10, +2 *keen dwarven waraxe*); SQ damage reduction 20/+2, immune to critical hits, mind-influencing attacks, most spells, slowed by fire & cold, repaired by electrical "damage," goes berserk (+1%/rd); AL N; SV Fort +6, Reflex +5, Will +6; Str 27 (+8), Dex 9 (-1), Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.



Chapter Seven: Personalities of the Secret College

Appendix: Reference Tables

Tool and Component Prices and Weights

Item	Cost	Weight
Belladonna extract, vial	100 gp	*
Body parts	**	**
Body, animal	3 sp to 10 gp	variable
Body, beast/magical beast	†	variable
Body, exotic (includes fey, giant, dragon, outsider)	†	variable
Body, humanoid	**	100 to 200 lbs.
Body, monstrous humanoid	†	variable
Body, shapechanger	**	variable
Bone saw	3 sp	1 lb.
Canopic jar	5 gp	10 lb.
Coffin nail	1 sp	*
Flaying knife	3 gp	1 lb.
Grave earth	5 sp	1 lb.
Linen wrappings	1 gp	5 lb.
Mummy bones	100 gp	3 lb.
Mummy dust, small jar	50 gp	1 lb.
Natron salts	10 gp	10 lb.
Needle, humanoid bone	5 gp	*
Needle, silver	7 sp	*
Needle, gold	1 gp	*
Powdered blood, exotic, vial	100 gp	*
Powdered blood, humanoid, vial	200 to 500 gp	*
Pus, vial	200 gp	*
Embalming resin	10 gp	4 lb.
Scarab beetle, dead	2 cp	*
Scarab beetle, live	1 sp	*
Skeleton, animal	5 sp to 100 gp	variable
Skeleton, beast/magical beast	‡	variable
Skeleton, exotic (includes aberrations, fey, giant, dragon, outsider)	‡	variable
Skeleton, humanoid	**	20 to 70 lbs.
Skeleton, monstrous humanoid	‡	variable
Skeleton, shapechanger	**	variable
Skin parchment, humanoid, sheet	100 gp	*
Skin parchment, magical beast, sheet	50 to 1000 gp	*
Tannis leaf	1 gp	*
Thread, animal sinew, spool	5 cp	*
Thread, silver, spool	1 gp	*
Thread, gold, spool	5 gp	*
Thread, ogre sinew, spool	25 gp	*
Thread, human sinew, spool	50 gp	*

*Item is of negligible weight

**See item description for more details

† 1000 gp or more per point of challenge rating

‡ 1000 gp or more per point of challenge rating plus 200 gp for cleaning

The Necromancer

Level	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Spells Per Day									
	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Create familiar	3	1								
2	+1	+1	+0	+3	Scribe scroll	4	2	0							
3	+2	+1	+1	+3		4	2	1							
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	4	3	2	0						
5	+3	+2	+1	+4	Control undead	4	3	2	1						
6	+4	+2	+2	+5		4	4	2	2	0					
7	+4	+2	+2	+5	Touch of death	5	5	3	2	1					
8	+5	+3	+2	+6	Bonus feat	5	5	4	3	2	0				
9	+5	+3	+3	+6		5	5	5	4	2	1				
10	+6/+1	+3	+3	+7	Imp. Ghoul touch	5	5	5	5	3	2	0			
11	+7/+2	+4	+3	+7		6	6	6	5	4	2	1			
12	+7/+2	+4	+4	+8	Bonus feat	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	0		
13	+8/+3	+4	+4	+8	Grave touch	6	6	6	5	5	4	2	1		
14	+8/+3	+5	+4	+9		6	6	6	6	5	5	3	2	0	
15	+9/+4	+5	+5	+9	Energy drain	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2	1	
16	+10/+5	+5	+5	+10	Bonus feat	7	7	7	6	6	6	4	3	2	0
17	+10/+5	+6	+5	+11		7	7	7	7	6	6	5	4	2	1
18	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+12	Touch of undeath	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	3	2
19	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+13		7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	4	2
20	+12/+7/+2	+7	+6	+14	Lich	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	5	3

The Death Knight

Level	Base Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Spells Per Day				
	Bonus	Save	Save	Save		0	1	2	3	4
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Resist poison	—				
2	+2	+1	+0	+3	Unholy aura	—				
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Immune to disease	—				
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	1				
5	+5	+2	+1	+4	Unholy steed	1				
6	+6/+1	+2	+2	+5	Cold resistance	2				
7	+7/+2	+2	+2	+5		3	0			
8	+8/+3	+3	+2	+6	Dark ritual	3	1			
9	+9/+4	+3	+3	+6	Lightning resistance	3	2			
10	+10/+5	+3	+3	+7	Bonus feat	4	2	0		
11	+11/+6/+1	+4	+3	+7	Fire resistance	4	2	1		
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+4	+8	Touch of death	4	3	2	0	
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+4	+8		5	3	2	1	
14	+14/+9/+4	+5	+4	+9	Control undead	5	3	2	2	
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+5	+9	Unnatural vigor	5	4	2	2	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+10	Bonus feat	6	4	3	2	0
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+5	+11	Unhallow	6	4	4	2	1
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+6	+12	Face of death	6	5	4	3	2
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+6	+13		7	5	4	3	3
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+7	+6	+14	Death knight	7	6	5	3	4

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NECROMANTIC FAMILIAR

NAME: _____

RACE: _____

ABILITIES:

STR **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier

SAVES:

FORTITUDE **REFLEX** **WILL**

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HIT POINTS _____

HIT DICE - BASE: _____ BONUS: _____

INITIATIVE: _____

SPEED: _____

AC: _____

ATTACKS: _____

DAMAGE: _____

FACE/REACH: _____

SKILLS: _____

FEATS & SPECIAL ABILITIES: _____

OTHER NOTES: _____

UNHOLY STEED

NAME: _____

RACE: _____

ABILITIES:

STR **DEX** **CON** **INT** **WIS** **CHA**

Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier	Modifier

SAVES:

FORTITUDE **REFLEX** **WILL**

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HIT POINTS _____

HIT DICE - BASE: _____ BONUS: _____

INITIATIVE: _____

SPEED: _____

AC: _____

ATTACKS: _____

DAMAGE: _____

FACE/REACH: _____

SKILLS: _____

FEATS & SPECIAL ABILITIES: _____

OTHER NOTES: _____

SPELLS PER DAY

	0	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH	7TH	8TH	9TH
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SKILLS ADDENDUM

ABILITY RANKS	MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIER	SKILL MODIFIER	SKILL	KEY ABILITY
+ _____	+ _____	= _____	Craft (Construct)	INT
+ _____	+ _____	= _____	Craft (Embalming)	INT
+ _____	+ _____	= _____	Knowledge (Anatomy)	INT

ABILITY RANKS	MISCELLANEOUS MODIFIER	SKILL MODIFIER	SKILL	KEY ABILITY
+ _____	+ _____	= _____	Knowledge (Mortuary Customs)	INT
+ _____	+ _____	= _____	Profession (Graverobber)	INT

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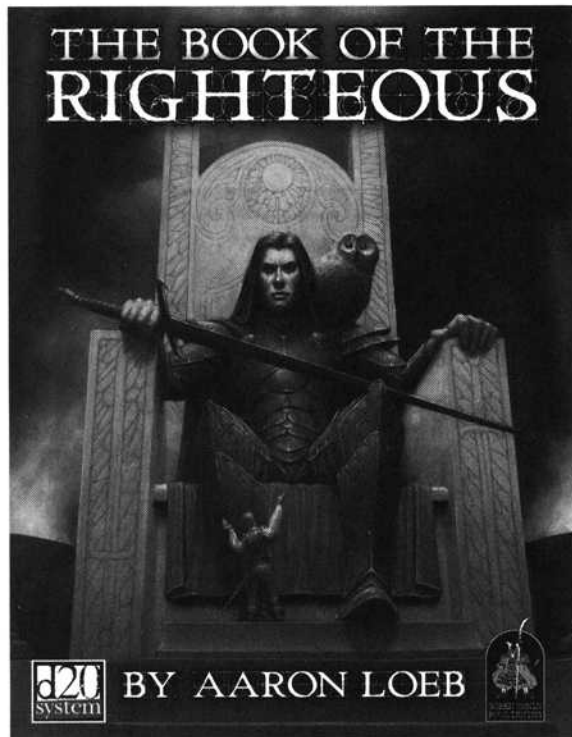
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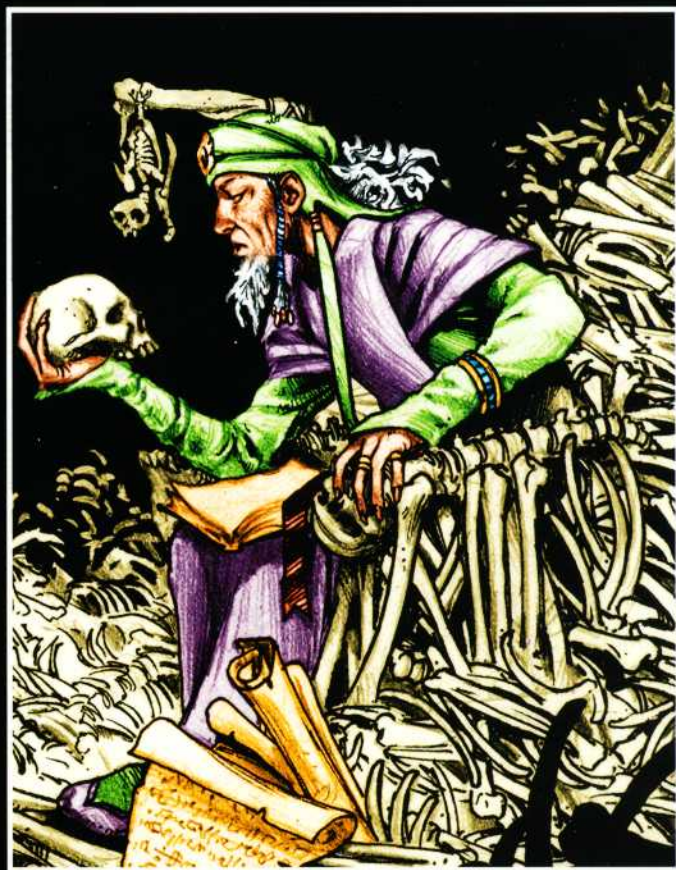
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