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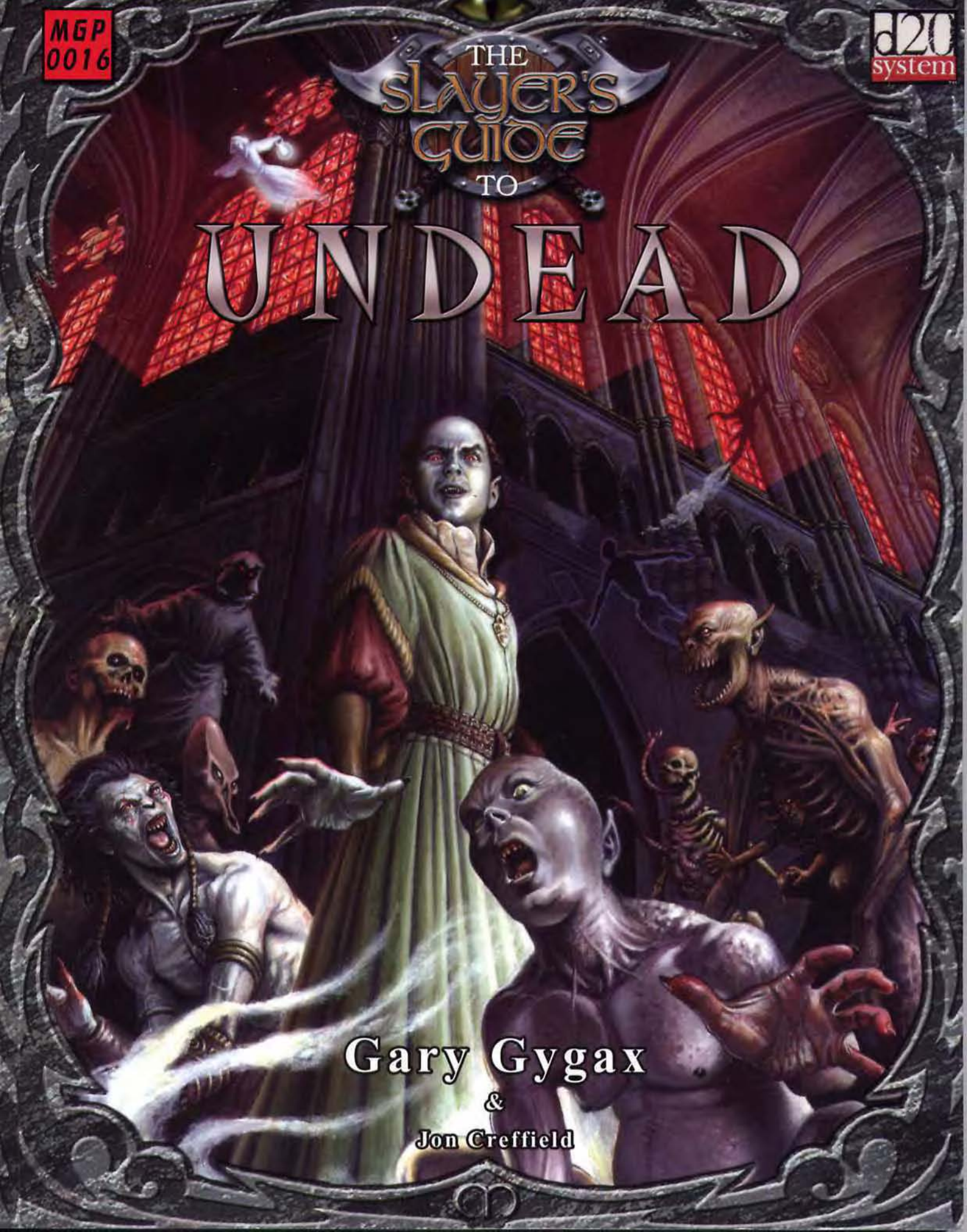
THE
SLAYER'S
GUIDE
TO

UNDEAD

Gary Gygax

&

Jon Creffield





Quilliams
2002

Human Body
The Atlas
of the
Human Body

The
Slayer's Guide
To
Undead

Gary Gygax and John Creffield

Contents

Introduction	2
A Demonic Overlord	4
The Unwilled Living Dead	12
The Free Willed Living Dead	25
Spirits of Evil	63
Lords of the Living Dead	85
Hybrid Undead	99
Peak of the Nightlord	101
Bestiary of the Damned	115
Index	127
Licenses	128

Credits

Additional Text: Shanon Kalvar

Line Developer: Paul Tucker

Editor: Daniel Bishop

Cover Art: Chris Quilliams

Interior Illustrations: Anthea Dilly, Chad Sergesketter, Chris Quilliams, Danilo Moretti, Drew Langston, Eric Bergeron, Fred Rawles, Marcio Fiorito, Nathan Webb, Patricio Soler, Phil Renne, Rich Longmore, Rod Pereira, Sarwat Chadda, Tony Parker

Production Manager: Alexander Fennell

ProofReading: Lucya Szachnowski

Special Thanks: Steve Mulhern

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MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

Mongoose Publishing, PO Box 1018, Swindon, SN3 1DG, United Kingdom

info@mongoosepublishing.com

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INTRODUCTION

Mouldering soil cracks open, emaciated limbs burst through the ground and claw-like hands tear at the turf as an unnatural horror from the demesne of worms and beetles comes to stand beneath the moonlight.

In cottage, castle and cave the living shudder and huddle closer to their fires. Is that a sound at the gate, is someone knocking? All stare fixedly at the flames dancing in the hearth, for none wish to go and see what might have returned from the gloom. Mother, father, brother, sister or friend, it matters not. Their place is with the dead now, no rights have they to the soft summer sun or to the warm glow of love. Let them be gone.

Are your players afraid of the undead? Do their eyes widen when a vampire is encountered? Does a chill run down their spines? Or perhaps they merely grab hold of their twenty-sided dice and prepare to dispatch the fiendish wretch to the hell it has avoided while grabbing a piece of pizza and talking about last week's episode of *Star Trek*. If the latter is true of your players then this guide will prove most useful. Herein are the secrets of the grave and the terrors of the night, and players who fail to respect and fear the living dead which grace the pages of this tome will find their characters falling prey to these life-hungry horrors!

THE SLAYER'S GUIDES

This series of supplements, designed for use with all fantasy-based d20 games systems, takes an exhaustive look at specific monster races, detailing their beliefs, society and methods of warfare. Herein the undead are considered; every example of that noisome breed from *Core Rulebook III* is studied and not a few new examples are given. Truly the dark has never before held so many terrors for adventurers to face.

THE LIVING DEAD — FOES OF LIGHT AND LIFE

Those that somehow slip death's dark bonds and linger in our world have no place in it. If they are to remain they must carve one for themselves by sweeping aside the living and dispelling the natural order.

By what eldritch might do they hold on to a semblance of life? Some are brought to a state of living death by the malign work of necromancers — through dark magic wizards, sorcerers and priests can raise up the remains of a man and force the rotting carcass or age-stained bones to do their will. Such revenants are more fortunate than others of their ilk, for they are without consciousness and have no knowledge of the vile state to which their mortal remains have been brought.

More dreadful are those undead conscious of their state — the ghoul or barrow wight that still recalls the days of its life under the blue sky. Torn by the pain of half remembered things, envious of life and driven by an insatiable hunger, such free-willed horrors are a plague upon mankind.

Vilest of the undead are those that delight in living death, who eagerly sought that state of existence and scheme to further their power and take pleasure in spreading woe or further scattering the seeds of corruption. Powerful arcane forces must be wrought for men to willingly enter such a state, with potent philters, ancient spells and vast quantities of blood required.

Ghosts and other restless spirits are a source of much fear. Throughout history men have sought to placate the souls of their departed kin, fearful lest they cause mischief in the afterlife for their families still here on earth or, worse still, that they should return to haunt those they once held dear.

Skill Points and Templates

Throughout this book templates are provided that enable the creation of all manner of terrifying and unique undead creatures. The creature's type changes to 'undead' when these templates are applied, so technically their number of base skill points should change as well. This would entail a lot of work on the Games Master's part so we have chosen to follow the example set by the lich and vampire templates in *Core Rulebook III* and leave the skill points of the base creature unchanged. For the example creatures given herein, the modifier of each skill has been changed in accordance with the creature's new ability scores but the number of skill points they possess has not been changed.

All men seek to forget that which most plagues their mind whether debts, labours or a nagging spouse. Mary could soothe away a man's cares with a soft and gentle caress, the sound of her voice or the heat of her passion. For men truly overwhelmed by the world ardour does not come easy, for what they carry in their minds stills the fires a woman might otherwise light, and so it was with Kaluk – the unnaturally-aged swordsman who had shown Mary the curious tome. From her first sighting of the time-mouldered book she had desired to read it. Words did not come easy to her, girls of any class were rarely taught to read. Mary was more fortunate than most. Her adolescent years had been spent in the care of a priest who had taught her to spell so that she might learn from his collection of holy books. Mary had learned a little of reading but not the morality that the pious cleric had hoped to instil in her young mind.

Kaluk had wished for nothing save to drink of the inn's golden ale and ponder the plight of his companions, lost in the horrid tomb from which he had fled. He would not allow Mary to read what lay between the book's worm-eaten covers.

'Tis the only treasure I possess girl and I would keep it near me and hand it over to none. Besides there can be nothing to interest you in it, I glanced at its pages and what I read made me tremble,' is all the reply he would give.

Such words served only to heighten Mary's eager curiosity, hardening her determination to learn what secrets might lie within. All the scrolls of her youth had seemed banal to her, never engaging her interest, but surely this book, pried from the deep darkness where the dead still walked would hold answers to the many questions Mary had about life, death and what lay beyond the grave. The pious homilies and promises of redemption offered in the temples always struck her as sops to please congregations burdened by life's many miseries, the descriptions of future glory a poor compensation for the drudgery of everyday existence.

Resolved to read the book at all costs, Mary set aside her trade for the eve and spent her time in Kaluk's company. At first he would hardly speak with her, turning away her questions with a grunt or a shrug, but Mary persisted, seeking the key that might lead him to unburden himself fully and finding it at last in asking him of how he and his lost party had first met. Recalling their first happy days together Kaluk spoke freely and slowly, Mary guiding him to speaking further of his life. Mary knew the art of seduction well – to show interest in another's speech was a sure way to make oneself seem a soul-mate. Subtly she offered agreement to all Kaluk's opinions, sharing small details of her own life when such were in accord with his. Troubled as Kaluk was, he had no wish to head for bed when the last of the patrons left. Mary, swift as a she-fox, urged him to her chamber so they might talk further saying, 'in your company I feel respected and safe knowing you seek nothing from my body.'

In her perfumed boudoir, hung thickly with rich fabrics and rare silks, she guided him yet further towards love, speaking of her 'lost innocence' and 'cruel life'. Feigning that she had never given love freely to any man and had known only brutes, she awoke first sympathy and then lust in Kaluk.

Their union had been short and savage, as if Kaluk hoped to force the demons from his mind with each vigorous thrust. When he was spent Mary whispered softly in his ear and rubbed gently at his brawny shoulders until Kaluk, momentarily freed from the memories that brought him such anguish, fell into a deep sleep.

Mary stealthily slipped her lithe form from below the warrior's heavy body, careful not to disturb the slumber holding him. Beneath the pale light of a single candle, she pried open the heavy hinges of the *Book of Dis* and turned to the first page. Seeing it covered in crude and unpleasant depictions of skulls, she turned the page again only to be confronted by odd diagrams and sigils, the meanings of which were unknown to her. Disappointed, she paged yet further into the tome, finding more meaningless scrawls and unhealthy pictures. Frustration built within her until, on the thirteenth yellowed leaf, she came upon a decipherable script.

All hail the Dark Master, he of a thousand voices, lord of the bones that walk, animator of dead flesh, king of shadow and sovereign of the blood-soaked vampire.

Let he who would break death's veil speak thrice the Master's name: Orcus, Orcus, Orcus!

In the light of the flickering candle Mary whispered the name. Upon its third utterance a breeze – cold and somehow damp – stirred the linens hanging over her pillow-strewn bed, sending a shudder of delicious intensity down her spine. Kaluk stirred fretfully in his sleep; Mary smiled.

A DEMONIC OVERLORD

Orcus, lord of the damned and prince of the undead, rules a noisome plane where death is meaningless as all flesh, no matter how corrupted, has volition. Shambling *things* populate his charnel abode; vampires are his knights and ghouls his foot soldiers. He is the king of the living dead and the original perpetrator of the dreadful curse that causes the dead of the material world to rise and walk.

Long ago, before time itself was fully established, there was a golden age when death was unknown. In this age of peace and plenty, gods and men walked together. The many myths of man paint pictures of this period in different ways but all agree that our forbears eventually broke their word to the gods and, in doing so, lost mankind's privileged position in the earliest paradise. No longer were his days unnumbered – death came to man. Some argue that death is good as renewal comes after it, the aged and infirm passing as new life grows in a mother's womb. Others see it as a balancing force; just as there can be no light without darkness, there can be no life without

death. However, most know death for the horror it is, stealing away a man from the love of his family, leaving the bereaved only a grave and memories to remind them of one who once walked, talked and laughed with them.

Delighted by this rupture between heaven and earth, the demons and devils rubbed their scaly talons together in glee, eagerly awaiting the lost souls of evil folk who would plummet across the astral wastes and end up in their terrible realms when they lost their material lives. Yet for Orcus this was not enough, for was not death the will of the celestial powers? Was it for Orcus to see the benign powers' wishes go unhindered? No, indeed it was not! In conclave with evil gods and powers that predated even the lords of paradise, Orcus plotted a terrible reversal of heaven's will. Knowing that the benign powers offered those remaining faithful to them an eternal life in elysian fields at the end of mortal existence, Orcus sought a similar way to reward those who had been evil, despicable and immoral during their days on the material world. Of course, being utterly evil himself Orcus wanted a 'reward' that would in itself be a terrible burden, as well as a source of woe for mortals still living.

So it was that when truly evil souls arrived in the abyss, Orcus sent them back to the worlds of man to

For ten days and nights I lay in the coffin with black candles burning at my head and feet. Whether I made my journey in body or in spirit I cannot say, but journey I did. To Orcus' place I came, and all about me was dead and death. There is no life there, no warmth, only chill shadow and decay. I wandered across that waste of skulls to where a moat of blood runs past a fortress of bone. High upon the horrid battlements I saw the prince of death, though whether I saw his true form or but one of many I cannot say. On all sides the living dead surrounded him, for the bone walls of his castle did still subsist, and with moaning and awful groans the dead within them paid him homage. At his sides stood corrupted human forms, slack jawed and sightless, clad in armour and bearing pennants upon the tips of tarnished spears. Above him the sky was black, for a hundred shadows writhed and drifted as if they were clouds in the leaden air. Marshalling this host of the damned were vampire lords in black plate armour, their skin sallow for lack of blood and a greedy burning hunger in their eyes. Yet for but a short while did I gaze upon the living dead, for my attention was captured by their master.

Broad were the bat-like wings wrapping cloak-like about his back, his body was bloated and bloodless, having the look of a corpse and though I have heard tell this demon lord oft times wears the mask of a goat, the head I saw was more akin to a man's. Nor did I see the cloven hooves and barbed tail with which he is so often depicted, for his lower half was hidden by a host of lesser-demons. To these he touched a sceptre of strange design bearing an emblem of death and each was transformed, becoming a malevolent spirit, flesh-eating ghoul or life-hungry wight.

At Orcus' direction these undead horrors leaped from the battlements into a vortex of indigo energy, swirling like a storm cloud above the castle's blood-filled moat.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

claw their way free of the grave. This dreadful parody of resurrection was no true reward, however, for those afflicted by it felt a burning anguish, an unquenchable envy for those still living. Furthermore, in order to preserve their living dead state, they needed to feed upon the life forces of mortals lest they return to the horrible, unthinkable tortures of the demon realms.

Never-ending is Orcus' ingenuity, in his wicked realm a legion of demons devise new and more terrible undead forms with which to 'reward' the evil and plague mankind. So dreadful is Orcus' curse that the minions he sends into the material world have the power to inflict this 'undeath' on those that they kill, causing the numbers of living dead to grow exponentially unless checked by steadfast heroes willing to risk their souls to protect the world.

While this tome discusses many kinds of undead, the products of Orcus' depraved will and the black power of evil gods, there is yet hope – the benign powers did not leave mankind defenceless. Much to Orcus' rage, his evil servitors are powerless against the divine radiance of the beneficent gods. The gracious celestial powers can make known a portion of their divinity in the person of a true clerical follower. Thus, undead exposed to a bold priest, strong in faith, will flee from, or even be destroyed by, such holy power made manifest.

Here in the material world there are hidden shrines dedicated to Orcus. Only the most depraved of human souls offer their prayers to him. Humanoid tribes and other wicked creatures frequently count him amongst their gods and many a vampire or lich is dedicated to him.

Those seeking entry into undeath, as certain powerful magi are inclined to do, oft times call to Orcus as a part of the terrible rituals required of one who would exchange life for living death. Orcus draws power from such mortal devotions, using the energy it gives him to spread woe in the many worlds of man and to contest for the limitless planes of the abyss with the other princes of demonkind.

Those honouring Orcus usually do so in conjunction with homage paid to certain black gods and goddesses of death. The names of these terrible deities vary from world to world but all are malign haters of mankind. Alone, Orcus lacks the power to spread the curse of undeath to every world and so he receives power from the wicked gods with which he is

allied. Thus he could be viewed as either their agent in this evil enterprise or as an equal. An example of this is found in the dread organisation known as 'The Sons of Dis' whose unholy tome is quoted from throughout this book. Dis is a little-known deity who serves Hades. While the dark brotherhood bearing his name hold Dis in high regard, their spells and rituals name many vile gods, goddesses, fiends, devils and demons with Orcus in a prime position, for they are necromancers of the darkest sort.

A chapel dedicated to Orcus is a truly vile place. The demon prince's adherents must locate it in a hidden place, for no civilised society will allow the awful practices they indulge in to go unpunished. Some are secreted beneath a city's streets, accessed by hidden passages leading from apparently respectable residences and businesses. Corrupted clergy, who have turned from the gods of light, have been known to desecrate their ostensible place of worship by hiding a shrine dedicated to the prince of the undead within its crypts.

Of course it is in the mausoleums, cemeteries and catacombs that Orcus' congregations are most likely to gather, as there is a plentiful supply of skeletons and corpses to use in their unholy magic and, perhaps, a company of ghouls willing to join in their wanton dancing and unspeakable feasting.



The Phenomenon of Good Undead

The very nature of most of the undead is a blasphemy against the balance of life and death, creatures of negative energy with an unnatural life and a cursed consciousness that is acrimonious towards all truly living things. Virtually all free-willed undead are the result of some sort of curse or supernatural contagion. The result is a being that carries a hatred for all life.

Notable exceptions exist, of course. Most common is the ghost, a special form of undead that is tied more closely to the ethereal plane than the negative material one. The creature is born in the negative energy caused by a great tragedy, but does not always have a constant connection to the negative plane. Many, but not all, ghosts wish for some unfinished task to be accomplished and haunt places, not people. Thus, the ghost's alignment can run the gamut of Law, Chaos, Good or Evil.

Curses can also turn the free-willed undead on their head, so to speak. For example, while vampires are normally immune to all mind-affecting spells, certain items, such as a *helm of opposite alignment*, can affect them. After being affected by such an item, these predators of the living will become filled with angst and guilt. Since most beings, both living and undead, have a strong self-preservation instinct, such creatures are likely to want to continue their existence and turn to good gods, seeking atonement for their sins.

There is also the phenomenon of other free-willed undead of an alternate alignment and rumours of liches, mummies and similar corporeal creatures with non-evil alignments have been passed around for centuries – those entities willing to make a dire sacrifice to serve some greater good. While rare, such creatures do exist, tragic and lonely figures that have long-term goals and tasks to deal with.

Good undead, especially corporeal ones, are still not going to have universal support, as their very existence is a blasphemy. Good creatures, particularly celestial outsiders and clerics, often have a deep loathing towards the aberration, since the creatures use energy that is in direct opposition to their holy power. Similarly, those venerating nature are not likely to support the undead, since their very existence is an imbalance in nature. A militant sect of druids with a strict interpretation of neutrality, for instance, might hunt down all undead, no matter what their alignment. Likewise, the common man is liable to ready the fire and holy water first and ask questions later. Of course, powerful evil undead and those that practice necromancy are some of these 'converted' creatures' fiercest foes.

Where a kingdom is built upon depravity, cruelty and wickedness, the followers of Orcus can act openly. They will build a black cathedral to venerate the horrible demon and fill it with undead servants. Smaller temples can be found in far off uninhabited lands, remote mountain ranges and the deep jungles of night-black isles.

Within these impious structures horrors uncounted are to be found. Shadows rule, for the spawn of Orcus fears the light. No sane man can walk inside without a sense of foreboding and fear – a shiver will run down his spine at the sight of the gruesome gargoyles depicted on pillar and wall, the abominable scenes depicted in the wall carvings and the blasphemous nature of the tapestries and altar cloths. What little illumination there is comes from candles fashioned from corpse fat, a charnel smell hangs over all, for here the rotting remains of bodies still walk, dropping maggots with each shambling step.

When the temple is concealed in some law-abiding land, its priests must go to great extent to both hide and feed the undead servants found in the place. Often it is safer for the human clergy to go abroad at night to waylay and capture innocent folk, rather than allow the living dead to roam freely. Annoying bands of adventurers are apt to track the undead down, following them to the evil fane itself and wreaking vengeance upon the wicked clergy of that place.

When first he calls to Orcus, the would-be adherent is answered by a soft and gentle voice that speaks not in words but rather in emotions working upon his already decadent soul. The initiate is lead further and further away from the light, for darkness is made to seem sweet and alluring. The dark master detests the gods of good and likes nothing better than to steal away one of their beloved children, making them as despicable as he is himself. Although Orcus' vile, hate-filled spirit may at first seem a thing most refreshing to his mortal follower, this is only because Orcus chooses to mask himself, giving the impression

of a wronged lord who will reveal to his new worshiper those secrets the 'oppressive' celestial gods have hidden from man. Of course, the dark master has no regard for his mortal followers, thinking them utter fools. He gleefully engineers the destruction of their souls while giving them trinkets of power, petty spells which cost him little to grant, and false knowledge that serves only to build a gulf between them and the benign gods that would forgive and save them. Their eventual reward will be a horrendous existence in the abyss, where they will be the food and play-things of sadistic demons until such time as Orcus returns them to the world of men as loathsome undead.

There is no question that the legions of undead answering Orcus' call in the abyss give him a great advantage in the never-ending wars there. Being creatures of chaos, the demon princes find co-operation distasteful, ever questioning the motives of their brother princes and fearing one might gain mastery and dominion over them all. Their evil nature makes war an attractive option and so it is that, on the contested layers of the abyss, armies near infinite in size battle unceasingly. Shoulder to shoulder with his armies of lesser demons stand the dark master's myriad undead troops, from lowly companies of bow-armed skeletons to vampire



cavaliers mounted upon undead dragons, while lichs work their spells at the behest of their lord.

What Should And Should Not Be Undead – A Guideline For The Games Master

This book attempts to expand upon the types and possible combinations of undead for the intrepid Games Master. However, before applying the presented templates, it should be noted that there are limits to what beings can have undead templates applied to them. Below are some general guidelines of how to best use the undead templates with the creature types presented in *Core Rulebook III*.

Humanoids are considered the prime candidates for undead, for that is what most of these creatures used to be.

Fey tend to be resistant to the undead as they have strong supernatural ties to nature which resist the contagion of undeath. Still, negative forces might be able to corrupt them if the energy is sufficiently strong, or if the creature is evil by nature.

Giants are still very much humanoid in nature. It is thus logical that they could also have undead versions. Their huge size and isolated nature tend to make the occurrence of undeath lower than that found in smaller species.

Monstrous Humanoids make good undead, though they are rarer because of their strangeness.

Animals, Beasts and Magical Beasts can be animated by powerful wizards and clerics and the type of undead such entities become is determined by the magical means of their creation.

Shapechangers depend on the creature in question. For instance, lycanthropes or doppelgangers are suitable for transformation into some form of undead, while the phasm, with its gelatinous nature, would not be.

Abberation is a catch-all category for several weird and alien monsters of varying types, some close to humanoid (such as the mind flayer) and others not (such as the beholder). The Games Master should consider the impact of such a creature carefully before creating an undead abberation, as certain powers and abilities could be impacted. Some of the more

powerful aberrations might have their own powerful undead variants (such as mind flayer lichens).

Dragons seem to live forever, and they consider themselves the ultimate beings in creation. However, some few may choose to become undead just as humans choose to be, while others might become cursed by a vile power.

Vermin are still life forms, so they could conceivably become undead, but none of the existing templates really fit for invertebrates or creatures with exoskeletons. Skeletons and zombies assume a standard humanoid creature and the vermin's instinctual intelligence prevent them from becoming more powerful creatures.

Plants are mostly inappropriate for undeath. Typical plant life does not really have a soul or spirit that can be corrupted. However, plant creatures with some form of intellect or personality might be altered into some form of corporeal undead, under the right circumstances. However, such creatures are extremely rare. If you use such creatures, they are probably the result of some cursed or corrupted land, as the typical undeath contagion does not affect them.

Elementals and Outsiders are from alternate planes, spheres, and/or dimensional matrices. Many such beings are immortal, meaning that they do not become infirm with age, are not subject to natural death and, in several cases, do not need to eat, drink, sleep or even breathe. As such, they are mostly immune to the forces that make other creatures undead.

Some suggested guidelines when considering an undead elemental or outsider are as follows.

† Humanoid creatures that have mortal lives and existences on their home planes, such as the planetouched, might become undead.

† 'Classic' elementals are beings composed of elemental force animated by spirit.

† Geniekind tend to be immune to undead status, since they are immortal beings.

† Even the weakest celestials can never become undead as their purity of spirit prevents such corruption, and most are considered immortal.

† Beings native to the planes of law and chaos are usually immune to undeath. Order resists aberrations, while chaos creates so many permutations that undead corruption is usually impossible.

† The lower realms are more supportive of undead than the other planes, since demonic and diabolic forces are at the root of many undead beings. However, most of the native beings, such as demons, devils and daemons, are immortal and do not die a natural death, so they too are probably immune to undeath. Perhaps at best, if devils and demons leave behind a corporeal body when slain, they can then be animated as skeletons or zombies, but that would be a rare occurrence.

Constructs are neither alive nor dead. Thus, they cannot become undead.

Oozes tend to be resistant to undeath's cold embrace due to their gelatinous nature.

Undead and the Undead Templates

While somewhat atypical, special circumstances might allow the combination of two or more undead templates, such as a vampire/ghoul that needs to consume both flesh and blood in order to survive.

PHYSIOLOGICAL TRAITS

The General Makeup of the Undead

Undead bodies are powered by negative energy. This allows the undead to move, sense and have some state of consciousness without having working organs or cells.

Sages, philosophers, bards and other knowledgeable men argue over the exact origin of this energy. Some suggest the energy comes from an alternate plane consisting of pure negative energy and their existence depends on access to this, others theorise that the power of the undead comes from the lower planes where demons and devils reign. Still others say that it is a type of magic that permeates the cosmos, just like all others.

The undead transformation creates a creature that is more like an object than a living being. Incorporeal undead are spirits or souls wrapped and empowered by negative energy. Corporeal undead are powered by negative energies rather than biological functions, which empowers motor function and, depending on the undead, prevents rot, decay, rigor mortis and other

effects that usually accompany death. Indeed, this negative energy can restore damage inflicted on the physical body of corporeal undead.

This has several major effects in terms of game mechanics. Vitals no longer apply, so a dagger through the lung, axe embedded in the skull or mace to the groin have no special effect beyond pure damage dealt. Since none of the undead organs are needed, damaging them does nothing. Thus, they are immune to critical hits, sneak attacks and death from massive damage, as well as stunning effects.

Undead are ordinarily immune to subdual damage, since they do not suffer fatigue or pain. Thus, one cannot 'knock out' undead with a particular blow, martial art move or succession thereof, nor do they suffer damage from environmental extremes.

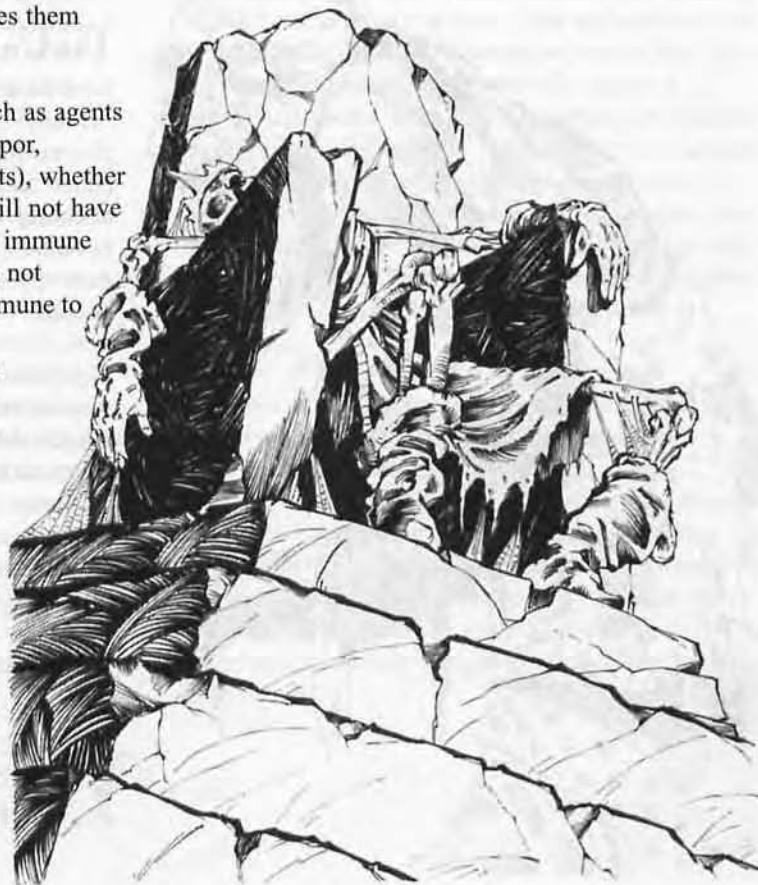
Undead, regardless of form, are also immune to effects that require fortitude saves to resist, unless the spell description specifically states that it effects objects or undead directly, such as a *disintegrate* spell. The Games Master should use this as a guide when considering other conditions where the spell does not have a saving throw. For example, the undead are immune to *blindness/deafness*, which makes them immune to *power word, blind* as well.

Poison and other biological chemicals (such as agents that cause intoxication, incapacitation, stupor, hallucination or nausea, among other effects), whether insinuated, ingested, inhaled or contact, will not have any effect on an undead creature. Undead are immune to paralysis, since their motive dexterity is not powered by natural forces. Undead are immune to disease, however, the negative energies surrounding certain undead may allow the undead to serve as a 'carrier' for a disease. Some undead also work in symbiosis with slimes, moulds, rot grubs and the like.

Undead cannot be affected by a polymorph effect unless it can also affect an object, such as *polymorph any object*. Those undead that have spellcasting abilities can use a *polymorph self* spell, spell-like or supernatural ability, to assume a semblance of a normal living creature. Note that even corporeal undead are immune to standard petrification effects (including *flesh to stone*), as their bodies no longer conform to living flesh.

Biologically, most undead lose the ability to procreate – their undead status making them incapable of reproducing in a natural way or experiencing carnal lust. The only being who can possibly engage in procreative activity might be the vampire. Rumours exist of humanoid offspring resulting from trysts between living women and male vampires, but most sages dismiss this theory as simple myth.

Unlike most living creatures, undead do not *need* to consume to survive, the negative energy that empowers their existence suppressing any possible need they would otherwise have. However, certain corporeal undead *want* to feed. This is a powerful psychological want, like an addiction that never ends, and is spiritually torturous for one of these undead to go without. A ghoul locked in a tomb for years will attack the first bit of meat it sees in a berserk frenzy, while a vampire prevented from consuming blood will appear haggard, aged and decrepit and will desire to get blood at the first opportunity.



Senses of the Undead

The senses of the undead need some explanation. The senses of corporeal undead, while tied to their physical form, appear to have at least a small preternatural element to them. A skeleton, for example, has no physical eyes or ears but can still see and hear as effectively as a healthy human can. The condition of the body does not affect their ability to perceive, nor can these senses be directly attacked in combat.

All corporeal undead have a sense of touch (including temperature and pressure sensitivity), although only the intelligent undead are able to utilise it effectively. Thus, while someone knifing a zombie in the back would cause it to turn and face its attacker, it would not react if set on fire.

While the senses cannot be attacked directly, either via combat or direct spells (for example, by the *blindness/deafness* spell), such senses can be blocked. Fog and smoke can obscure their vision and magical

spells that affect the senses, such as *silence*, *glitterdust* or *darkness*, are also effective.

Weaknesses of the Undead

Virtually all undead creatures despise daylight and many are damaged or weakened by it – powerful nightshades cringe, vampires burn and wraiths lose their ability to manifest. It is the most natural source of positive energy in the material world and a prime component of the upper planes of existence. Sunlight is also known to be a key element in magical effects that hurt undead, and clerics of solar deities tend to have extra turning ability against the undead.

All the immunities of the undead carry a price. The corporeal undead does not possess the natural regenerative abilities of a living creature and so cannot heal burns, wounds or broken bones. By breaking bones and hacking off pieces of flesh, the corporeal form of an undead can be damaged enough that the negative energy matrix is disrupted and the creature dies. Undead cannot be healed as living beings can – in fact, the positive energies that clerics use to heal creatures harm the undead, disrupting the negative energy matrix that holds them together.

The Undead Psyche

Undead are immune to virtually all spells that affect the mind. This includes illusions composed of phantasms or patterns (*weird*, *hypnotic pattern*, *colour spray*) and spells that have the ‘mind-affecting’ descriptor. Thus, undead cannot normally be *charmed* or *compelled* and are immune to spells such as *fear*, *emotion*, *hypnotism*, *suggestion* and *hold monster*.

This power causes many debates among sages and seers as the undead span a wide variety of creatures, not just mindless fleshy automatons. Liches and vampires have been shown to carry the widest variety of human traits – intelligence, emotions, intuition and knowledge – and yet they are still immune to mind-affecting magic.

Some have hypothesised that the undead do not have working brains and thus the magic cannot affect them. However, it is known that powerful enchantment magic exists that can compel servitude and loyalty from virtually every creature, including strange aberrations, elementals and even outsiders, of which some have strange



brains (or no brains at all), so this theory has been largely dismissed.

Perhaps the reason for the immunity is different for each type of undead. Skeletons and zombies, for example, have no true intelligence and, as such, they have no 'mind' to influence at all. On the other hand, most intelligent undead think in a particularly twisted or demented way, with ghouls, wights, spectres, allips and the like appearing to have an almost psychotic bent to their psyche which is warped into such a monomaniacal state that nothing can influence it.

The predatory and almost-human vampire, the vile lich and those strange creatures such as devourers and nightshades, appear to have full minds. However, they too are unaffected by enchantment spells. Perhaps these creatures have superior will that allows them to resist such spells.

Whatever the case, sages agree that negative energies play a part in the immunity and these energies can be manipulated with knowledge of the right forces. Despite the general resistance to necromantic effects, certain spells of the necromancy school can mentally paralyse an undead being (such as *hold undead*) or compel them into service (such as *control undead*). Knowledge of the dark arts gives one power over the undead, whether from knowledge of the negative energies, or secrets and mysteries taught to practitioners by infernal or abyssal forces.

It should be noted, however, that while the mind cannot be influenced, mentally attacked or probed, they can be contacted and communicated with via *telepathy*. A vampire cannot be compelled or its thoughts probed but telepathic communication, such as a *sending* spell, can reach the undead mind and many undead have telepathic or mind-influencing abilities themselves. The immunity to mind-affecting spells does not automatically give the vampire or lich the equivalent of *mind blank* spell, nor does it stop *screaming*.

Supernatural and Spawned Undead

As with lycanthropy, there appears to be a difference, however minor, between 'true' undead (known as *supernatural*), and those who get their undead status from being slain by another undead (known as *spawned*). There is an important distinction between the two.

Supernatural undead are created by uncanny forces. They either chose to exist in such a condition willingly, or are manipulated by dark forces and transformed into a foul undead creature. Such undead beings were wilfully evil in life and their undead states are usually the results of this – the exception being undead with different alignments, such as ghosts.

Spawned undead are created via the undead 'contagion', the result of ability damage or drain, energy drain or otherwise being slain by an undead creature. Sometimes they are weaker and controlled by their creator, such as vampire spawn are. Other times, they are identical to their creator in terms of power and personality and become free-willed.

Unlike *supernatural* undead, the *spawned* undead's soul is trapped and twisted into an unholy psyche typical to the creature, regardless of the original personality. Thus, the most upright and virtuous paladin can be twisted into the vilest and depraved vampire.

For the most part, players will probably try to restore old characters that qualify as *spawned* undead to life. Please keep in mind that even if the undead is cursed, its personality resists all attempts to restore it to life and that resurrection spells normally require a contemplative and strict ritual, which do not facilitate their being cast in combat. If the players have access to a magic item that allows instant *resurrection* or *true resurrection* to be cast as a standard action, you might want to allow the creature a Willpower saving throw, with failure meaning that the original, trapped, personality takes control and the resurrection is successful.

For most purposes, one cannot tell the difference between *supernatural* and *spawned* undead and it does not have any in-game effect save for role-playing purposes. Games Masters who wish *spawned* undead to have sparks of their former personality might consider using the flashbacks rule presented in the bodak entry of *Core Rulebook III* to make things more interesting and hint to the players that this being needs rescuing from its condition rather than destruction.

THE UNWILLED LIVING DEAD

Let us consider those living dead that are animated without consciousness or wills of their own, who act upon the bidding of the master who created them. Sorcerers, clerics and wizards can all work spells upon corpses to make them rise as undead creatures, bound to serve the caster's wishes.

SKELETONS

Standing guard in dusty crypts or following an evil master to carry out his wishes, the animate bones of man or monster are a potent tool for the one animating them. Truly a skeleton is a tool, a weapon rather than a creature, possessing no more awareness of itself than does a gravestone.

Physiology

Experienced adventurers hardly bat an eye when encountering sword-wielding skeleton warriors, having fought such before or seen clerics raise bones up from the dust. However, for the neophyte fortune hunter on his first dungeon foray, the experience can be unnerving and quite often fatal.

The appearance of skeletons varies with the magic used to give them energy. In those rare instances of a good spellcaster creating them, the bones are clean, white and glowing with a soft golden energy, with a silvery light playing about the eye sockets. When the caster is neutral, the bones are yellowed and cracked, with a baleful green glow in the skeletons empty eye sockets. Most common are the skeletons raised up by

evil casters whose bones are dark, cracked and stained, sometimes with scraps of leathery skin or rotting flesh still attached and leathery sinews binding bone to bone. These skeletons emit a hellish red glow from their eyes and their skulls seem to grin as they come clattering to the attack.

Habitat

Wind, weather and the changing of the seasons make no difference to a dead automaton. The skeleton has no habitat – it exists where its master bids it to exist and waits there through hours or centuries for its next instruction.

As skeletons need neither sleep nor food they make excellent guards. Charged with defending a place and killing all intruders, they will do so fearlessly, fighting until the last of their bony bodies is broken. Often skeletons serve as sentinels in little-used places where their creator knows his real followers will not enter, or as guards for the burial places of the long dead, keeping their watch untiringly through the millennia.

Society

There is no order in a group of skeletons, as they have no culture or desires to fulfil. In short, they have no society at all.

If the creator of a skeleton loses control of it, by creating more undead than he is able to master, the uncontrolled automaton becomes 'feral' and will destroy all living things it encounters, including its former master. This is why bands of skeletons are sometimes found wandering the wilderness and dungeons, destroying all they meet.

While skeletons are mindless, unwilled things, reports suggest *very rare* occurrences of memories lingering in one. It is thought this only occurs when the skeleton raised is the remnant of some fallen

While Kaluk slept his fitful sleep Mary read on, pouring over the brittle leaves of the unspeakable *Book of Dis*. She came upon a woodcut depicting a sorcerer touching the rotted remains of elves, its horrid panels showed the wood-folk's bodies rising, the flesh slipping from them like ill-fitting clothes, and the newly made skeletons then following the sorcerer in an eerie dance. While such blasphemous mistreatment of the dead made Mary grimace, she felt within an urging to wield such power herself. Clients who had casually mistreated her and those who had satisfied themselves and left without a backward glance would dance to her tune and follow her will if she came upon their corpses and spoke the words of power to make the dead rise and walk.

spellcaster of great power. To the one so brought up from death's slumber, volition is a burdensome toil yet a great apathy binds it to its animator's commands. Should the necromancer sleep heavily, perhaps after indulging in drink or drugs, a skeleton with faint recollection can shrug off the chains binding it to unthinking servitude. If other skeletons are the remains of one-time cohorts, the now free-willed remnant can whisper to them of their past life and awaken a desire to return to death's oblivion. The sleeping necromancer will then learn the perils of his craft, awaking to the horror of being destroyed by his own constructs.

Methods of Warfare

There is no method in the attack of a pack of skeletons, they merely obey instructions given to them by their creator or, in the case of feral skeletons, follow an instinctual desire to destroy all life.

Orders given to a skeleton must be fairly simple and direct. Thus, 'kill anything entering this chamber', 'kill anything entering this room by the west door', 'kill anyone not bearing the symbol of fire' and 'kill anyone not wearing a face mask' are all acceptable commands.

Orders are given in such a way as to avoid circumstances in which the animator or his allies might be attacked and a clever adventuring party can exploit such loopholes. If they can learn the triggering event for a skeleton's attack, they can avoid doing that which triggers it. Unless the animator orders his automatons to attack those attacking them, a party will be able to destroy the skeletons without fear of retaliation if they have avoided the triggering event.

For example, in the case of 'kill anyone not bearing the symbol of fire', a party whose members had found such symbols on neck chains and donned them could attack the skeletons and destroy them without risk. Had the animator given the instruction, 'kill anyone not bearing the symbol of fire, or those attacking you', then the skeletons would retaliate after the party's initial attacks. In such a case the party would automatically have initiative and could array themselves in whatever order they wished to maximise their potential for attack and defence before the battle started.

If the animator is present, he may issue new orders to his skeletons as the need arises, however, the Games Master is urged to have the skeletons fulfil these instructions to the letter. The skeleton can draw no conclusions of its own, thus a necromancer crying out, 'destroy them!' and making a grand gesture towards his enemies had better be sure none of his allies are in the area towards which he pointed. The skeletons will make no distinction between friend and foe in such circumstances.

A powerful necromancer with many skeleton squads at his disposal might order some of them to follow the orders of one of his henchmen. In such circumstances the automatons will obey the henchman's commands unerringly and literally, just as they would the necromancer's. If the commander is dim-witted this could prove both amusing and dangerous. Note that, having instructed the skeletons to obey his underling, the animator cannot issue them with orders himself should the henchman fall.



THE UNWILLED LIVING DEAD

Upon creating his skeleton troops, an animator can garb them in good armour and give them decent weaponry. A phalanx of pike-armed skeletons clad in banded mail might shield a dozen of their cohorts plying longbows.

No matter how well-armed a skeleton force might be, it will use no ingenuity in its tactics – missile fire will not be concentrated on spellcasters, enemies armed with bludgeoning weapons will not be regarded as a greater threat and there will be no retreats or attempts at ambush. Only if a reasoning, thinking commander is present will any kind of tactics be employed and even then such strategies will be limited to the most basic of plans, as the skeletons can follow only simple orders. Of course, the triggering event leading to a skeleton force's attack might cause surprise if the animator is clever. Skeletons that arise from the floor of a bone-heaped corridor, after the party has negotiated several chambers filled with such debris without incident, might well gain the advantage of surprise.

Higher-level clerics are sure to turn skeletons in abundance; make their life harder by having a Non-Player Character counter their turning or by

equipping each skeleton with an amulet specially created to bolster the wearer's turn resistance, similar to the ability possessed by most free-willed undead. Remember that evil clerics can bolster undead against turning attempts for ten full rounds. Where appropriate, have your evil cleric strengthen the skeletons (see *Core Rulebook I*).

Simple spell effects can be employed to make skeletons seem more threatening. A *magic mouth* placed on the lead skeleton's skull might speak a dire warning, while *light* spells cast on weapons will give the impression of eldritch power contained within. A variety of illusion magic can also lend the skeletons a far more frightful image, with nimbuses of black energy, flames in the rib cage and vapour coming from bony jaws being popular effects.

Roleplaying With Skeletons

We have now considered much about the automaton skeletal undead but how might the Games Master include these horrors in their game? Clearly the most common way skeletons will feature is as opponents for the adventuring band or as allies created by the party, but are there other ways skeletons might feature in the campaign?



A skeleton need not serve as simple guard and killer for its master. Equipped with shovels, arrayed in a line and ordered to dig, a squad of skeletons will work tirelessly day and night until ordered to stop. A fence or wall could be erected thus, and equally they might serve in other mundane and simple tasks for the animator.

When travelling in evil lands the party might encounter squads of these remnants at work laying roads, clearing woods or building fortresses. They would be under the direction of a skilled engineer, of course, who has been granted control of the skeletons by the one who created them.

How might the party react when coming to a drought-beset village and finding the peasants harnessing their ploughs to the skeletal remains of oxen raised up for them by the good-aligned village priest determined to save the community at all costs?

Intelligent Skeletal Undead Template

The skeleton entries in *Core Rulebook III* consider only humanoid skeletal forms, from the tiniest of man-like things through to the largest of giants. Consider the horrid consequences of a horde of skeletal rats pouring over a prostrate adventurer or the shock value of a mounted squadron of skeletons riding the animated bones of horses. Then again, the possibility for skeletal lions and tigers, or even dragons, does exist... This template is provided to help the Games master create unusual *intelligent* skeletons capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. These thinking skeletons cannot be created by the *animate dead* spell – they arise only at the will of black gods and the darkest of demons and devils.

Creating an Intelligent Skeletal Undead

'Intelligent skeletal undead' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature having an interior skeleton (hereafter referred to as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: The base creature's natural armour bonus is based on its size. Note that the listed natural armour bonus replaces that normally possessed by the base creature.

Size	Natural Armour Bonus
Fine	+0
Diminutive	+0
Tiny	+0
Small	+1
Medium-size	+2
Large	+3
Huge	+4
Gargantuan	+6
Colossal	+10

Attacks: An intelligent skeletal undead retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains two claw attacks if it did not already possess them. Note that claw attacks may be unsuitable for certain creatures, such as horses.

Damage: Intelligent skeletal undead have claw attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

Size	Damage
Fine	–
Diminutive	1
Tiny	1d2
Small	1d3
Medium-size	1d4
Large	1d6
Huge	1d8
Gargantuan	2d6
Colossal	2d8

Special Attacks: An intelligent skeletal undead retains all the special attacks of the base creature.

Special Qualities: An intelligent skeletal undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Immunities (Ex): Intelligent skeletal undead have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh and most internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: An intelligent skeletal undead gains +2 to Dexterity but, being undead, has no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Intelligent skeletal undead gain Improved Initiative, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and does not already have the feat.

Climate/terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Any.

Challenge rating: Same as the base creature.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Advancement: Same as base creature.

Intelligent Skeletal Undead Characters

As all intelligent skeletal undead are evil, some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only *rebuke*, not *turn*, the living dead, they must revere an evil god and receive domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity.

If a wizard or sorcerer skeletal undead character summons a familiar, it must also possess this template.

There is an example of an intelligent skeletal undead in the *Bestiary of the Damned* chapter.

THE UNWILLED LIVING DEAD

Some humanoid tribes might see the reanimation of dead warriors' remains as a boon if their shamans were to portray it as such. *'See how the one-eyed lord loves us? Does he not return the fallen so they might still fight against the vile elves?'* A party trying to sack an orc stronghold might find it necessary to destroy each enemy warrior twice, once in life and once in undeath.

In evil cities, watchmen might patrol with a squad of skeletons at their beck and call, the undead serving both as catchers of those opposing the wicked regime and a warning of the punishment awaiting the rebellious, with executed 'felons' being restored as skeletal minions of the government.

Another way to warn the potential criminal is for the remains hanging from gibbets to be treated with *animate dead* and then ordered to move and struggle, so too with those impaled or otherwise gruesomely put to death. Were a *magic mouth* to speak from the dead skull, players might think twice before indulging their talents in such a harsh domain. *'Look upon me and shudder, for all wrongdoers will soon join my dance.'*

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Dusty Tomes and Walking Bones

Clamerion the Loremaster has a problem. Having collected a library of rare books unsurpassed in his kingdom he warded the valuable texts with animated skeletons. Last night he lost control of his mindless undead guards. Quite unexpectedly, they turned on him and he was forced to flee for his life. As the practice of necromancy is forbidden by city ordinances, he cannot go to the authorities for help. Thus, having heard of the characters' reputation for dealing with dangerous situations quietly and effectively, he approaches them for aid.

Unbeknownst to Clamerion, a group of Orcus-revering clerics are responsible for turning the skeletons against their former master. Even now these evil priests are ransacking the loremaster's library in search of one particular text that reveals the location of a forgotten fane dedicated to their demonic lord.

The Black Cemetery

Skeleton packs rove the roads day and night attacking all they meet and even entering villages to wantonly take life. Something must be done.



No matter how many bands of these automatons the players destroy, more appear. It can only be concluded that someone or something is creating them. If the skeletons' tracks can be found and followed, they lead to a remote cemetery – abandoned, overgrown with weeds and full of crumbling gravestones and mausoleums. A brief inspection reveals many of the graves have been dug up and the iron gates of the sepulchres torn from their hinges.

Working diligently, yet unthinkingly, at the grisly task of exhumation are work gangs of skeletons. If attacked these automatons make no response, continuing at their labour until the blow of axe or mace ends their unlife.

Responsible for this mass desecration of graves is a mad sorcerer, convinced the day of judgement is at hand. Following a 'vision', this insane spellcaster believes he is the tool of the gods, charged with the raising of the dead and punishment of the world's sins. He has opened the tombs, animated the dead within and sent them forth to kill and destroy. In his possession is an evil amulet of undeath that allows the sorcerer to control a limitless number of skeletons and empowers him to *animate dead* five times per day. Unfortunately, the malign power it holds

unhinges its user's mind, leading him to a crazed desire to animate all dead things.

The sorcerer is powerful, perhaps too strong for the party to defeat alone. Fortunately, his disciple is at hand and warns the party of the malady affecting his master, urging them to remove the amulet and dispel the curse it has bestowed upon his once-kindly mentor. If this were done the sorcerer would reward the party richly before setting off to make amends as best he can for the evil he has spread. Prior to leaving he indicates one tomb in which he found a network of hidden caves and chambers holding many kinds of undead. There are rich rewards in this dark place but many fell challenges for the adventurers to overcome.



The Icy Fingers of Death

Inn and tavern gossip has it that the tomb of a clan of frost giants has been found in the high mountains. The dwarves who located the glacial sepulchre removed great treasures from the place but there is yet more to be found by an adventuring band willing to journey there.

After a perilous trek into the mountains, the party locates the tomb – its mouth exposed by the melting of a glacier's icy closure. The first few chambers are plundered, huge sarcophagi stand empty and massive bones litter the floor along with the occasional dwarven corpse.

Upon penetrating deeper the party discovers untouched graves but, upon opening them, they trigger long-dormant magic – raising up the skeletal occupants as giant undead. The bones of winter wolves and white dragons animate too, and so potent is the necromancy that these monstrous skeletons possess their icy breath weapons even in undeath.

Once the living dead are bested the party can garner a fortune in giant-wrought gold and gems. However,

upon leaving the adventurers find the dwarves who initially discovered the giants' graveyard have returned. Outraged at the party's plundering of 'their' find, the dwarves demand recompense. Will the party pay or fight?

ZOMBIES

Like the skeletons discussed above, a zombie is an unthinking automaton animated by sinister magic. Much of what was said in regard to the skeletal undead holds true for the zombie as well.

Physiology

No thought passes through the petrifying brain of an animate corpse – it feels no emotion and knows no pain. Ponderously the zombie responds to the wishes

Three days and three nights did queen Issiad mourn her lost love. At night she kept his cadaver in her bed and by day had her servants array the dead king in all his finery, seating the remains on his chair of state. When Bishop Compton could not return life to the rotting monarch, the queen had the pious priest's head removed and sent for Simon Trismagestus of our order.

Fearing for his own neck, Simon animated the king's corpse with a simple spell and bid the zombie he created from the fluid oozing remains to hearken to the queen's words. To this day the mad queen sits enthroned beside a maggot-infested corpse, spending her nights beside it too. Costly are the perfumes sprayed to cover the noisome smell of putrefying flesh but woe betide the courtier who fails to pay due homage to the mindless shell of the dead king.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*



of he who raised it, muscles long torpid and sinews leathery and dead move only in response to the commands of another, for the nervous system of the cadaver does not function.

As with the animated skeleton, the zombie's functions are entirely supernatural, no scientific or pseudoscientific explanation can be given for something wrought by such black magic.

A zombie made from the corpse of a thing but recently dead might pass for a living entity if viewed from a distance, although its sluggish movements might cause alarm. Once seen at close quarters, however, even the 'freshest' zombie will be seen for what it is. The eyes gaze fixedly and do not follow the thing's movements or actions, the upper limbs sway loosely as the horror shuffles forward or awkwardly turns and the jaws hang open and slack.

An older corpse produces a most loathsome zombie, eye sockets empty and oozing putrescent fluid or writhing worms. So rotted is the flesh of the thing's head that the lower jaw might hang down as far as the chest, while the skin of its cheeks falls in sallow folds.

Wriggling maggots squirm and feast in the cavity of its chest and clouds of flies hover around the rotting cadaver as it goes about its master's wishes.

It should be noted that once the zombie is animated, it no longer continues to rot, for the potent energy of the spell that causes it to be animated halts decomposition. Yet the stench of rot remains and the worms still feed on the undead corpse, for the magic allows renewal of what is eaten thus.

Habitat

As with the skeleton, there is no habitat for the zombie – it stands where it stands and does as its master bids.

Society

The zombie is a thing of oblivion, an unthinking slave. It should not be regarded as a creature as, like the skeleton, it is without self-volition – it is its master's implement and nothing more.

Masterless zombies, those whose creator is dead or otherwise unable to give them orders, will continue to fulfil their last instructions throughout eternity. The magic animating such corpses prevents the things from entirely rotting away although the passage of years makes them vile to behold.

When a wizard, cleric or sorcerer creates more zombies than he can control, the excess undead become feral and obey a simple urge to destroy living things, shambling across the world until sword, axe, mace or priestly power returns them to the grave.

Methods of Warfare

Massed ranks of zombies staggering forward to the attack, oblivious to all losses and careless of wounds received make an unnerving foe for the bravest parties of adventurers. As with skeletons, though, they can but follow the simplest of commands and are incapable of spontaneous action.

What has been written in regards to the skeletal automatons in combat applies equally to zombies. One notable difference is the slow movements a zombie makes, hampering it somewhat when it must close with its target. A powerful necromancer might

Intelligent Zombified Undead Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create highly unusual *intelligent* zombies capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. These thinking zombies cannot be created by the *animate dead* spell; they arise at the will of black gods and the darkest of demons and devils.

Creating an Intelligent Zombified Undead

'Intelligent zombified undead' is a template that can be added to any corporeal aberration (based on form), animal, beast, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid or vermin (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: Use the natural armour bonus listed on the table below or the base creature's natural armour bonus, whichever is better.

Size	Natural Armour Bonus
Fine	+0
Diminutive	+0
Tiny	+0
Small	+1
Medium-size	+2
Large	+3
Huge	+4
Gargantuan	+6
Colossal	+11

Attacks: An intelligent zombified undead retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a slam attack if it did not already have one. Note that a zombie can only ever make one attack in a round unless *hasted*.

Damage: Intelligent zombified undead have slam attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

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

Special Attacks: An intelligent zombified undead retains all the special attacks of the base creature.

Special Qualities: An intelligent zombified undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Partial Actions Only (Ex): Intelligent zombified undead have poor reflexes and can perform partial actions only. Thus they can move or attack, but can only do both if they charge (a partial charge).

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Modify from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex -2, Int +0, Wis +0, Cha -8. As undead creatures, intelligent zombified undead have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Intelligent zombified undead gain Toughness, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites.

Climate/terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Any.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Advancement: Same as base creature.

Zombified Undead Characters

As a zombified undead character *must* have an evil alignment and some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *core rulebook III*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only *rebuke*, not turn, the living dead, they must revere an evil god and receive domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity.

Where charisma affects spellcasting count the zombified undead's score as 9-points higher where magic use is concerned.

If a wizard or sorcerer zombified undead character summons a familiar it too must be one of the zombified undead. (Apply this template to the normal form of the familiar.)

There is an example of a zombified undead monster using a titan as the base creature in the *Bestiary of the Damned*.

counter this disadvantage with *haste* spells or special amulets allowing an undead wearer an extra partial action.

Another way to toughen up a zombie is to have growths of dangerous mould covering it. Imagine a group of long-dormant zombies warding a secret room in a necromancer's abandoned dungeon. During the long centuries, patches of yellow mould have sprouted up on their decaying flesh, drawing unspeakable nutrition from the decomposing tissue. As the party enters the zombies stagger forward, their jerky movements triggering the release of thousands of deadly spores!

Roleplaying With Zombies

As with skeletons, the zombie might serve as an unthinking labourer, a slave rather than a combatant for its master. Increased physical strength makes the zombie a better choice for such tasks.

Physicians and the scientifically inclined might use zombies in their studies of anatomy. The animated cadaver can be cut open, ordered to walk, and the hidden functions of muscle and sinew observed. Individual body parts might have animation in the laboratory of an unscrupulous student.

Larger cities sometimes have an illicit trade in dead bodies; these are animated by evil spellcasters who sell the cadavers to plantation and mine owners. The 'resurrection men' who unearth these corpses have been known to commit

murder for the few coins a fresh body brings when supplies of the recently dead are short.

Evil priesthoods use the threat of 'zombification' to control their terrified adherents; they know the remains of those displeasing the witch doctors of such cults will be indentured to perpetual zombie servitude once death claims them.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

A 'Passionate' Tale to Chill the Heart

There is an abhorrent rumour of a pleasure palace in a decadent city of the east. It is whispered that this harem is composed of specially preserved cadavers, the dead bodies of beautiful young girls and men, animated to fulfil the lusts of disgusting necrophiliacs willing to pay a small fortune to indulge their depraved desires with 'lovers' still capable of movement.

It is said the owner, a half-dragon/drow vampire, accepts commissions from noble clients and will abduct victims to order, even from distant lands.

When someone the party members know mysteriously vanishes, let the adventurers hear this horrid tale. Can the party catch up with the abductors in time? Once they know of the nauseating acts being practised, will they travel to the decadent city and put an end to them once and for all? What if the client





ordering their friend's abduction was the grand vizier of the immoral metropolis, will they still take vengeance against so powerful a man?

Drums on the Sea Shore

The terrified savages of the southern reaches report the bodies of drowned men are returning from the sea and attacking their stockades by night. These simple folk are pearl divers and many of their numbers are lost to the depths, but what is causing the dead to resurface and plague the living?

The players' ship runs aground on a sand bar not far from one beset community and the chief implores the well-armed heroes to give aid. At sundown ghastly, foetid undead lurch from the jungle and come clambering up the village's defensive palisade, careless of the spears hurled at them. If the party refused to give help they are still attacked as a horde of bloated cadavers board their vessel!

If the party can destroy the zombies, their trail can be followed back to an isolated cove. If an ambush is laid the next night, the party can take a sahuagin cleric and his aquatic-zombie servants unawares as he brings ashore more zombies with which to assault the villages.

If captured, the sahuagin reveals the presence of a sea-devil shrine not far from a spot favoured by the natives when diving. The evil sea-folk are

determined to preserve the place's 'sanctity' and thus seek to drive the pearl divers away.

If the party journey into the depths and assault the shrine, they find it warded by bizarre aquatic zombies – sharks, giant octopi and even a zombieified dragon turtle.

Kingdom of the Dead

In a remote and barren land the party finds the shattered remains of a once-mighty kingdom. Years of erosion have eaten into the stones of the crumbling palaces, aqueducts are filled with dust and temples and humble dwellings alike lie half-submerged in the sand.

Yet the folk of this kingdom have no rest. A mad necromancer who rules over all from a refurbished palace staffed with zombies has forced them from their graves. The shade of a former king materialises before the party while they traverse this strange country and begs them to kill the necromancer so his people's remains might return to their deserved rest.

When the necromancer is confronted, he offers to share his power with his would-be assailants. Would they too not like an army of slaves, could they not forge an empire here in the desert by leading a legion of zombies against the nomadic tribes and merchant cities? If the party resists temptation and lays the

its *spiderclimb* ability, only revealing its presence when directly over the party by releasing its terrifying scream. Dropping down to attack, this undead creature attempts to make a coup de grace if its victim has been paralysed, otherwise striking with its bone sword until paralysis results and a swift death can be delivered. Its sneak attack ability makes it a highly effective when striking from ambush, even though its target has yet to succumb to paralysis.

If its approach is detected, the skassassin's is adept at rushing past guards and against attacks of opportunity its armour class is an impressive 28. While subject to another's will, the skassassin is highly intelligent and the Games Master will do well to utilise this intelligence when planning the skassassin's assault. If it is clear a close-quarter combat will result in the undead's destruction, then it will waylay its intended victim and seek to kill it with arrows from its bone bow.

Of course, if the skassassin can time its attack for a period when its victim is sleeping, it will do so.

Roleplaying With Skassassins

Powerful priests, sorcerers and wizards can summon many malign beings to play the part of killer, yet the skassassin has abilities making it well suited to the act of murder. Of course, these undead are rare as the bones of executed murderers are not readily available and the remains of killers hanging from a gibbet are apt to disappear overnight when a necromancer has a rival to dispose of.

Mighty castles are no defence against the wall-scaling skassassin; what use are sturdy doors when this undead can open them freely? The most alert guard cannot save his master once fear has taken hold of him, leaving him paralysed. The skassassin is a frightful killer, one best resisted with magical wards rather than mundane ones.

If the skassassin must travel far to find its prey then it will do so by night, clothing itself in a voluminous cloak in an attempt to conceal its true nature from other wayfarers. Even when so disguised, passing through the streets of a city or town is hard to do without provoking alarm, a fortunate fact for many an intended victim.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Ensuring the Inquisition

Paldormio, a zealous and misguided cleric, has rooted out several covens of witches and burned a score or more wicked sorcerers in the town square. While he has managed to cause the downfall of a few miscreants, far more of those who have suffered at his hands have been innocent of any wrongdoing or, indeed, any magical prowess.

A necromancer whose apprentice was tortured by Paldormio is now bent on taking his revenge. Forewarned by divination, Paldormio knows he will be assailed by undead. The players are his chosen guards, for he knows them to be experienced in the fight against darkness. The party can refuse his request but doing so risks the wrath of his church – an unwise choice for foreign clerics, sorcerers and wizards.

Should the players be reticent to aid Paldormio in this matter, he will have one of their number arrested by his church guards (with the support of the town's militia). Paldormio makes it clear that the detainee faces torture and execution unless the adventurers can protect him from his assailants.

The players have until nightfall to make defensive arrangements. Provide them with a map of the inquisitor's manse and have them indicate where their characters will stand guard and what other measures they might take (such as set traps). If you wish, Paldormio might have several men-at-arms and the party can decide where these figures are located for the night's vigil—maybe these soldiers are under orders to arrest the party should they fail to protect the torturer!

If the party members are low level then a single skassassin strikes, scaling the wall, knocking open a window and then clambering across ceilings and silently disposing of guards until it is in a position to strike the inquisitor down. Higher level parties should face two or more skassassins backed up by diversionary attacks from more undead – such as giant skeletons battering the front door with a ram while zombie stirges fly through windows and ghouls and gargoyle alight on balconies.

THE FREE- WILLED LIVING DEAD

The passage into unlife is horrendous, whether the spirit is sent back to re-inhabit its dead body by the will of Orcus as a 'reward' for an evil life or trapped in the corpse due to the circumstances of death.

While the zombies and skeletons are mindless automatons, there are many undead still capable of

thought – cunning creatures with a will of their own. The skassassin has intelligence; it can formulate plans and adopt strategies, but it does so only to fulfil another's commands. It does not think and remember. The undead we consider in this chapter have a consciousness and will of their own. This consciousness is different to that possessed in life, the resolve is not that of their former self but rather a twisted and malign determination inculcated by the malign agency fostering living death in the material world.

BODAKS

Bodaks are mortals that were consumed by sheer evil. Able to kill with a glance and by such a look curse their victim with undeath, it is fortunate these things are both lacking in great intelligence and are chaotic

Mary looked up from the black book as her candle guttered and dimmed. Peering out of her narrow window she saw the moon was high in the clear starlit sky and realised she had been reading a long while. Softly she slid open a bedside drawer and removed a fresh candle, lighting it from the flickering stub of the first and, with a glance at the still-sleeping kalgus, returned to her study of the gruesome *Book of Dis*.

'How many killers hang from the scaffolds here about?' wondered Mary. One knowing the secrets of Dis could raise supernatural henchmen, remove every enemy or rival and make herself truly feared. Mary smiled a slender smile as she thought of One-Eyed Tab, guild master of thieves, to whom she paid a quarter of her earnings...

Returning to the book, she paged deeper into it until her passage through the tome was arrested by a single phrase written in the margin, 'Let he who would live eternal eat of the forbidden fruit.' Wondering at the meaning of this, Mary looked closely at the spidery writing crawling around a picture on the following page. The illustration showed a man-like thing so emaciated that its ribs were visible through its blotchy skin. As Mary gazed at the image it moved and it seemed to the startled girl that the thing beckoned to her, pointing with one clawed hand towards an open grave in the background.

Mary's breath came in short gasps, her vision swam and she found herself standing in a darkened cemetery. Before her was the thing from the picture, crouched like a dog despite its man-like form. Now she saw its flesh was not only thin but decaying too, it beckoned to her and in a voice high-pitched and pleading said, 'Join us.'

As a sleepwalker drifts, so did Mary walk towards an open grave following behind the wheedling horror who whispered again and again, 'Join us, join us.'

At the edge of the hole Mary stopped, gripped by a sudden fear. Her escort pointed into the pit but Mary was too terrified to look down. From below she heard more plaintive whispers, 'Join us, join us, eat of the forbidden fruit.'

Against her will Mary looked into the grave; it seemed unnaturally deep and wide and at its bottom a pack of ghouls in a rat-like frenzy were tearing the burial shroud from the corpse of a woman, sinking their teeth into the white flesh. One ghoul, fatter than the rest with a leering smile that showed bloody gobbets of flesh in its mouth, pulled the face cloth from the corpse.

With a strangled cry she cast the *Book of Dis* to the floor, finding herself back in her own perfumed room. She looked at her arm and saw bite marks upon it – during her unnatural reverie, she had sunk her teeth into her own arm.

necromancer low, the shade of the one-time king grants them a boon before returning to oblivion.

NEW UNWILLED UNDEAD: SKASSASSIN

Skassassin

Medium-size Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +4 (+4 dex)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 24 (+4 dex, +10 natural)

Attacks: Bone sword +11/+6; or bone bow +12/+7; or 2 claws +7

Damage: Bone sword 1d6+1; or bone bow 1d6; or 2 claws 1d4+1

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

Special Attacks: Bone bow, bone sword, scream of terror

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1, immunities, rogue abilities, spell-like abilities, SR 15, undead

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 18, Con -, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Balance +7, Hide +13, Listen +9 Move Silently +13, Spot +9

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral

Advancement: 7+ HD (Medium-size)

The skassassin is raised to undeath by a potent necromantic spell. In appearance it is much the same as an animated skeleton, although there is no light burning in its eye sockets.

The skassassin seeks out a single victim, guided by a mental link that can be broken only temporarily by spells such as *non-detection*, *sequester* and *mind blank*. If the mental link is so broken, or if the target leaves the plane upon which the undead is operating, the skassassin becomes dormant until such time as its mental link is re-established, whether by the expiry of the protective abjuration or its target returns.

Unlike skeletons and zombies, the skassassin possesses a cruel cunning, although it has no will of its own. The shade of the murderer whose bones were

used in its construction inhabits the skassassin, granting it a degree of self-volition. While tracking its intended victim the undead attempts to avoid combat with other beings by utilising its stealth skill but it will fight if cornered or if it is the only way for it to reach its victim.

Combat

The skassassin prefers to attack by surprise, utilising its skills to approach its target undetected and bypass any guards seeking to interpose themselves between it and its victim. While preferring to strike at close quarters, the skassassin will use its bone bow to make a ranged attack if closing with its target is clearly impossible. When assailing its victim, the skassassin will seek to paralyse him and then make a coup de grace attack.

Bone Bow (Su): The spell creating the skassassin also brings a powerful ranged weapon into being – a short bow made of thick, yellowed bone. The bone bow has the range increment and damage capabilities (1d6/*3) of a standard short bow but gains a +2 enhancement bonus to hit and causes those struck to become paralysed for one round unless they make a successful Fortitude save at DC 16. A bone bow can be used only by the skassassin for which it was created.

Bone Sword (Su): The spell creating the skassassin also brings a powerful melee weapon into being – a short sword made from a long shard of yellowed bone. The bone sword deals damage as if it were a normal short sword and causes those struck to become paralysed for 1d4 rounds unless they make a successful Fortitude save at DC 16. A bone sword can only be used by the skassassin for which it was created, who gains a +4 enhancement bonus to hit when wielding it.

Scream of Terror (Su): When within 50 feet of its victim, the skassassin lets out a high-pitched, spine-chilling scream. Any creature within range hearing it must make a successful Willpower save at DC 16 or be paralysed with fear for 1d4+1 rounds. The target victim makes this save with a -4 penalty. Creatures and characters that are immune to fear are unaffected by this ability.

Sneak Attack: The skassassin may strike as a rogue inflicting +3d6 sneak attack damage.

Evasion: The skassassin takes no damage when succeeding in a Reflex saving throw against a spell that would normally inflict half damage if a save were successful.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): The skassassin retains its dexterity bonus to Armour class regardless of being caught flat-footed, struck by an invisible attacker, or flanked.

Immunities (Ex): Skassassins have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh and internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *knock*, *spider climb* as a 6th-level sorcerer.

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

Animate Skassassin

Necromancy (Evil)

Level: Clr 6, Death 6, Sor/Wiz 8.

Components: V, S, M.

Casting Time: 10 minutes.

Range: Touch.

Target: See Text.

Duration: See text.

Saving Throw: None.

Spell Resistance: No.

This spell turns the bones of an executed murderer into an assassin ready to kill a victim of your choice.

You must know the full name of the target victim and their current location. Thereafter the skassassin has a mental link with its target and knows its location regardless of its movements. It will unswervingly head for that location with utmost speed to slay the victim.

The skassassin has 6 hit dice plus one extra hit dice for every other spellcaster level the activator has reached beyond the minimum caster level required to activate this spell. Once the target has been killed, the spell ends and the skassassin crumbles into dust.

Material Component: The bones of an executed murderer and a lock of hair or fingernail clipping from the assassination target.

Methods of Warfare

Entries for physiology, habitat and society are irrelevant for the skassassin, so we move straight to a study of its combat techniques.

A skassassin striding down a dungeon corridor straight towards an adventuring party will usually be reduced to bone fragments before dealing any appreciable amount of damage to them. This undead's true potential lies in its ability to make surprise attacks, swiftly bypassing guards to launch a deadly assault upon its intended victim.

Moving silently and hiding in every shadow, the skassassin closes with its target. Where possible it will scale the wall and climb along the ceiling, using



by nature. They do not attempt large-scale actions and rarely band together in groups of more than three or four individuals. Were a gifted bodak to arise, capable of welding together a sizeable band of its kin, whole cities might succumb to them, with each murdered citizen arising as a bodak to spread the curse yet further.

Physiology

The corpse of one transformed into a bodak loses the colour and vitality of life, becoming a grey shell to house the malevolent spirit within. While retaining a semblance of humanity, one cannot mistake a bodak for anything other than a monster, its features warped by the horror and fear felt in the last moments of life.

The supernatural death gaze exposes its victim to the same evil that created the first bodaks. One looking into the colourless eyes is momentarily transfixed. Only the staunchest will keep his soul, for the pallid orbs can draw it from the victim's body into an evil dimension where the spirit becomes one with the unspeakable dark before returning to the lifeless corpse.



Madness dominates the returned soul and yet a spark of the former being remains – an ember of humanity in a dark corner of the now twisted and malevolent mind. The sight of something familiar, be it person or object, can awaken this dormant sanity, calling back dim memories of its former life to the unfortunate bodak. Lucky is the adventurer granted sufficient reprieve by such a reminder to strike the bodak down before its evil nature comes to the fore once more.

Habitat

The bodak is spawned of darkness and in shadow it must remain. A dark god formed the first bodaks and his offspring are reduced to ashes if they brave the fierce radiance of the sun too long. In places dark and shadowy the bodaks lurk, often close to the site of their death, as to wander too far from their original den is to risk exposure when the sun rises.

The bodak's undead state persists throughout all eternity without the need to drain life from another and remote locations strongly associated with elder evil are the ones most likely to be haunted by these horrors.

Society

The bodak lives a dream life, a constant reverie in which it remembers its brief union with pure vileness. Normal persons would deem it a nightmare but to the bodak, consumed by madness, the loss of union with the dark is a painful thing. It seeks always to re-establish that lost connection, to feel once more the cold embrace of shadow and the caress of evil, felt all too-briefly whenever it destroys another being with its gaze. Thus, the bodak yearns to kill.

While more potent bodaks do exist and sometimes lead a group of their fellows, a typical gang seems to have no leader or overall plan of action beyond locating mortals and killing them. Confused and unpredictable, a gang rarely grows large as individuals wander off to follow their own course, either to be destroyed by some righteous force or to slay a sufficient number of people to create a new gang.

It is thought that the powers of the nether realms create bodaks of greater strength whose task it is to recruit their less potent fellows in a grand design, a quest of some sort. What is it the bodaks seek? This is unknown, but there are many lost artefacts of evil in

Bodak Leaders

When creating a powerful bodak leader the Games Master might use the bodak template presented here or simply increase the number of hit dice the leader possesses. Raising its ability scores, particularly intelligence, is warranted, as is an increase in the Difficulty Class of its death gaze.

the material world, perhaps this is what these appalling 'children of the dark' are charged to find. Others speculate it is The Lord of Darkness Eternal the bodaks search for, to release him once more into the world of men and precipitate the end of the world.

Methods of Warfare

As each bodak wishes to be the one who takes life, there is rivalry in a band when an opportunity arises to attack the living, hampering any attempt they might make to launch a co-ordinated assault. The only pleasure a bodak has is in the moments prior to killing, thus they prolong the moment by leisurely approaching their prey and enjoying the terror their presence induces, relishing the moment of death.

If a powerful bodak is present it might force its fellows to launch a more efficient attack, one taking advantage of surprise and tactical retreat. One such stratagem is for two or more bodaks to lay in wait and attack suddenly from the shadows, then flee around a corner or into a darkened chamber. If the party

pursues they run straight into a large bodak band ready and waiting for them. As noted though, such planning is unusual, as the chaotic bodaks, lost in a tangle of black thoughts, are unable to scheme unless directed.

Roleplaying With Bodaks

On initial consideration, the role of the bodak in a campaign might seem limited to the Games Master. Clearly these monsters might be encountered as enemies in any dungeon-like locale, their appearance justified easily enough by deeming them to be a wandering band seeking a dark place to dwell, from which they might sally forth to slay the living. Places with strongly evil associations, such as wicked temples or the resting-places of foul artefacts, might either attract bodaks or create them.

Given the ease with which bodaks can kill, one might imagine lands becoming plagued with these undead. In such places folk would fear to venture abroad after dark, holy symbols would adorn stockades and doors,

Simon Trismagestus tells of a distant valley where a temple was built to the elder gods, the people there honouring the forgotten ones with blood and prayers until they awoke He Who is Lost.

In the centre of the evil fane a great shard of black crystal, twice as tall as a man, hung suspended. The priests and wizards screamed places and worlds far distant when they gazed into its ebony depths. One winter's night, when all about the temple was coated in frost, they beheld The Hidden One's unutterably beautiful face in the translucent rock.

Who can look upon pure evil and not be driven to madness? Blasted were those wizards and priests, driven screaming from the black sanctuary to tear out the eyes that had seen what no man should see. Death claimed them, but those who have come into contact with absolute evil and looked upon utter wickedness cannot escape its consequences, even in death.

The shocked valley-dwellers buried the fallen seers in caves to the north of their city. When the sun descended behind the mountains that night, the tombs opened once more as the first bodaks came into the world. To their former temple the undead walked, seeing through orbs, soulless and white, that had taken the place of the eyes they tore out. The men, women and children of the valley sought to placate the returned souls, horrid though they seemed, with gifts of bread and fruit but the bodaks brought both death and undeath to their countrymen.

To this day the bodaks creep over the face of the world, always by darkness for they cannot endure the sun's warm glare, spreading their curse through the pale, godless eyes given them by The Lord of Darkness Eternal.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

Bodak Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual bodaks capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. Unlike *Core Rulebook III* in, this template assumes that any creature can be affected by the malign curse.

Creating A Bodak

'Bodak' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12. No bonus hit points from Constitution.

Speed: Same as the base creature, less 10 feet per round.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armour modification or +3, whichever is greater.

Attacks: A bodak retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a slam attack if it did not already have one. Note that a zombie can only ever make one attack in a round unless *hasted*.

Damage: Natural or manufactured weapons inflict normal damage. A slam attack uses the base creature's value, or the bodak slam value, whichever is greater.

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

Special Attacks: A bodak retains all the special attacks of the base creature, except for gaze attacks, and also gains a death gaze.

Death Gaze (Su): Death, range 30 feet, Fortitude negates DC (10 + ½ bodak's hit dice + Charisma modifier). Corporeal creatures who die from this attack are transformed into bodaks in one day.

Special Qualities: A bodak retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Damage Reduction (Su): A bodak's undead body is tough, giving the creature damage reduction 15/silver.

Resistance (Ex): A bodak has fire and acid resistance 20.

Immunities (Ex): A bodak is immune to electricity damage.

Sunlight Vulnerability (Ex): Bodaks loathe sunlight for its merest touch burns their impure flesh. Each round of exposure to the direct rays of the sun deals 1 point of damage to the creature.

Flashbacks (Ex): From time to time, a bodak sees something that reminds it of its almost-forgotten life. At the start of every encounter, there is a 5% chance that the bodak notices something about an opponent (randomly determined, if more than one opponent is present) which causes it to recall its life. If this happens, the bodak takes no action for one round and thereafter suffers a morale penalty to all attacks directed at that opponent.

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

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Modified from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +4, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha +2. As undead creatures, bodaks have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary or gang (2-4).

Challenge Rating: +1.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Bodak Characters

Bodak characters must be chaotic evil in alignment, and some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 1 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties: they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity.

If a wizard or sorcerer bodak character summons a familiar it too must possess this template.

There is an example of a bodak in the Bestiary of the Damned.

temples and churches becoming places of sanctuary for beleaguered communities. Such an unfortunate land would welcome adventuring bands, reward them well too.

With a sufficiently able leader bodaks might become the prime antagonists in an evil plot. Bodak spellcasters, for example, could facilitate movement during daylight hours, through the use of *darkness* spells. The Games Master might equip bands with armour and weapons to augment the dreadful death gaze and deem the bodak intent on building a kingdom of death in his campaign world.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Dark Star Rising

At night the wind does not blow, all is still and bone-numbingly chill. Dawn seems to come later and later each day, while the sun dips below the horizon unnaturally early. Maddening dreams afflict the people, driving them to acts of senseless depravity and no one knows why this is or how the natural order might be restored.

Cantelbry, an elven seer, reports a disturbance in the heavens, something new has come, it disrupts the passage of the stars and moons and yet cannot be seen by normal sight, for it emits a black radiance bringing darkness rather than light.

From the shadows at civilisation's edge the bodaks come, few at first but gradually increasing their number; and as they come they sing a horrid song of death and oblivion. Why is this so? What connection is there between the bodaks and the hidden star? Can the party discover the secret before eternal night comes and the bodaks rule all?

To Drink the Black Water

A prophet has arisen in the slums of the adventurers' home city, promising direct communion with a new god, salvation from the toils of this world and an entrance into eternal life. His adherents plan to follow him to the promised land, with whole families of slum dwellers, and not a few of the wealthier classes, having donated all they own to the new church and begun the long journey to 'paradise'.

Amongst the pilgrims is the mayor's granddaughter and he would have her restored to his family safe and

well. Rewards, and the mayor's goodwill, await the party returning her to the city.

The pilgrims have travelled far, to a pair of granite doors built into a cliff face high in the mountains. Beyond the doors are miles of caverns leading to a dark realm where an underwater river runs, the pilgrims drinking deeply from this hidden spring gain what the prophet promised – eternal 'life' as bodaks!

Can the party thwart the prophet before he leads a bodak army back to the city? Will they find the girl in time to save her?

DEVOURERS

Towering horrors able to rip the life-force from a living being and feed upon it, the devourers are repellent things from man's worst nightmares.

Physiology

It is hard to believe that these things were once mortal. Can the emaciated, near-mummified thing that towers over its prey once have bounced upon the



THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

knee of a loving father? Could the deviant entity that imprisons the life-force of others so visibly within itself once have walked, talked, wept and loved as other men do? Shockingly, the answer is yes, the devourers were once mortal beings like you or I.

Truly some men are wolves in sheep's clothing, a wicked fellow can wear a pleasant face and speak warm words and thus fool those around him into believing he is a creature like they are when, in truth, his soul is as warped and black as a demon's. Death strips away the masks men don to hide their true nature. When one sees a devourer one sees the true form of a wicked and sinful man.

In comparison to some men, ghouls are honest creatures, for they do not disguise their lusts. So too does the vampire drain the life from its victims openly – it does not disguise the horror of its acts. Yet there are men and women who feed off their families, friends and lovers in a subtle way. Through manipulation and emotional blackmail they control those around them, forcing those they should love to expend their life energies upon them, to think always of them and to pander to their every need. Slowly they drain all joy from their ignorant and unwitting victims, making life a dull and troublesome thing.

Predatory lovers, those that seek gratification only for themselves and care nothing for the feelings of their partners, consume life energy by feeding off the emotions they arose in their conquests. Some take

joy in shattering the hopes of those they have seduced.

So too do some immoral nobles, merchants, guild masters and property holders feed off their workers and tenants, becoming rich while those beneath them suffer. Such folk hold their grand positions only because others toil for them ceaselessly, giving away their strength so that their employer might prosper.

There are thieves and brigands who unthinkingly destroy the lives of others for their own profit. They will steal all that another man has worked for or, worse still, bloodily murder their victims for the smallest of profits. The assassin, whose life's work is to kill for gain, is yet another example of a mortal who feeds off the life energy of his victims.

All such villains are at risk of becoming devourers in the afterlife. When their soul leaves their body at the moment of death it drifts first into the ether. Here it might glimpse, in a shadowy and indistinct way, the preparations for its funeral before it is drawn deeper into the ether and eventually on into the astral plane. In that grey waste await the agents of the lower planes – lesser devils, demons and daemons that convey the souls of the wicked to one of the terrible planes of evil and an eternity of suffering. Some amongst the recently dead escape this fate, fleeing into the astral plane and evading the pursuing horrors in its many swirls and eddies, its portals and peculiar anomalies. Here they begin to fade, no force or place sustains them and they are at the mercy of the astral wind and

Thrice cursed is the black tower of Nabadon! Four and twenty of our order established themselves there under the tutelage of the necromancer Tas'Luk, he who has walked every lower plane, and thought themselves privileged to learn from so erudite an instructor.

Foul Tas'Luk, such a deceiver is he! At Nabadon he had researched the power of the devourers, seeking a way to utilise the life-forces of others to extend his already-long span of years. Each of his students expired, trapped in a cage of negative force, their essences drawn forth and fed to Tas'Luk by a diabolical machine.

Simon, who still walked in the living flesh, came against Tas'Luk full of wrath. Through one long night their battle raged. Tas'Luk brought devourers he had enslaved forth from the ether, a challenge Simon answered by calling up the she-demon Ghul.

At length Tas'Luk was bested and driven from the world. Now the mendacious necromancer walks with the devourers across the astral wastes, sustaining himself upon the souls of those he meets and plotting vengeance against us.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

the many predators of the endless astral emptiness. In order to survive they must adapt to their new existence, and those that fed upon others in life find it natural to do so in death. The form they adopt, the grotesque and terrifying shape of the devourer, is one that mirrors their twisted souls – if one had been able to see their true essence while it dwelt in its mortal tent of flesh it would have looked much the same.

While most devourers come into being through such acts, others are given the status as a 'reward' for a particularly wicked life. Orcus and other dark powers seek to spread misery across the multiverse by increasing the number of devourers. At times a grouping of such horrors will guard a portal, gate, pool or other inter-planar nexus point.

The devourer's undead form is hateful to behold. Freed from its shell of flesh the spirit solidifies into an ugly, huge and frightful beast. Most loathsome to see is the tiny figure trapped within its breast, the essence of its most recent victim. The devourer is able to kill by touch and by so doing draw the very soul of a victim into itself.

Horribly, the victim does not expire at once but rather, the trapped essence remains both sentient and aware. Consider the awful, mind-numbingly ghastly fate of one who falls foul of a devourer – the suffering they endure. The torment of experiencing a prolonged extinguishing of all that they once were and all that they might have become drives the victim to madness, it grasps at the cage of ribs that imprison it and begs for release, pleads for an ending to the torment it endures. That end comes slowly and painfully as the devourer consumes its energy to feed itself and fuel its spell-like powers. Throughout the process the trapped essence is aware of the depraved thoughts and unnatural desires of its host, it knows all-too-well the bleakest and most hateful consciousness a man can imagine.

Habitat

The ethereal and astral planes are the devourers' hunting grounds. It is not for nothing that the dead are sometimes buried with arms and armour of a magical nature, for the soul might need to defend itself as it traverses the cosmos en-route to its final resting place. So too are the prayers of ecclesiastics at the time of burial of utmost importance, for they ensure the presence of a solar or other benign creature that will shepherd the newly deceased's essence across the dangerous voids.



The devourers are ever lurking, ready to snatch up a stray spirit and consume it. Those devourers created by Orcus or other evil powers steal only the souls of the good but most of their kind are hated not only by angelic beings, but also by the powers of evil for they rob them of their due – the souls of the damned.

Of course, the devourers stalk those travelling the astral and ethereal planes too. Mortals employing magic to make such hazardous journeys need ever be on their guard, lest a devourer come upon them unawares. On the astral plane the devourers are able to follow the silver cords that stretch from the traveller back to the prime material even though those cords are invisible to most. So too on the ethereal plane can the devourers note a faint swirl in the ether left by a recent traveller and so track them to strike at an opportune moment.

From time to time a devourer slips into the material world and resides there. In the worlds of men victims are plentiful but, thankfully, so are heroes who will seek out and slay the awful things.

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

Devourer Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual devourers capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life.

Creating A Devourer

'Devourer' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size: Increase by one category (Small to Medium-size, Large to Huge, etc.).

Hit Dice: Increase to d12. All hit points due to Constitution are lost.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armour bonus or +9, whichever is highest.

Damage: Natural or manufactured weapons inflict normal damage. A claw attack uses the base creature's value, or the devourer claw value, whichever is greater.

Size	Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1
Tiny	1d2
Small	1d3
Medium-size	1d4
Large	1d6
Huge	1d8
Gargantuan	2d6
Colossal	2d8

Special Attacks: A devourer retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ devourer's HD + devourer's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a devourer's claw attack or *spectral hand* ability receive one negative level.

Trap Essence (Su): The devourer is named for its ability to consume an enemy's life essence. To do so, it must forgo its normal melee attacks and make a trap essence attack. This requires a normal attack roll to hit but deals no damage. The affected creature must succeed at a Fortitude save or die instantly.

The slain creature's essence is trapped within the devourer's ribs, and the diminutive figure takes on that victim's features. The trapped essence cannot be raised or resurrected, but a *limited wish*, *miracle* or *wish* spell frees it, as does destroying the devourer. A devourer can hold only one essence at a time.

The trapped essence provides the devourer with enough power to use five spell-like abilities per HD or level of the trapped creature. As this energy is expended, the twisted soul fades away until it evaporates completely. The trapped essence receives one negative level for every five spell-like uses. When the number of negative

levels equals the creature's total HD or level, the essence is destroyed. If an essence is freed, the restored creature must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 2 less than the original save) for each negative level or lose that level permanently.

Spell-Like Abilities: At the start of any encounter, the trapped essence within a devourer is assumed to have $3d4+3$ levels (enough for 30 to 75 uses). Once per round, the devourer can use one of the following as the spell cast by an 18th level sorcerer (save DC = devourer's Charisma modifier + spell level): *confusion*, *control undead*, *ghoul touch*, *lesser planar ally*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *spectral hand*, *suggestion* and *true seeing*.

Special Qualities: A devourer retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead

Spell Deflection (Su): The trapped essence provides a measure of magical protection. If any of the following spells are cast at the devourer and overcome its spell resistance, they affect the trapped essence instead: *banishment*, *chaos hammer*, *confusion*, *detect thoughts*, *dispel evil*, *dominate person*, *emotion*, *fear*, *geas/quest*, *holy word*, *hypnosis*, *imprisonment*, *magic jar*, *maze*, *suggest*, *trap the soul* or any form of charm or compulsion. In many cases this effectively neutralises the spell (charming a trapped essence, for example, is useless). Some of them (*banishment*, for example) might eliminate the trapped essence, robbing the devourer of its magical powers until it can consume another.

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

Spell Resistance: A devourer gains spell resistance (CR +

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +10, +0, Int +6, Wis +6, Cha +6. As undead creatures, devourers have Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Astral and ethereal plane or any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Devourer Characters

Devourer characters must be neutral evil in alignment, so some lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn the undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spell abilities as appropriate to that deity. Wizard or sorcerer devourer cannot summon a familiar.

Society

Usually solitary and homeless, the devourer wanders endlessly, but infrequent gatherings are held. The devourers are enemies with a certain race that lives permanently on the astral plane and will from time to time make a concerted effort to eradicate one or more of their outposts. This enmity stems from the devourer's natural tendency to consume the essence of every creature they meet and the astral dwellers need to protect themselves and dominate their environment.

Sages have long speculated as to whether or not there is a higher power co-ordinating the activities of those devourers created independently of Orcus. The ravings of a recently returned priest of the sun god seem to imply that such a dreadful being does indeed exist. According to the pious wanderer of the astral plane, he came upon a hateful locale far from any known point of entry or egress where many chunks of primordial matter revolved around a titanic mouth, a huge maw filled with teeth and many slimy tongues. Here the devourers were gathered in an unholy conclave and each gave up a trapped victim to the great mouth.

The priest was forced to flee before observing much of the blasphemous ritual and, upon returning to the material world, his mind was so unhinged by what he had seen that little sense could be gained from him. One refrain in his maddened babble is a constant though, he speaks again and again of a shattered god, of a being that once was and will be once more.

Methods of Warfare

Devourers are highly intelligent adversaries and this alone makes them a dangerous opponent. When waylaying victims, the devourer first seeks to observe its prey and gauge their strength. It is stealthy and sharp-eyed and will choose the best moment to strike, first activating such powers as *true seeing* and *lesser planar ally*. As the devourer can also cast *control undead* its assault might be co-ordinate with that of a number of lesser undead beings, if such reside in the area. If possible the devourer will throw a *confusion* spell at its enemies, following that up with a *ray of enfeeblement* directed at a potent fighter type. A *suggestion* will be worded to separate one adversary from the rest and, if combating the whole group seems too great a task, the devourer will withdraw and satisfy itself with destroying that lone victim.

In combat it concentrates its blows upon warriors

rather than spellcasters, its spell resistance and magical immunities allowing it to leave magic-using enemies to last. Of course, it makes repeated use of its own store of offensive magic to confound its prey and summons aid should it prove necessary. If circumstances will allow, the devourer hangs back and uses touch attacks from its *spectral hand* power to drain life energy. Cunning to the last, the devourer might flee – leaving its summoned allies to fight the bulk of its enemies – in the hope that one bold foe will pursue it. Once sufficient distance has been put between the brave pursuer and his comrades, the devourer halts its flight and turns to do battle!

Roleplaying With Devourers

Given that devourers usually inhabit the astral and ethereal realms, Games Masters might consider their usefulness limited. However, there is no reason to reserve the vile devourers for such extraordinary journeys beyond the mundane – as noted previously, these undead sometimes reside on the material world and could potentially be encountered anywhere. Are the corpses of vagrants found on the streets of the party's hometown? Perhaps a devourer is being sheltered in a hidden shrine dedicated to Orcus. What is it that prowls about the party's encampment half seen in the moonlight? A devourer in search of sustenance!

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Death's Ghastly Embrace

A cheerless air hangs over the city; the sunlight is wan and does not warm the bones. The citizens are pallid and morose, going about their daily business like automatons. Children do not laugh or sing and the setting of the sun brings with it the hush of death and a notable aura of fear and dread.

Why is this so? The common folk do not know. They remember a more cheerful and carefree time but they have felt sorrowful for so long that the pleasant days of the past seem like a dream. Magnicus the sage-priest knows the truth, he has whispered it in the ears of his superiors, told it to the governor and now cries it aloud in the streets but none will take heed of his tale and deem him mad.

'The Prince of Death has come to us! His soldiers hang invisibly in the air about us. They consume the spirits of the dead as they leave their mortal shell.

The devourers are here and though you see them not they feed off of you! Beware! Soon they shall break free of the ether and stalk the streets of our town. Death is with us!

People shake their heads and walk away into streets cold and forlorn.

GHOULS, GHASTS AND LACEDONS

Let us now look at those undead that feed upon the living; cunning creatures with a will of their own that not only defile graves to feed but also actively seek out mortals to waylay, kill and eat. They seek to devour a dead victim's flesh, for doing so gives them eternal sustenance.

Given the similarities between these three undead species, they are covered together in one section, with details given pertaining to all three unless otherwise noted.

Physiology

The ghoulish undead are frightful to behold. In their state of living death the skin has become pallid or disgusting shades of green, grey and purple. Cursed with an insatiable hunger for carrion, the ghou, ghastr or lacedon seems emaciated – its skin stretched tight over its bony frame.

The transformation into the ghoulish state lengthens the teeth and turns normal hands into viciously sharp claws.

Physical strength and precision increase, and a cunning intellect develops.

While granted a feral ferocity and wily shrewdness in matters of ambush and attack, the mind is twisted, first by an all-consuming desire to eat the flesh of sentient things and then by a frenzied way of thinking, a disorganised intellect setting it at odds with the world.

All three of these undead forms can paralyse by striking a foe with tooth or claw. In essence, the ghou's attack transfers the rigor mortis, that by rights should constrain the ghou onto the victim. Elves, whose bodies do not become stiff in the initial stage of death, are immune to this paralysis unless it comes from a ghastr, the touch of which is sufficient to overcome this natural resistance.

The more potent ghastr emits such a foul odour of decay that enemies are reduced to nausea by its presence. In part this putrid smell is the product of its own decaying flesh, but it is also the reek of decayed carrion – that which it has devoured.

The first ghouls were members of a terrible cannibalistic cult revering a hideous god whose following flourished in the east long ago. The adherents of that abhorrent faith sought immortality by eating the dead, consuming the spirits of those they ate as well as their mortal remains. Some claim it was the gods of light who made them into ghouls, deeming perpetual hunger to be a fitting punishment for the depraved wretches.



In the present time these undead can arise when one who leads a life of debauchery dies and his soul passes into the abyss where, after a period of demonic torture and humiliation, it is made into a ghoul and sent back into the world. Shipwrecked pirates are in danger of becoming lacedons. Driven by greed and a lust for wealth in life, 'feeding' off the toil of honest mariners, they become literal devourers of men upon their death.

Most ghouls are created when a living being dies at a ghoul's hands and is not eaten. Why some corpses are left is uncertain. Perhaps the ghoulish undead seek to spawn more of their kind or they are interrupted in their feeding and the new ghoul's 'birth' is an accident. Ghosts are the most successful of ghouls, those who have devoured many, 'lived' long and grown in power.

Habitat

Beneath the cemeteries of many cities are labyrinths tunnelled through the worm-infested soil by corpse-hungry ghouls intent on robbing each freshly-dug grave. These tunnels go deep, down to unspeakable places where ghoul and ghost gather to dance and feast. Were the dwellers of the world's great cities aware of what went on beneath their feet they would not rest easy in their beds and loved ones would not be buried where the undead might find them. Perhaps it is best that such vile secrets are not common knowledge.

Through crypt, sepulchre and mausoleum the ghoulish undead creep in their never-ending search for carrion. If dead meat cannot be found, the ghouls will slink into a city's streets after dark, carrying off homeless beggars, streetwalkers or other late-night wayfarers.

Below black and choppy seas where many ships have gone down, lacedons search out drowned corpses on which to feast, although these horrid creatures occasionally board unsuspecting vessels to find fresher flesh.

Strange waters attract the lacedons, seas where currents run up from the deepest marine trenches, places unfathomable, never touched by the sun's rays, housing things inimical to man yet well disposed to the living dead.

Society

The ghouls have a king. What authority this 'king' exerts is limited by the chaotic nature of his subjects but it is said that the king has a number of 'nobles' beneath him, each a ghost-like creature of incredible power that can *shadow walk* to ghoul strongholds and pass on the king's wishes.

On a lower level the society is pack-like, with the most powerful ghoul dominating the others by virtue of its strength, ferocity and cunning. When ghosts are present they assume a commanding role, forcing their weaker brethren to bring them the choicest corpses or living victims they might torture awhile before killing and then eating them.

The Ghoul King

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 50d12 (325 hp)

Initiative: +16 (+12 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft., swim 50 ft.

AC: 48 (-1 size, +12 dex, +27 natural)

Attacks: Bite +35 melee; 2 claws +33 melee

Damage: Bite 4d6+11 and bite of ghoulish doom; claw 2d6+5 and paralysis

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

Special Attacks: Bite of ghoulish doom, corrupted water of death, paralysis, vile stench of death

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 20/+4, regeneration 20, undead, spell resistance 31, summon ghoulish horde

Saves: Fort +18, Ref +30, Will +41

Abilities: Str 33, Dex 35, Con-, Int 33, Wis 34, Cha 36

Skills: Balance +19, Bluff +28, Climb +18, Diplomacy +33, Escape Artist +19, Hide +32, Intimidate +28, Jump +18, Knowledge (Arcana) +18, Knowledge (Undead) +28, Listen +34, Move Silently +32, Sense Motive +27, Spot +34

Feats: Alertness, Blind Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Multiattack, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Sunder

Climate Terrain: Any land, aquatic, and underground

Organisation: Unique

Challenge Level: 29

Treasure: Triple standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

The fabled ghoulish king devours dozens of corpses each day. He stands some fifteen feet tall, is lean and emaciated, and has rotted, festering skin the colour of a three-week-old corpse. The king's mouth is set in a permanent leer, revealing rows of razor sharp teeth and a long purple tongue. His eyes are tinged with yellow and blaze red when he is angry.

His domain is far beneath the ground. Legend has it that a labyrinth of passages exists beneath an ancient cemetery and that one wandering this nightmare route comes at last to a vast subterranean sea of foetid black waters teeming with lacedons. A broad and flooded channel leads from those waters to a cavernous kingdom of the dead where the ghoulish king holds court atop a many-stepped ziggurat fashioned from the skulls of countless victims.

Combat

The ghoulish king spends his time in blasphemous negotiations with other undead princes, devising new ways to bring horror to mankind. He has countless minions to do his fighting for him. Should he be forced into combat he will attempt to attack from ambush, if necessary retreating from a foe as a preliminary act.



A favoured tactic is to direct followers, or summon more if his guards are slain, to ambush interlopers. The ghoulish king watches from hiding, waiting the moment to strike and allowing adversaries to deplete their stores of magic. When the foe are weakened the king jumps into the midst of his enemies, exposing them to the horrid vapours he emits, and then makes devastating melee attacks using his Power Attack feat to add 30 or more points of damage to each blow.

Bite of Ghoulish Doom (Su): Anyone bitten by the king's yellowed teeth must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 48) or be immediately transformed into a ghoulish under the control of the king. Only a *miracle* or *wish* spell can restore one subjected to such horrid alterations.

Corrupted Water of Death (Ex): When swimming with his lacedon subjects, the ghoulish king's presence so pollutes the water within 20 feet of himself that any living creature exposed to it must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 48) or die.

Paralysis (Ex): Those struck by the ghoulish king's claws must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 48) or be paralysed for 2d6+4 minutes.

Vile Stench of Death (Ex): So foul is the ghoulish king's odour that a living being inhaling the air within 20 feet of him must succeed a Fortitude save (DC 48) or die.

Regeneration (Ex): The ghoulish king regenerates 20 hit points of damage, from any source, each round. Severed limbs regrow in 2d6 minutes or instantly reattach themselves if held against the stump. Only by reducing the king to a negative hit point total and then using a *wish* or *miracle* spell to prevent regeneration, can he be permanently destroyed.

Undead: The ghoulish king is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore, he is not subject to critical hits, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

Summon Ghoulish Horde: Once per day the king can summon a group of undead servitors. 4d4 ghouls, 2d6 ghosts and 2d6 tr'ouls, each with maximum hit points, appear and serve the king until discharged from duty or 24 hours have passed, at which point they return to whence they came.

Methods of Warfare

Ghouls are cunning and stealthy creatures. A pack will seek to fight on its own terms, choosing an opportune moment to strike or leading enemies into a well-prepared ambush.

If a small number of ghouls detect an exploring party, one or more will shadow them while the rest go to fetch their abhorrent kindred so they can attack en-mass. These undead are partial to secret doors, hidden passages and other ruses that allow them to gather both ahead of and behind their prey. Pit traps and other tricks are used to waylay the unwary, as well as one-way doors to channel a party straight into the ghouls' parlour – a den where the undead have gathered in strength to kill and feast.

If the pack can pick out a cleric by his vestments or symbols they will certainly concentrate their attacks upon him so as to forestall any attempts at turning.

Lacedons make nets out of entangling weeds or lurk in the shadows of sunken ships to catch their victims. They will board passing vessels to feed their insatiable hunger, paralysing crewmembers and throwing them overboard to drown beneath the waves.

Being chaotic and selfish by nature, the ghoul who paralyses or kills a foe is likely to begin gobbling him up at once rather than aid its fellows. While the unfortunate victim is in for a horrible end, the remaining players gain some slight respite to prepare counter-measures or flee. A paralysed victim being eaten alive is subject to a coup de grace attack each round. Assume it takes a ghoul one minute per point of Constitution the victim possessed to fully devour an adventurer.

Ghosts are aware of the effect their nauseating smell has on the living. When attacking as part of a ghoul pack they disperse across the field of battle so as to expose as many enemies as possible to their foul reek. Where aquatic ghosts swim with the lacedons, their 'smell' pollutes the water in the same way a land-bound ghost's stench pollutes the air.

Roleplaying With Ghoulish Undead

Ghouls are versatile monsters easy to include in city, wilderness, aquatic or dungeon adventures. Little justification is required to explain the presence of grave-robbing ghouls in the local cemetery. How

many unmarked battlefields are there in the wilderlands through which the party treks? What number of sunken pirate ships lay beneath the waters their vessel crosses? An appearance by ghouls or ghosts can happen at nearly any time the Games Master desires it.

The involvement of ghouls in obscene rites practised by black magicians and their ilk is a matter of record. Blasphemous ceremonies are conducted by moonlight – human followers enter an ecstatic state and join with ghouls called forth from their tunnels in unholy feasts of human flesh. Mortals engaging in such practices become ghouls themselves after death and the demented cult members view this as a blessing from their black gods.

Being intelligent, the ghouls can serve an evil master as spies and soldiers. Companies of ghouls will go into battle beneath the standard of an evil demigod or as part of a powerful evil temple's host. Gleefully the human temple leaders allow the ghouls to feast on the corpses littering the battlefields on which they fought – a small price to pay for such welcome service. Losses in the undead ranks are easy to replace and cultists take prisoners, giving them to the ghouls to torture and kill and then removing the corpses so they arise as ghouls themselves.

Ghoulish Undead Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual ghouls capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. While *Core Rulebook III* indicates only humanoids slain by a ghoul or ghost will return as undead, this template assumes that any creature can be so transformed.

Creating A Ghoul

'Ghoul' is a template that can be added to any corporeal animal, beast, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast or shapechanger (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armour bonus or +2, whichever is greater.

Damage: Ghouls have bite and claw attacks. If the base creature does not have these attack forms, use

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

the damage values in the table below. Otherwise, use the values below or the base creature's damage, whichever is greater.

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

Special Attacks: A ghoul retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ ghoul's HD + ghoul's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a ghoul's bite or claw attack must succeed at a Fortitude save or be paralysed for 1d6+2 minutes. Elves are immune to this paralysis.

Create Spawn (Su): In most cases, ghouls devour those they kill. From time to time, however, the bodies of their victims lie where they fell, to rise as ghouls themselves in 1d4 days. Casting *protection from evil* on a body before the end of that time averts the transformation.

Special Qualities: A ghoul retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A ghoul has +2 turn resistance (see *Core Rulebook III*).

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +4, Int +2, Wis +4, Cha +6. As undead creatures, ghouls have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature, plus Multiattack and Weapon Finesse (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Any land, aquatic and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or pack (7-12).

Challenge Rating: +1.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Lacedons

Use the above template with the following modifications.

Speed: Lacedons can swim at a speed of 30 feet.

Ghast

If a ghast is desired, use the above template with the following modifications.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armor bonus or +4, whichever is greater.

Damage: Ghasts have bite and claw attacks. If the base creature does not have these attack forms, use the damage values in the table below. Otherwise, use the values below or the base creature's damage, whichever is greater.

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

Special Attacks: A ghast retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed for the ghoul. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ ghoul's HD + ghoul's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise. In addition, the ghast gains the following abilities.

Paralysis (Ex): This ability is identical to that listed for ghouls, except that it can also affect elves.

Stench (Ex): The stink of death and corruption surrounding these creatures is sickening. Those within 10 feet must succeed at a Fortitude save or be wracked with nausea, suffering a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves and skill checks for 1d6+4 minutes.

Ghoulish Characters

Ghoulish characters must be chaotic evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. If a wizard or sorcerer ghoulish character summons a familiar it must possess this template.

There is an example of a ghoulish undead in the *Bestiary of the Damned*.

One form of hybrid undead has come to prominence in recent times. While quite rare they are of sufficient number for scholars and sages to speculate that they are the products of demonic intervention rather than normal ghoulish spawning. The creature is the tr'oul, a horrid combination of troll and ghoul.

Tr'oul

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp)

Initiative: +4 (+4 dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 17 (-1 size, +4 dex, +4 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +8 melee

Damage: Claw 2d4+7 and paralysis

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

Special Attacks: Paralysis

Special Qualities: Regeneration 1, sunlight vulnerability, +1 turn resistance, undead

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

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Spot +10

Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or pack (7-12)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: 50% coins, goods and items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-6 HD (Large), 7+ HD (Huge)

In the records of adventures long past mention is made of a horrid beast seemingly part troll and part ghoul. So infrequently has this creature been fought in subsequent years, that it was thought by many to be a simple myth. Recently, however, a party of explorers penetrating the labyrinthine dungeons beneath a legendary castle met with some of these foul creatures – only a few members of that doomed expedition escaped to relate the tale.



The tr'oul is no commonly raised troll-ghoul and, while it has both troll-like and ghoul-like qualities, it is something quite different from either. Adventurers have pointed out that a troll cannot expire from the attack of a ghoul, any damage dealt is regenerated, thus the troll cannot die and become a ghoul-spawn. This has led some to speculate that a troll exposed to a ghoul's paralytic touch undergoes a spontaneous transformation into a tr'oul. Others counter such theories by pointing out that a tr'oul is stronger than a troll and yet less robust, and that its powers of regeneration are inferior. Surely, they say, the tr'oul is a different species altogether. Then there are those sages who speculate that a troll consuming the flesh of a ghoul might well undergo the changes that would make it become a ghoulish troll, a tr'oul.

A tr'oul stands some seven feet tall, its arms and legs look spindly despite its incredible strength. A mass of grey hair descends from its ugly misshapen head, fanning out across its broad shoulders and falling down its bony back. Its tough hide is a mottled grey



and pale mauve in colour and, although it does not bite in combat, it has a broad mouth full of razor-sharp teeth.

Combat

The tr'oul is cunning in combat, seeking to attack with the benefit of surprise when possible. It is utterly ferocious, heedless of harm suffered and delights in inflicting grisly wounds on its victims. Unlike other undead, the tr'oul is not harmed by holy water – another indication of its unusual heritage.

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a tr'oul's claw attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 16) or be paralysed for 1d20+20 rounds. Those succeeding in the save are immune to that particular tr'oul's touch and need not save again if struck a second or subsequent time.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a tr'oul, all other harm can be regenerated at the rate of one point per round. Lost body parts can be reattached by holding them to the stump, otherwise they regrow in one hour.

Sunlight Vulnerability (Ex): Tr'ouls cannot abide the clean light of the sun; each round of exposure to its direct rays inflicts 1 point of damage to the creature, this harm cannot be regenerated and is repaired at the rate of 1 point per day.

Undead: A tr'oul is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual

damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Butcher, Baker and Undead Ghoul Maker

The ghoulish king has devised a scheme to bring utter destruction on the player characters' home city. Three powerful ghoulish nobles have arrived in the region and forced all lesser ghouls and ghosts to bring the corpses of their victims into the crypts rather than eat them, to arise as new ghouls. However, the spread of the ghoulish curse is not limited to humans. As a deliberate policy, ghoulish packs are roving the woodlands and fields after dark and 'infecting' livestock and animals.

Milkmaids have been devoured by ghoulish-cows, ghoulish squirrels attack village children and the wood-dwelling elves are combating dozens of ghoulish bears and worse horrors. A delegation of druids approaches the party and asks them to root out the undead plaguing the countryside.

When the party returns from this foray, they discover plague of flesh eaters has broken loose on the streets of their town. Many of their friends and relatives are now carrion-eating members of the undead. How will the adventurers react to fighting former loved ones? Can they discover the lair of the ghoulish nobles and destroy them?

The Flesh Pit

Hebrak the innkeeper's son died after a night of debauchery with his immoral companions. Grief-stricken, Hebrak buried the boy beneath a yew tree at the rear of his establishment. Three nights later he heard a plaintive mewling at the kitchen door. He descended from his chamber with naught but a candle to guide his way and found his son shivering on the threshold.

Delighted but mystified, Hebrak brought the boy inside. Quickly the innkeeper cooked up a meal for his hungry son but that did not sate the lad's appetite. 'Father I think I will die again if I don't have real meat' the boy pleaded, so his father thought it best to throttle one of the chickens and offer it to his son. While the innkeeper caught the sleepy fowl, his son satisfied his hunger by tearing apart his sleeping mother and eating the brains out of her decapitated head. Why Hebrak did not fetch the village priest or destroy the blasphemous remnant of his son is an unanswered question. It is possible he loved the boy too much and cared little for his wife.

Hebrak's inn is on a lonely road and solitary wayfarers have a habit of vanishing in those parts, so all are glad to find shelter behind its stout doors and heavily shuttered windows. In the cellar there is a deep pit covered by an iron lid, at the bottom dwells the innkeeper's ever-famished son. Hebrak cannot bear to see his boy suffer and, although he loathes the act, he finds meat for his boy whenever he can. Lonesome

travellers do indeed vanish in those parts and they can be found at the bottom of the flesh-filled pit.

MOHRGS

Physiology

Mohrgrs are either fleshless and, in appearance, much like an animated skeleton, or covered in a thin layer of mouldering skin and rotted flesh, thus resembling a zombie. At a distance adventurers might mistake them for a lesser kind of undead and suffer because of their error. At close range it is clear that the mohrg is no ordinary automaton, for its tongue protrudes from its desiccated lips by two or more feet. This appendage is blackened, tough and fibrous, and ends in a three-pronged claw.

As is known, mohrgrs are the undead remains of unrepentant murderers, those that failed to atone for their villainous crimes. It is usual for such killers to be denied a burial in holy ground and perhaps this in part explains the horrid transformation that turns an inert corpse into an all-too-mobile member of the undead. Doubtless the will of malign supernatural agencies is also involved in this change. Orcus desires the spreading of murder and mayhem in the mortal realms.

The distended tongue that characterises the mohrg is a legacy of its mortal days – in life it should have used that tongue to beg forgiveness, should have spoken words of repentance to the bereaved families of its victims and besought the gods to cleanse its

As they lead me to the gallows I cursed them, the crowd cheering and jeering as they put the rope around my neck. I looked the hangman in the eye and refused to wear a hood, I wanted to see the faces of the fools who applauded my death.

The priest took my hand and told me to confess my sins and seek forgiveness; I spat at him.

I did not die at once. I heard my neck break and felt the warm flood in my trousers as my bladder emptied. Then they pulled on my feet and life left me.

I slept and dreamt nightmares of pain and suffering, and then I awoke. Darkness, all about me was darkness. I tried to sit up but could not, for I was confined in some gloomy prison. I could see even though there was no light to see by. Who had put me in this small cell? And then I knew. I remembered. I was dead.

Hate welled up in me, a burning hatred for those who had killed me and for the multitude that had sniggered at my end. My anger gave me strength and I struck at the lid of my coffin until it sundered, dug with my fleshless hands at the clay that fell in on me, and worked until I broke free of the earth and stood once more on the world's surface. Gravestones surrounded me.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

soul. Yet it refused such opportunities and spoke only words of hatred. In death all the bile, rage and vitriol that festered in its soul has risen up into that ill-used tongue and made it into a barbed weapon through which it vents its rage.

The psyche of the mohrg is dominated by anger. Even though it was a murderous, heartless being in life, it considers itself to be a victim. There is no empathy for those it slew, no remorse for its cruel acts, only an overriding conviction that others wronged it. The mohrg is convinced that life was stacked against it, opportunities others had were denied to it, its own crimes were justifiable and that its end was undeserved. In death it seethes with rage and seeks to gain vengeance on those who still live. It longs to be alive once more and, knowing that it cannot, it brings death to all it meets.



Those slain by a mohrg rise as an empty soulless shell – a zombie doomed to serve the mohrg throughout eternity.

Habitat

These things have no true habitat. They are alien to any environment save the grave from which they have escaped. The territories they haunt will be cold and chill, odious and damp, for mohrgs bring a tomb-like atmosphere wherever they go.

Burial grounds where criminals and other sinners are interred, highways lined with gallows and other places strongly associated with a criminal's death might be terrorised by a mohrg. As they actively seek out the living, they might secrete themselves in a city's more ruinous and uninhabited areas or be found skulking near gates or other thoroughfares waiting to make a kill. Of course, vengeful clerics or other adventurers soon destroy these overly bold mohrgs, so most find homes in forgotten dungeons and other forlorn places.

Society

If a gang of murderers or similarly iniquitous villains perish together, they might all arise as mohrgs if the powers of the dark so wish it. What order exists between them will be the same as that which existed in life – the leader of the band and his lieutenants will still hold positions of command and will direct the efforts of their subordinates.

Methods of Warfare

A lone mohrg stalks its prey stealthily, striking when their comrades are distracted and hoping to paralyse and carry off its victim before it is detected. As these creatures are fast and highly mobile in combat, they can dash past would-be guards or other obstacles seemingly heedless of blows aimed at them.

When several mohrgs attack together, they prefer to do so behind a phalanx of their zombiefied victims. As the lesser undead shuffle forward, the mohrgs stay to the rear and allow the mindless zombies to absorb their foes' initial attacks. At an opportune moment in the fray, the mohrgs dash forward and their startled adversaries are often caught off guard by this coordinated and well-timed attack, as they believe

Mohrg Undead Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual mohrgs capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. Mohrgs are an unusual kind of undead, the circumstances causing one to arise are rare and this template should thus be applied sparingly. Creatures that are by their nature evil will not become mohrgs in undeath. Only when the creature had a choice between good and evil, and deliberately chose the latter, will the circumstances be right.

Creating A Mohrg

'Mohrg' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12. All bonus hp from Constitution are lost.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armour bonus or +4, whichever is greater.

Attacks: A mohrg retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a slam attack if it did not already have one. A mohrg also gains a melee touch attack with its tongue.

Damage: Mohrg have slam attacks. Natural or manufactured weapons inflict normal damage. A slam attack uses the base creature's value, or the mohrg slam value, whichever is greater.

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

Special Attacks: A mohrg retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the mohrg must hit with its slam attack.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): A mohrg lashes out with its tongue in combat. An opponent the tongue touches must succeed at a Fortitude save at DC (10 + ½ mohrg's HD + mohrg's Charisma modifier) or become paralysed for 1d4 minutes.

Create Spawn (Su): Creatures killed by a mohrg rise after 1d4 days as zombies under the mohrg's control. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

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

Special Qualities: A mohrg retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the undead type.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +10, Dex +2. As undead creatures, mohrg have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Mohrg gain Dodge, Improved Initiative and Mobility, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and does not already have these feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or mob (2-4 plus 5-10 zombies).

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: Usually none.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Advancement: Same as base creature.

Mohrg Characters

Mohrg characters must be lawful evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. A wizard or sorcerer mohrg character cannot summon a familiar. There is an example of a mohrg in the Bestiary of the Damned.

themselves to be in combat with slow-moving zombies.

Gnomes, halflings and other small creatures are in serious danger of being dragged away by a mohrg. As efficient wrestlers, the undead horrors will pull such diminutive victims off into the shadows while their allies are otherwise occupied.

Roleplaying With Mohrgs

How many villains fall at the hands of the adventurers in your campaign? What becomes of them after death? Most are probably destined for the lower planes and an eternity of suffering but might not some return as mohrgs? Such unholy revivification should be extremely rare but, when a particularly despicable non-player character has fallen, the Games Master might wish to consider the possibility.



Scenario Hooks And Ideas

The Judge's Death

They called him 'the hanging judge' and the name was well deserved. He once condemned three score men, women and children to the gallows in a single sitting. While some considered him to be a zealous upholder of the king's law, others saw in him a murderer as bestial as any man he condemned. In truth, it mattered little to the judge whether his victims were guilty or not – he loved power, he gloated when those he convicted begged for leniency and he shuddered with a secret inner joy when he saw them hang.

Never accused of a crime or convicted of wrongdoing and yet a murderer all the same, the judge passed away one cold autumn evening. Few mourned at his graveside and no relative laid a wreath for him.

Autumn has gone, winter is here and the grave now stands empty. The judge has returned from the abode of the worms and has held a secret session. He called the tombstones as witnesses and appointed the owls as advocates for the prosecution and defence. The accused was mankind and the verdict was 'guilty as charged!'

The hanging judge must carry out the sentence, not with a rope but with his extended tongue. That bloated and fibrous member will be wrapped about the throats of those he waylays and tightened until they are dead.

MUMMIES

The shifting desert sands cover many an ancient secret. Once-mighty civilisations are buried, as are the darker mysteries of the primeval past. In ages gone by, many cultures preserved the bodies of their dead, treating the flesh with herbs, spices and rare unguents to stave off rot, and wrapping the cadaver in swathes of bandages to safeguard it in the ages to come. Such folk provided rich burial goods for the deceased to take into the afterlife – golden barges, gem-encrusted objects, face masks of solid gold, statues, scrolls, weapons, armour, food in vases of silver and platinum and sundry other precious things. The folk of the ancient world were not naïve; they knew robbers would come to desecrate their tombs and took measures to protect them. Curses afflict those entering the preserves of long abandoned crypts, traps kill the unwary and the dead themselves

will arise, intent on safeguarding the treasures with which they lie.

Physiology

The ritual treatment of a mummy's body causes its unique appearance. Its flesh and tissue has withered down around the bones, yet the skin retains its flexibility. Over the centuries, golden charms in the linen press down into its leathery skin and eventually embed within it. The resin soaked linen has a very stiff texture, clinging to the mummy in rigid folds even as it deteriorates. In all a mummy looks like a twisted, shrunken but still recognisable mortal being, caught forever in the final moments of his agony.

Unlike other undead the mummy was carefully prepared for his final journey. The treatments required to prepare the body prevent its decay and the accompanying smell of death that marks the undead. Instead a mummy has a slightly dusty, slightly spicy smell that can tip off an experienced adventurer. Novices, used to the charnel smell of other monsters, find the difference in scent disorienting.

The ancients knew well their craft and mummified corpses thousands of years old can be found in the tombs and graves of their lost civilisations. The making of a mummy is a complex process. In the best of them the internal organs are first removed through an incision in the abdomen. Liver, lungs, stomach

When reading from the book of the dead we learn many secrets of the world to come and hidden in those scrolls are deeper truths that Simon Trismagestus has both deciphered and translated. Let he who would cheat the grave read these incantations:

The dark one sayeth 'O thou who art motionless, O thou whose members art motionless, like unto the grave, hear now. Thy members shall not be motionless, they shall not rot, they shall not crumble away, they shall not fall into decay.'

The dying one sayeth 'I would not perish and come to an end. Come then, strengthen my breath. Stablish me, stablish me and fashion me strongly, O Lord of the funeral chest.'

'Let not my body become one with worms, but deliver thou me as thou didst deliver thyself. I pray thee. Let me not fall into rottenness, as thou lettest every god, every goddess, every animal and every reptile see corruption when the soul hath gone out of them, after their death.'

'When the soul hath departed, a man seeth corruption – the bones of his body crumble away and become stinking things, the members decay one after the other, the bones crumble into a helpless mass and the flesh turneth into foetid liquid. Thus man becometh a brother unto the decay which cometh upon him, and he turneth into a myriad of worms, becometh nothing but worms and an end is made of him. Perisheth in the sight of the god of day, even as do every god, every goddess, every bird, every fish, every creeping worm, every reptile, every beast and every thing whatsoever.'

'Let all the Spirits fall on their bellies when they recognise me, and behold! The fear of me shall terrify them, and thus let it be with every being that hath died, whether it be animal, bird, fish, worm or reptile. Let unlife rise out of death. Let not the decay caused by any reptile make an end of me and let not enemies come against me in their various forms. Give me the strength of the slaughterer in his execution-chamber, who killeth the living and maketh them rot, and who destroyeth the bodies of his enemies and liveth by carnage. Let me have unlife, and perform his order; I will do what is commanded by him. Give me the strength of his fingers, so I might overcome all, for I am under thy command, O Lord of the Night.'

'I shall not decay, I shall not rot, I shall not putrefy, I shall not turn into worms and I shall not see corruption. I shall have my being, I shall have my being! I shall live in death, I shall live in death! I shall flourish, I shall flourish, I shall flourish! I shall wake up in anger, I shall not putrefy, my intestines shall not perish, I shall neither become a ruin, nor be destroyed on this earth.'

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

and intestines are drawn forth. Having been washed, dried, painted with resin and wrapped in linen they are put in special funerary jars to be kept close to the mummy's place of repose.

The heart is usually left in the body but sometimes it is removed, wrapped with linen and then carefully replaced inside the body. If the brain is to be removed, it is hooked out of a nostril or eye socket, or through a hole drilled into the skull for this purpose. The cavity is then filled with sawdust, resin or linen.

A mineral called natron, garnered from dry lakebeds, is then sprinkled over the body. This powder is an excellent desiccant – it destroys grease and fat, leaving the body devoid of moisture. This process can take a week or more.

The now dried-out remains are filled with resin-soaked linen to provide a natural shape and to prevent insect infestation. As many as seventeen cuts are made in the skin so the abdomen, back, neck, arms, legs, buttocks and thighs can be padded with such linen. Occasionally sawdust, sand or mud is used as well.



The eyes are replaced with glass, stone or painted linen, while wax is spread over the eyelids. The nose and ears are also plugged with wax. Then the body is coated with hot resin and bandaged with sixteen layers of linen. Inserted into many of these layers are charms and amulets to protect and guide the deceased. The limbs are wrapped separately so the whole bandaging process might take as long as two weeks to complete.

The corpse's face is either painted onto the linen in a life-like aspect, or a funerary mask is placed over the head. Sometimes the mummy is dressed in clothes fitting to its former station, while spell-inscribed amulets and talismans are draped around the neck.

Of course, over the passage of centuries the wrapping tear and come lose. One encountering an animated mummy confronts a hideously frightening thing, the arms and legs are shrivelled, empty eye sockets might show through the bandages and bones are visible through rents in the dried out skin.

The dark spells spoken during mummification, the myriad objects bound within the mummy's bandages and the oaths sworn by the deceased bind the mummy to certain actions, usually to protect the tomb in which it rests and the goods buried there. These duties compel the mummy to destroy those disturbing the sanctity of its burial place and it will travel far if necessary to gain such vengeance.

Habitat

Tombs are the places a mummy is most likely to be found. Only the fanes of dark gods will be warded by these undead, charged to protect the secrets and treasures of such evil places. Often the mummy rests within its coffin or sarcophagus heedless of the passing years, waking only if intruders violate its demesne.

Mummies can be found elsewhere, as guards in dungeon complexes constructed by mighty necromancers or even in cities if a sarcophagus was removed to one. As noted above, being intent on pursuing those that have desecrated its burial place, the mummy will follow its enemies to the ends of the earth.

The ancients mummified many things, not just men. They believed a man needed his body whole to persist in the afterlife and considered treasures and material goods of worth to the dead. Guardian

'Mummies powers derived from the positive forces of the universe? Bah!'

'I don't care who the hell this 'Don Rifkin' or whatever this hack's name is, but I assume he is gathering information from one of my oldest works and guides to all sorts of beastly flora and fauna. The truth be told, I made a mistake in that work – haven't you ever done that, said 'left' when you meant 'right'? I'm still appalled at the fact that few so-called 'learned ones' don't correct what are obviously errors.

'Any wizard or scholar with even half of his wits knows that all the undead get their powers from negative energies! While positive energies allow for animation of constructs or objects, only the forces of the negative spheres, both from the inner realms of 'material' and the outer realms of 'metaphysical' (whether demonic or diabolic), have the power to create an undead form. The mummy has the same special immunities and weaknesses other corporeal undead have and anybody who thinks otherwise is in for a big surprise.'

—Portion of an epistle written by Zagig the Mad Archmage

creatures were also regarded as beneficial – explorers might discover mummified pets and horses, animate and ready to serve their lord, or perhaps vile monsters preserved against the ages, ready to fight tooth and claw to guard their resting place.

Society

Commonly the mummy does not interact with others of its kind unless it is disturbed, at which point it will co-operate with its fellows in bringing swift death to intruders. This is not always so however and some mummified emperors still hold sway in crypt-bound courts, served in death as in life by mummified retainers, soldiers and seers.

When mummies are active they view one another as they did in life. Thus the mummified corpse of a prince takes precedence over that of a general and can command him.

Methods of Warfare

The simplest understanding of mummy strategy and tactics is that the mummy is a mobile trap. It has a single, overriding goal to protect a specific place or object. Nothing else matters to it – not fear, not hate, not even the end of its unlife. Everything it does focuses around achieving this aim.

In many ways the mummy resembles a construct more than it does an undead. Its creator places it where it is for a specific purpose. The environment it operates in was specifically designed to allow it to function at maximum effectiveness. Furthermore, it may have elaborate tactical and strategic 'programming' enabling it to act in ways far exceeding its base intelligence. Unlike constructs, a mummy retains some of the intelligence that it had in life, enabling it

to adapt its initial programming to changing circumstances.

Personal Combat

In direct combat a mummy wields fearsome powers. In addition to being awesomely strong and close to indestructible, its touch can infect the target with a degenerative disease that eventually kills. Although a mummy's eyes and ears no longer function as living creatures both its sight and hearing are supernaturally keen. Like all undead a mummy is immune to most effects that would impeded its relentless attack. Finally, it carries with it an aura of despair that inspires fear.

The mummy's aura comes into play when a mortal creature first sees the creature causing instant paralysis. This gives each mummy a short but deadly period in which to either attack several targets so as to spread disease or to inflict massive damage on a single target. If the majority of a mummy's opponents are paralysed it will coup de grace one paralysed target per round until it comes under meaningful attack. If only a few of the mummy's opponents are paralysed it will coup de grace any lightly-armoured target first then turn its attention to the more heavily-armoured targets.

When fighting a heavily-armoured target (anyone in medium or heavy armour) a mummy may use a trip attack instead of a normal slam. This allows the mummy to make a touch attack negating the opponent's armour bonus. Since any touch by a mummy results in a save against mummy rot even a trip attack may ultimately prove fatal. Furthermore a prone character must spend a move-equivalent action to stand up which prevents a more skilled opponent from making multiple attacks.



The mummy attacks opponents in the following order: fire-bearers, lightly-armoured targets and then heavily-armoured targets. This allows the mummy to inflict maximum damage to the intruders in as short a space of time as possible whilst minimising its own risk.

The mummy does not vary its target until the target falls. It relentlessly pounds away at its chosen victim, even pursuing the target past or through intervening obstacles. An intelligent adventurer can take advantage of this by 'dragging' a mummy that has latched onto him though the areas that his companions threaten.

Finally each mummy may exhibit unique powers from the numerous amulets embedded in its wrappings and skin. These powers rarely exceed that of first and second level divine spells permanently placed upon the mummy. Common examples of spells that might be 'imbued' into a mummy include: *endure elements*, *protection from chaos/evil/good/law*, *shield of faith*, *enthrone shield*, *obscuring mist*, *desecrate* and

silence. More exotic effects exist; the only limit is the imagination of the mummy's creator.

Notes on Mummy Amulets

Remember to adjust the CR of a mummy up when adding special powers from its amulets.

A mummy's amulets cease to function when the mummy is finally destroyed.

For truly ugly encounters add *inflict light wounds* as a permanent power to a mummy. Then have that mummy make trip attacks against its targets. The attack is a touch attack, inflicts mummy rot, and does 1d8+ 5 damage as well as potentially knocking the target prone.

Functions

The starting actions of a mummy depend on what function it serves in the defensive scheme of the tomb it protects: ambusher, caretaker or guard.

Ambusher

A mummy acting as an ambusher assaults unsuspecting attackers. It hides either among similar looking mummies or in a niche along a long corridor. Against a significant number of intruders it waits for the group to pass before coming out and stalking them. Against a group it could ordinarily deal with the mummy will spring from concealment when a soft target presents itself.

Caretaker

A mummy acting as a caretaker moves through the tomb, resetting traps and clearing away the debris of centuries. If part of a group of wardens or guardians, the caretaker also assumes responsibility for repairing other damaged mummies. When in combat a caretaker retreats to a strong point (a place with traps or where only one attacker at a time can get at it) to make its stand.

Guard

A mummy standing guard will find a narrow choke point in the tomb it protects. There, in accordance to its maker's commands, it maintains an environment of dust and fragile broken pottery shards that force a stealthy intruder to make some kind of sign of his presence. Any disturbance in the dust or sound made by a footfall on the pottery provokes a lethal response.

Protectors, Wardens, and Guardians

The *Core Rule Book III* lists three different kinds of mummy encounter organisation: solitary, wardens (2 to 4 mummies) and guardians (6 to 10 mummies). The number of mummies encountered directly affects the tactics the creatures employ.

Protectors

A solitary mummy acts as the protector of a dusty minor tomb, or may be the sole remaining survivor of a larger contingent of guards in a greater tomb. It works to ensure that the traps in the tomb remain potent, performs maintenance, and waits for the day its services become necessary.

The protector mummy most often acts as an ambusher. It attempts to strike from surprise, maximising the time that it has to inflict damage on the intruders before they can act against it.

Wardens

Wardens protect a larger tomb or potentially a small burial complex. These mummies work with one another and with their environment to punish intruders. In a group of wardens one mummy may be considerably stronger than the others (12 to 18 HD). This creature makes decisions about occurrences outside of the group's base programming.

A pair of mummies will most typically guard linked corridors or stage ambushes. In an ambush one mummy springs out for a surprise round, attacking paralysed foes first. The second sweeps in one round later from behind or from a hidden niche to create a second wave of paralysis.

Larger warden groups (3 to 4) will have one mummy acting as a lure. The others ambush the intruders in some kind of chokepoint or other unfavourable terrain.

When fighting in a group mummies work in teams of two. Each group of two attacks a single target until that target falls. As with individual mummy tactics a knowledgeable and courageous adventurer can exploit this tendency.

Guardians

An organised group of mummy guardians represents a considerable threat to all but the most organised groups of adventurers. These creatures protect important tombs or an entire necropolis. They may have access to undead troops (skeletons or zombies)

or other cannon fodder with which to distract the intruders while preparing their own assault.

If the mummies outnumber the attackers by two to one or more the mummies will stage a 'wave' assault with pairs of mummies joining the fight every round. This tactic helps to ensure that the majority of the mummies' foes will be paralysed for part, or all, of the fight. Once committed the mummies will not retreat or allow a retreat until they eliminate the intruders.

Any group of guardians will have two strong mummies (7 to 12 HD) and one or two very strong mummies (13 to 18 HD). One of the very strong mummies acts as a battle commander, making decisions about intruders that fall outside of the mummies' programming. The other acts as a caretaker, attending to the needs of the protected area and the other mummies.

Roleplaying With Mummies

Individually a mummy acts as a semi-programmed monster that reacts in predictable fashion assuming that one understands what the mummy intends. However, its native intelligence enables it to act beyond its constraints. Each mummy has a slightly different style in its approach to its duties. One may rely heavily on traps. Another may use secret passages to move quickly around its opponents. Still a third could have access to a minor enchanted object.

A mummy's power, along with its relatively low intelligence, makes it a tempting target for intelligent forces of evil. If a way could be found to alter a mummy's basic programming (say from defending a tomb to 'defending' a city by removing the inhabitants) then the mummy could be shifted from a guarding to an offensive role.

Finally, not all mummies start out evil. Some were once noblemen or soldiers who swore to guard their lords beyond death. A remnant of these once great men may still dwell in the spirits of some mummies, causing them to stay their hands against helpless or clearly harmless foes.

The stereotypical mummy confined to its sepulchral abode or wandering the earth to fulfil an ancient curse has been dealt with above. Not all mummies need follow this, somewhat predictable, trend though. While *Core Rulebook III* describes mummies as never attempting to communicate, this is not necessarily true and an encountered mummy might simply charge the party to complete a quest.

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

Mummified Undead Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual mummies capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life.

Creating A Mummified Undead

'Mummified undead' is a template that can be added to any corporeal animal, beast, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast or monstrous humanoid (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). Note that it is unlikely that a creature outside of the Tiny through Large size range would be possible to convert into a mummy and, because of the volatile nature of their embalming process, no creature of the fire subtype (for example, fire giants) should be selected. The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase hit dice to d12. All bonus hit points due to Constitution are lost.

Speed: Same as the base creature, less 10 feet per round.

Armour Class: Increase the base creature's natural armour class by +8. The embalming agents toughen the natural resistances of the skin.

Damage: Mummified undead have slam attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

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

Special Attacks: A mummified undead retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of 10 + ½ mummified undead's HD + mummified undead's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Despair (Su): At the mere sight of a mummified undead, the viewer must succeed at a Willpower save or be paralysed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that mummified undead's despair ability for one day.

Mummy Rot (Su): Supernatural disease – slam. Fortitude save (DC 20), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution. Unlike normal diseases, mummy rot continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or receives a *remove disease* spell or similar magic.

An afflicted creature that dies shrivels away into sand and dust that blow away at the first wind unless both a *remove disease* and *raise dead* are cast on the remains within six rounds.

Special Qualities: A mummified undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Damage Reduction (Su): A mummified undead's body is tough, giving it damage reduction 5/+1 (unless the base creature has a better damage reduction).

Resistant to Blows (Ex): Physical attacks deal only half damage to the mummified undead. Applied this effect before damage reduction.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): A mummified undead takes double damage from fire attacks unless a save is allowed for half damage. A successful save halves the damage and a failure doubles it.

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

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Modify from the base creature as follows: Str +6, Dex -2, Int -4, Wis +4, Cha +4. As undead creatures, mummified undead have no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Mummified undead gain Alertness and Toughness, assuming the base creature does not already have these feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any desert and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, wardens (2-4), or guardians (6-10)

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: Standard.

Alignment: Always lawful evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Mummified Characters

Mummified characters must be lawful evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook 1*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. If a wizard or sorcerer mummified character summons a familiar it must possess this template.

There is an example of a mummified undead monster in the *Bestiary of the Damned*.

In ages past the men of the fields lived in peace, many were their clans and tribes yet they saw each other as kin and fought not one against the other. Even to the animals of the wild wood they were friends and hunted only for that which they needed for sustenance and placated the departed spirits of fowl and deer with songs and ceremonies.

The elves were acquainted with the men of the fields. The wisest of that lofty race bade their fellows to have no truck with the tribes that hunted and gathered along the borders of their forested realms but many a young elf delighted in the company of man. Half-elven children were sired and knowledge was given.

So it was that the men of the fields became longer lived as elven blood began to run in the veins of their leaders and chiefs. Once wanderers, they now settled in roundhouses and raised earthen ramparts about their homes to shelter them from the many fell creatures that went abroad to hunt at night.

Magic was practised too, good magic that strengthened the weak and brought joy to those assembled around the hearth during the long nights of winter.

Those clans with many spellcasters became prosperous, towns were established and trade began to flourish. With daily needs now easily cared for art and poetry flourished and the half-elven nobles were admired as much for their songs as their prowess in the hunt.

One tribe was less successful. They settled in an area rich and pleasant and yet were soon targeted by orcs fleeing a great conflagration in the west. Man and orc fought fiercely and many fell. No time had the warriors of this tribe's clans for merriment or culture and they became as stern and brutal as the vicious humanoid against which they fought.

At length the orcs were bested, their whelps ruthlessly exterminated and their cavern-homes swept clean of life by the hard-eyed human warriors. Yet these men knew not what to do with the peace for which they had fought so hard. With envious eyes they looked towards their richer brethren. Had not the battle been theirs too? While the half-elves had sung, danced and feasted they had fought, bled, suffered atrocities and learned the harsh arts of war. Why had the half-elven nobles of the other tribes not come to their aid? Would not the orcs have trampled the half-elves' homes too if they had gained victory?

So it was that the hard-eyed warriors took up arms against their half-elven kin, driven by envy and

bitterness. The first battles were bloody and brief. The tribes lead by half-elves were ill prepared for war and quickly succumbed to the attacks, with many of their people bound in chains and carried off into slavery while their riches were plundered.

Only magic could save the peaceful tribes and so it was that they gathered to forge powerful weapons and cast spells against their foes. The tide of war turned and the hard-eyed warriors were driven back.

Now the warmongers' hearts were filled with a black rage! Why had their so-called kin not made such weapons during the orc wars? Their magic could have ended the struggle swiftly and with little loss of life. Now aware that magic was a potent weapon in its own right the hard-eyed warriors sought to learn such sorceries themselves. They had no time for study or research, wanting the power immediately. They found those willing to give such energy in the blood-red pits of hell. Black seers arose amongst the hard-eyed men, evil clerics who had bound their souls to the devils of the nether realms.

Now the war redoubled in fury, primeval magic devastated the unspoilt lands and the once-peaceful tribes lead by the half-elves were driven into the forests of their pure elven kin. Now the elves rose up, disgusted by the black magic that was being wrought, and descended on the war camps of the hard-eyed men.

The savage human warriors died by the hundred, their power was shattered and chiefs slain. The survivors raised burial mounds for the dead, laid their fallen within, still armed for war, and left for lands new, full of sorrow, bitterness and grief.

Yet the dead killed in battle did not stay in the depths of their dark earthen tombs. Now they found out the price of heeding the words of their black seers. To hell their souls descended to be tortured mercilessly before being returned to bodies withered by decay. Thus came the first wights to this world and never will all leave it.

To this day these living dead still fight their unholy war, their ranks swollen by the thousands who have fallen victim to their evil. Called wights by the elves because of their resemblance to men, these horrors are full of hate for half-remembered and imagined wrongs, they seek to suck life from the living and to spread darkness to all that walk in the sunlit realms.

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

WIGHTS

Death has its warriors in the world and those warriors are the dread barrow wights – fierce foes of all living things, burning with hatred and ever eager to kill.

Physiology

In some ways a wight resembles a mummy removed from its shroud of bandages. Their flesh is shrivelled and dry, clinging to bones that bulge through the stiff covering. The head is skull-like, covered in a thin layer of tightly drawn leathery skin. Tightened sinews have drawn the body into an inhuman posture, twisted and unnatural.

The terrifying eyes of a wight are the first thing an adventurer plumbing its ebony tomb will see, they blaze with a feral ferocity, a mad glare in which the wight's animosity to all things living is readily discernible.

Wights can arise spontaneously when a powerful evil warrior is buried, the forces of evil 'rewarding' the fallen one with undeath. Most commonly they are spawned when a wight destroys a living being, that one arising in a matter of seconds as a new member of this horrid breed. Certain sages speculate that the wraith is the spirit of a wight freed from its bodily shell. This is a topic we will investigate further in the chapter dealing with the spirits of evil.

Habitat

Some places reek of death and have a palpable air of sorrow, regret and loss. Such locales are home to

wights, though whether their presence creates this sensation, or such qualities attract them, is unknown. Whatever the case may be it is in barrow mounds, labyrinthine crypts, time-mouldered tombs and dungeons of dark reputation that wights gather and spawn.

They are not restricted to such obvious gathering places for the undead. There are ancient forests with strong evil associations where black-barked trees whisper evil secrets to the wind and abandoned cities in forlorn locales where massacres were once committed that provide a home to these malevolent beings.

Wights are twisted with evil, fashioning bizarre things in their sepulchres. Adventurers have glimpsed wall paintings depicting scenes of such wickedness that to look too long upon them was to risk madness. Statues of bone have been brought to the surface, carvings hateful to the sight of a sane man.

Society

Wights have but one purpose – to destroy the living. This is what motivates them, what they scheme and yearn for. They envy the living, covetous of life's rich warmth and feel ever betrayed and bitter, blaming those that still live for their own sorry state.

Being lawful, these creatures are co-operative and have a structure in their gangs and packs. When one wight held a high position in life and its fellows were subservient to it, the same order remains in death – they will follow and serve their former lord. Otherwise the strongest and most cunning will take precedence over the rest, appoint others to secondary leadership roles and lead the vile throng against the hated living world.

Wights will sometimes capture sentient living beings, particularly humans and elves, to sacrifice in grim subterranean rituals in honour of the unquiet grave and hell's dukes. They seek to spread darkness and death wherever possible and hate pleasant things. A beautiful song might



cause them to cease attacking and retreat for a few rounds if the Games Master considers it vibrant enough.

It is not unusual to find wights associating with wraiths and embarking upon wicked schemes together with those vile spirits.

Methods of Warfare

It is the awful life-draining touch of the wight that adventurers fear. To be struck by the beast's wicked talons is to have one's very soul endangered. Negative energy fills and fuels the wight and when the living come into contact with it their own positive energy is absorbed, just as a black hole absorbs the light of the stars which still burn.

Those who have their life drained begin to forget the world of the living – as their strength is stolen so too are their memories. As they forget who and what they are, the things they have done and the friends they have made, they also forget skills hard fought for and arcane mysteries learned or solved. This is what it 'lives' for, to feel again the warmth of life, to regain for a brief moment that which it has lost and to punish the living for being alive.

The wights' assault will be well planned and disciplined. They are of average intelligence and are fully capable of executing strategies and tactics designed in advance. As many wights were evil warriors in life, such assaults might be quite complex and clever, the product of former training and instruction.

Being stealthy by nature the wight can often surprise its foes. This is ideal, for without forewarning enemies have no chance to activate abjuration magic that might shield them from the wights' energy draining attacks.

If buried with arms and armour, or if able to defeat foes bearing such equipment, the wight might attack in a more conventional manner, should it become apparent that their enemies are unaffected by a supernatural assault. Games Masters looking to beef up an encounter can give magical devices to the wight, as well as conventional or enchanted weapons and armour.

Wights might serve as soldiers for a more powerful undead master and they associate with other forms of undead, possibly launching joint attacks with them.

Roleplaying With Wights

As with most undead monsters, the wight is a versatile adversary a Games Master can readily place into his adventures. No great justification is needed for including them in a dungeon complex, as wanderers from the local cemetery afflicting a city or town or as night-time visitors to an unlucky adventuring bands camp.

Wights can serve a more vital role in a campaign than this however. They can become prime enemies in an adventure, appearing in large numbers and lead by wights developed using the template given below. Acting in concert with other undead monsters, they might seek to take over an entire region or destroy some site associated with positive energy and life.

It is worth noting that a wight might easily be mistaken for a zombie or mummy when first encountered. The scheming wight might wish to lure the unsuspecting adventurer into a place where naught but a zombie guards. Then again, torn burial clothes can have the appearance of bandages. Other tricks might be played to confuse the party as to what it actually is that staggers towards them.



Wight Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual wights capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. *Core Rulebook III* indicates that only humanoids will become wights and also states that those transforming into this horrid kind of undead monster lose all the abilities they had in life. This template ignores such restrictions, allowing for the creation of unique and terrifying wights.

Creating A Wight

'Wight' is a template that can be added to any corporeal animal, beast, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid or vermin (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead'. It uses all the statistics and special abilities of the base creature except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12, bonus hit points due to Constitution are lost.

Speed: Same as the base creature.

Armour Class: Use the base creature's natural armour bonus or +4, whichever is greater.

Damage: Wights have slam attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

Size	Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1
Tiny	1d2
Small	1d3
Medium-size	1d4
Large	1d6
Huge	1d8
Gargantuan	2d6
Colossal	2d8

Special Attacks: A wight retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of 10 + ½ wight's HD + wight's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the wight's slam attack receive one negative level.

Create Spawn (Su): Any living creature of an appropriate type slain by a wight becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the wight that created them and remain enslaved until its death.

Special Qualities: A wight retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the undead type.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +2, Wis +2, Cha +4. As undead creatures, wights have no Constitution score.

Skills: Wights receive a +8 racial bonus to Move Silently checks.

Feats: As for the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or pack (6-11).

Challenge Rating: +1.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always lawful evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Wight Characters

Wight characters must be lawful evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. If a wizard or sorcerer wight character summons a familiar it must possess this template.

There is an example of a wight in the Bestiary of the Damned.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Legion of the Damned

Over a thousand years ago, King Herndrick and his huscarls fell in battle against crusaders come to end his blasphemous rule. A great mound of earth was raised over the piled up bodies of his followers, while the king's corpse was taken to a secret location and entombed so no demented disciple could ever seek his resurrection.

The players hear a rumour of an unlooted tomb, one where many warriors were buried with their magical accoutrements. When they breach the surface of its grass-covered crust they shatter a magical ward set over the mound, allowing those buried beneath it to arise as wights. To the players dismay, withered arms begin to break through the earth, awful forms clawing their way back into the world of the living.

The players might stand and fight, destroying or turning back some of these undead, but they number in the hundreds and soon the party must flee or fall before them.

Freed from death's black slumber, King Herndrick's huscarls now seek their fallen lord. If they find the warded tomb in which he lies they will release a wight of terrifying power, one that might lead them once more to dominion over the surrounding lands.

Will the party seek to undo the wrong they have accidentally done? If not then this part of the world is doomed to living death. Enquiries amongst the elves locate one sage who remembers where Herndrick's corpse was laid. Will the party travel there before the wights can find it and destroy the king's body? There are many traps, magical protections and guardian creatures to overcome if they accept the challenge, as those that buried the king sought to make his tomb impregnable. Or will they seek to destroy the wights before the undead can locate their king's burial place? If so, how do they propose to

secure a victory against so many hundreds of living dead warriors?

The Black Meteorite

One night a shooting star is seen, leaving a blood red trail as it plummets from the sky. When it strikes the earth there is a magnificent flash of crimson radiance and an ear-splitting crash.

Simple farmers dwell near the site of its impact, overawed they carry the cooled meteor into their church. 'A piece of heaven has fallen to earth,' they cry. Those who bore the black stone are the first to change, life fleeing from them and their bodies becoming dried husks as they turn into life hungry wights.

The meteor's malevolent influence spreads, first through the village and then the surrounding lands. Children are the first to change, becoming wights after a night of fever and bad dreams, rising to slay their parents and create yet more of the cursed undead. Soon all for miles around are consumed by undeath, even the animals of wood and field.

The meteor must be sent out of this world, it is a thing of negative energy, a piece of a hostile plane somehow broken loose that has travelled through the



THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

multiverse for aeons before striking the character's home world.

To reach it the party must traverse a land teeming with life hungry undead. Each night they are inflicted with one negative level as the aura of the malevolent shooting star sucks vitality from them. Will they still have strength enough to open a portal or plane shift with the black rock when at last they reach it in a damned village full of wights?

New Free-Willed Living Dead Monsters

Gholle

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 19 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +8 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +10 melee, bite +7 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+5, bite 1d8+2

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

Special Attacks: Paralysing gaze, stench, create spawn, improved grab, rake 1d6+2

Special Qualities: Undead, damage reduction 10/+2, SR 16, regeneration 5, +4 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 15, Con 0, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 17

Skills: Climb +11, Escape Artist +10, Hide +5, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +8, Search +7, Spot +10

Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or troupe (2-4 plus 7-12 ghulaz or ghouls)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 8-15 HD (Large); 16-20 HD (Huge)

These vile things often dwell in packs, often including ghulaz and/or ghouls. Naturally, their favourite food is carrion, human corpses, but a fresh one will do if they can't wait for 'ageing.'

These creatures stand about 12 feet tall and have clawed hands and feet of an animal nature, despite their human-like fingers and toes. Their skull is humanoid in shape, albeit more akin to that of a gorilla than a man. It is elongated with massive, hyena-like jaws, glaring bestial eyes and ears that resemble those of the hyena.

Combat

Gholles attack any living creature on sight, usually attempting to catch would-be prey by surprise.

Paralysing Gaze (Su): Paralysis for 1d6 minutes, 30 feet; Will save (DC 17) negates. Elves are not immune to the paralysing gaze of a gholle.

Stench (Ex): The stench of death and corruption sickens all creatures within 10 feet for 1d6+7 minutes that fail a Fortitude save (DC 16). A sickened creature suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves, and skill checks.

Create Spawn (Su): In most cases, gholle devour those they kill. Those that are not devoured rise as gholles in 1d4 days. They retain none of the abilities they had in life.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the gholle must hit a Large or smaller opponent with both claw attacks. If it gets a hold, it can make two rake attacks



with its feet (+10 melee) for 1d6+2 points of damage each.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a gholle. Lost limbs regrow in 3d6 minutes. A gholle can reattach severed members immediately, by holding it to the stump.

Ghulaz

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 9d12 (58 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +8 melee, bite +5 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+3, bite 1d8+1

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

Special Attacks: Paralysing spittle, stench, create spawn, improved grab, rake 1d6+1

Special Qualities: Undead, damage reduction 10/+1, SR 12, regeneration 5, +2 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Climb +8, Escape Artist +8, Hide +9, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +10, Search +7, Spot +10

Feats: Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or pack (2-4 plus 6-11 gholls)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 10-14 HD (Medium-size); 15-18 HD (Large)

Ghulaz are undead creatures rumoured to have originated on another plane of existence. These vile creatures often dwell in packs, including gholls and/or gholls. These murderous monstrosities are akin to the gholls, and are every bit as evil.

These creatures stand about 6 feet tall and have long arms, corded in muscle, that terminate in hideous clawed hands and feet of an animal nature, despite their human-like fingers and toes. Their skull is humanoid in shape, albeit more akin to that of a gorilla than a man. It is elongated with massive, hyena-like jaws, glaring bestial eyes and ears that are hyena-like in appearance. These vile things seem to be an amalgam of the worst features of a hound,

baboon and a human, blending them into a leering, fanged visage of demonic appearance.

Combat

Ghulaz attack their opponents with their claws and paralysing spittle. Creatures slain by a ghulaz are usually devoured. They fight unceasingly until either they or their opponents are dead.

Paralysing Spittle (Su): Paralysis for 1d6 minutes, 10 feet; Fortitude save (DC 17) negates. Elves are not immune to the paralysing spittle of a ghulaz.

Stench (Ex): The stench of death and corruption sickens all creatures within 10 feet for 1d6+6 minutes that fail a Fortitude save (DC 16). A sickened creature suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves, and skill checks.

Create Spawn (Su): In most cases, ghulaz devour those they kill. Those that are not devoured rise as ghulaz in 1d4 days. They retain none of the abilities they had in life.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the ghulaz must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with both claw attacks. If it gets a hold, it can make two rake attacks with its feet (+8 melee) for 1d6+1 points of damage each.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a ghulaz. Lost limbs regrow in 3d6 minutes. A ghulaz can reattach severed members immediately, by holding it to the stump.

Let us now examine the noisome gholle and ghulaz in detail. Given their many similarities we shall consider their physiology, society, methods of warfare and how one might role-play with them jointly.

Physiology

These creatures are truly horrific. In appearance they are a truly frightening and alien combination of man and ape, with a good portion of canine blood thrown into the mix. How can such creatures have originated? Surely no such blasphemous crossbreeds ever wandered the face of the world as living, breathing creatures?

Some have speculated that they represent an earlier form of humanity, something similar to Cro-Magnon man, yet far more bestial. More recent reports suggest a far more sinister explanation for their recent and growing emergence in the world of men.

THE FREE-WILLED LIVING DEAD

As will be seen in the society section below, the gholle and ghulaz have demonic rulers in the abyss. It is they who fashioned these horrors, initially at the behest of the demon lord of gnolls, he who has dominion over ghoul and ghastr, so that they might swell the ranks of the ghoule king's unholy army.

The demonic pair targeted a living world teeming with primitive life and, with no sophisticated beings to resist them, they were able to conquer the whole planet and set about twisting the life flourishing upon it. Unimaginably cruel experiments were conducted in which primitive man-like beings were surgically combined with bestial things and then cursed with ghoulish undeath, the gholle and ghulaz being the dreadful result.

Yet only the ghulaz were taken back into the nether realms for their lord to inspect and augment. Their creators kept the gholle secret for reasons that will become apparent in the following sections.

Habitat

In general, these fiendish things haunt the same forlorn locales as ghouls as they feast on carrion, with burial sites and battlefields being highly favoured. They are somewhat more widely scattered than ghouls, however, as they are seeking to secure dark abodes for themselves, wresting control of tombs, crypts, burial mounds, dungeons and catacombs from those that might oppose their evil masters.

Society

Like ghouls, the gholle and ghulaz assemble in feral packs. Usually these bands are a conglomerate of all three of these living dead monstrosities, with the lesser types subservient to the greater and the strongest gholle dominate overall.

These horrible flesh-eating bands answer the call of the demons Gholle and Ghul. Let us examine that appalling pair and, when we have finished shuddering, move on to study their malevolent schemes.

Demon: Gholle (Demon Lord of Gholle)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 19d8+95 (180 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 38 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +20 natural, bracers of armour +6)

Attacks: 2 claws +25 melee, bite +23 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+7, bite 1d8+3

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

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, paralysing gaze, stench, improved grab, summon demons or gholles, rake 1d6+3

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 40/+4, SR 30, immunities, resistances, telepathy

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +14, Will +18

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 22, Wis 24, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +26, Concentration +24, Diplomacy +23, Hide +15, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Knowledge (religion) +21, Listen +34, Move Silently +19, Scry +24, Search +24, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +25, Spot +34

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary or troupe (Gholle plus Ghul, 7-12 gholle, and 7-12 ghulaz)

Challenge Rating: 21

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods; standard items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: —

Gholle is a powerful demon lord, and revered by the undead creatures known as gholle. He appears as a 12-foot tall male figure with leprous flesh and clawed hands and feet of an animal nature. His head is human... almost. It is elongated, with hyena-like jaws, bestial eyes and ears that bespeak some nightmare blend of human and animal.

Combat

Gholle is a powerful opponent and relishes slaying those that disturb or bother him. He uses all of his abilities to their fullest and is particularly fond of slaying an opponent and then raising that creature as a gholle using his create gholle spell-like ability.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—animate dead, blasphemy, create gh'ool (slain creature rises as a gh'ool), deeper darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect law, fear, greater dispelling, pyrotechnics, read magic, suggestion, symbol (any), telekinesis, teleport without error (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), tongues (self only), unhallow, unholy aura, unholy blight, and wall of fire; 1/day—fire storm and

implosion. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 17 + spell level).

Paralysing Gaze (Su): Paralysis for 3d6+2 minutes, 30 feet; Will save (DC 26) negates. Elves are not immune to Gholl's paralysing gaze.

Stench (Ex): The stench of death and corruption sickens all creatures within 20 feet for 3d6+10 minutes that fail a Fortitude save (DC 24). A sickened creature suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves, and skill checks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Gholl must hit a large or smaller opponent with both claw attacks. If he gets a hold, he can make two rake attacks with his feet (+25 melee) for 1d6+3 points of damage each.

Summon Demons or Gh'hool (Sp): Once per day Gholl can automatically summon 10d10 dretches, 2d4 vrock, 1d2 mariliths or balors, or 2d4 gholl.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to poison and electricity.

Resistances (Ex): Cold, fire and acid 20.

Telepathy (Su): Gholl can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Gholl receives a +8 racial bonus to Listen and Spot checks.

Demon: Ghul (Lesser Demoness)

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice: 16d8+64 (136 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 31 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +20 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +21 melee, bite +19 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+6, bite 1d8+3

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

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, paralysing spittle, stench, improved grab, summon demons or gh'haz, rake 1d6+3

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 40/+4, SR 28, immunities, resistances, telepathy

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +17

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 24, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +23, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +23, Hide +14, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Knowledge (religion) +22, Listen +31, Move Silently +18, Scry +22, Search +14, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +22, Spot +31

Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary or troupe (Ghul plus Gholl, 7-12 gholl, and 7-12 ghulaz)

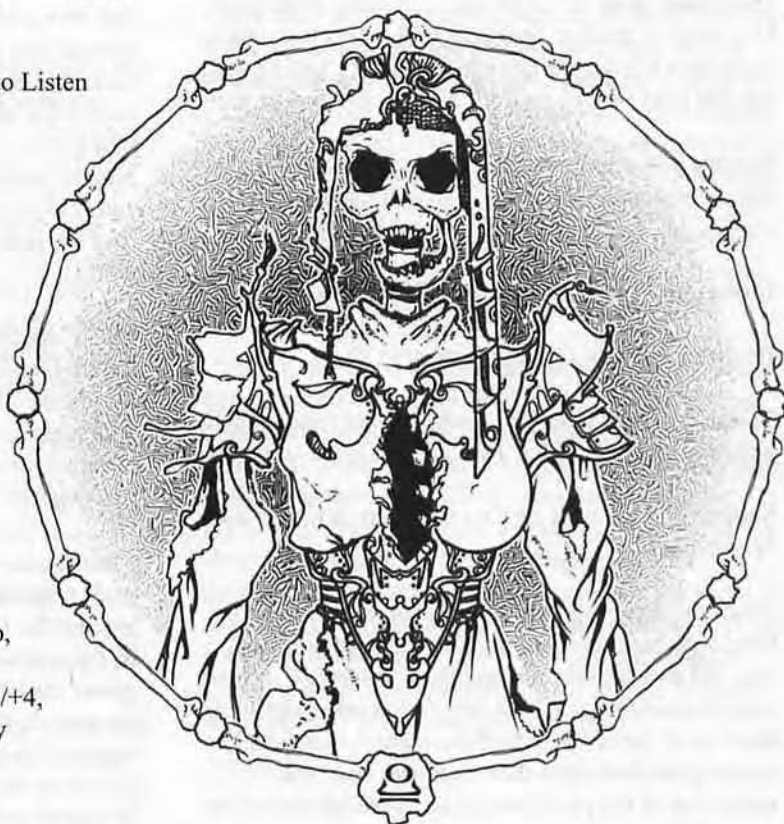
Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods; standard items

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: —

Ghul is a 12-foot tall female, misshapen creature and the mother of all gh'haz. Her bestial face combines the worst features of a hound, baboon and woman, twisted in a leering, fanged visage of demonic appearance. Her long arms are corded with muscle and terminate in clawed hands; the feet are similarly ugly and clawed. The overall impression of her bodes horror most malevolent.



Combat

Ghul attacks with her claws and bite, sprinkling combat with her spell-like abilities. She is a very dangerous and deadly foe, and knows no fear.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—animate dead, blasphemy, create ghulaz (slain creature rises as a ghulaz), deeper darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect law, fear, greater dispelling, pyrotechnics, read magic, suggestion, symbol (any), telekinesis, teleport without error (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), tongues (self only), unhallow, unholy aura, unholy blight, and wall of fire; 1/day—fire storm and implosion. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 17 + spell level).

Paralysing Spittle (Su): Paralysis for 3d6 minutes, 20 feet; Fortitude save (DC 22) negates. Elves are not immune to Ghul paralysing spittle.

Stench (Ex): The stench of death and corruption sickens all creatures within 20 feet for 3d6+10 minutes that fail a Fortitude save (DC 22). A sickened creature suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all attacks, saves, and skill checks.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Ghul must hit a large or smaller opponent with both claw attacks. If she gets a hold, she can make two rake attacks with her feet (+21 melee) for 1d6+3 points of damage each.

Summon Demons or Ghulaz (Sp): Once per day Ghul can automatically summon 10d10 dretches, 2d4 vrocks, 1d2 mariliths or balors, or 2d4 ghulaz.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to poison and electricity.

Resistances (Ex): Cold, fire and acid 20.

Telepathy (Su): Ghul can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Skills: Ghul receives a +8 racial bonus to Listen and Spot checks.

When the demon-god of gnolls charged Gholl and Ghul with making a new race of ghoulish monsters, they did so gleefully, making their 'offspring' in their own disgusting image. At first they worked dutifully, mindful of the reward he-of-the-many-headed-flail would give them once their task was done and conscious of the punishments he could administer to those failing him.

Yet, as they toiled on the primitive world they had conquered, a seed of resentment grew. Were they to give the fruits of their labour to another? Were not the gholle and ghulaz their progeny? Why should the ghoule king and his demonic master gain the benefits of their hard work and ruthless ingenuity?

To revolt against the gnoll-god was to risk utter destruction, they needed an ally if they hoped to survive and enjoy their new power. They found one willing to give succour and aid in Orcus, prince of the undead. Long had the demon lord of the dead resented the power the gnoll-god wielded over the ghouls, as they were his by right, and he felt great umbrage whenever he considered their misplaced loyalty. When Orcus learned of Gholl's and Ghul's intentions he promised to protect them from the gnoll-god and grant them dominion over all ghouls if only they would destroy the ghoule king and bring his ghoulish subjects into proper subservience to him. Orcus would be their sovereign, Gholl and Ghul their feudal overlords, near autonomous overlords at that.

So it was that when the demon lord of gnoll and ghoule called upon Gholl and Ghul to show him their creations, they brought only the ghulaz to his abyssal plane. Well pleased was he-of-the-many-headed-flail and he urged Gholl and Ghul to dispatch the new undead into the material world at once. Gholl and Ghul did indeed send the ghulaz into the mortal realms but along with them sent the gholle. Not to join forces with the ghoule king, but to fight against him, to destroy any ghoulish lord that refused to swear loyalty to Orcus and to recruit all ghouls into a dark crusade to establish ghouldom on the material world.

Full of wrath was the gnoll-god when he learned of the trick and at once sought to bring Gholl and Ghul to 'justice'. Orcus thwarted his attempts and a war now rages in the abyss between the two armies, a war of unimaginable destructive ferocity in which neither can gain the upper hand.

Meanwhile, Gholl's and Ghul's children are making great progress. Horrid packs of wandering ghouls are lead by the foul gholle's and ghulaz, more and more of the undead rally to their cause and the ghoule king grows restless and wrathful. Some speculate that the mysterious tr'ouls were sent in answer to, or in expectation of, this revolt and are the gnoll-lord's answer to the gholle and ghulaz insurrection. Whatever truth there may be in this, one thing is

certain – tr'ouls never accompany bands of ghulaz and gholle and are known to fight against them.

It should, however, be noted that gholles and ghulaz are, by their very nature, chaotic evil and thus do not have a set form of loyalties, even to their own creators. It is said that the gnoll lord has converted several of the ghulaz over to his loyalty and certain sub-types are said to ignore the commands of all the demons, including their creators. Like all chaotic evil creatures, they follow their own agenda.

Methods of Warfare

The attack of a ghoulish pack lead by gholle and ghulaz is utterly terrifying. The cunning creatures will strike at an opportune moment, ideally with the benefit of surprise, springing forth from the shadows or from behind cover and letting out a frightful dog-like howling.

Initially the gholle hang back, attempting to paralyse their foes with a malevolent stare. Meanwhile the ghulaz bound in close to spit their vile paralysing saliva over those resisting their brethren's gaze attack. Ghouls and ghosts, if they are present, rush in to a hand-to-hand melee, tearing with their sharp claws and ripping chunks of flesh from their victims with savage bites.

If the stench of the ghouls is not enough to weaken the adversary, the unbearable stench of the gholle and ghulaz is likely to nauseate even the staunchest when they close to rend and tear with toothy maw and wicked claws. The fight is likely to be brief and bloody but should the victims are made of sterner stuff and are able to turn the tide of battle against the ghoulish ones, then a prolonged fight is in order. Unless driven away by holy power, the gholle and ghulaz will not retreat. They know no fear, they fight on until the bitter end and combat will cease only when the last of them is destroyed.

Roleplaying With Gholle and Ghulaz

While these undead monsters might be used as an encounter in any suitable locale, a better way to introduce them into a campaign is to take an approach heightening the uncanny nature of their appearance and the mystery surrounding their arrival.

First the players hear of potent new 'ghouls', confused accounts given by half-drunk adventurers in taverns

and rumours picked up in temples and guildhalls. Next they might come across the fallen corpse of a ghulaz, note its bestial nature and wonder what it might be.

Eventually they begin to encounter these horrors, although only a few of them at first. Occasionally place a single gholle or ghulaz into a ghoul pack, and then slowly increase the number – making such encounters ever more threatening.

Hopefully the players will begin to wonder what these horrid things are. Keep their name a secret; explain that no one seems to know anything about the new threat arising in wilderness and dungeon. Perhaps the party will seek out a sage or other master of arcane lore and begin to learn just a little, vague hints at first. Perhaps a loremaster will commission them to make a study of the beasts by capturing a few examples.

With such potent leadership ghoul bands will become bolder, attacking in large groups even in civilised areas. Panic will spread and fear grow of these new kinds of undead.

As the characters increases in level, they can be drawn into the odd politics of the situation. A disguised agent of the ghoule king might approach the adventurers and offer knowledge about the gholle and ghulaz, encouraging the party to seek their hidden strongholds and wipe them out. The king will go so far as to provide accurate maps and other intelligence, even odd magical devices of a disgusting and evil nature will be lent to the intrepid heroes, if they want them! Should the party grow curious as to who their sponsor might be, allow them to discover it after a time and see how they react. Are they happy serving such a vile being if it furthers the cause of good?

If such a discovery is never made then further intrigue can be added by having an agent of Gholl and Ghul contact the adventurers. This sinister fellow tells them how to find the ghoule king's subterranean realm and claims that it is the king who has brought the gholle and ghulaz into the world, suggesting that the characters assassinate him. A tangled web of deception and trickery can be spun about the party as they seek to end the gholle and ghulaz menace. If the adventurers are clever they will eventually see the true nature of things and work against both factions while secretly pretending to serve them.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Corpses, Corpses Everywhere and Not A Morsel to Eat

While exploring a particularly vile catacomb beneath a city known for its immorality, the party are approached by a pack of whimpering ghouls. These festering things beg the adventurers for help! They explain that they have been cursed and can no longer chew upon the bones of the dead or strip the flesh from the recently interred, 'When we try to eat our mouths become dry, our tongues cleave to the roofs of our mouths and our jaws feel like lead. Oh how hungry we are, how we ache to eat!'

Well might the adventurers be glad of this and tell the vile undead to be gone, but the ghouls plead yet more and tell the party they know where the richest and oldest burial sites are and how the traps warding them can be passed.

If this tempts the party they will become allies of countless ghouls who slink through the catacomb's night-black passageways. They will learn of the gholle and ghulaz that demanded the ghouls serve and aid them. It was the ghouls refusal that lead to the curse, for with the newly arrived undead is one with unusual strength – a gholle capable of casting spells as a high level sorcerer and in possession of an evil magic item which can adversely influence undead earning its ire.

Will the party aid the ghouls and attack the gholle and ghulaz? What unusual friendships they will make while so doing! Once freed, will the ghouls stick to their bargain, or will their first feast after the enforced fast be on the flesh of the adventurers who saved them?



SPIRITS OF EVIL

ALLIPS

Why do men and women take their own lives? The urge to live, to strive against all odds, is mankind's driving motive. Indeed, to survive and procreate is the basic impulse of all living things. Even amongst the living dead there are species that follow this pattern, seeking to spawn more of their number while preserving their own unnatural existence.

Yet some human beings do destroy themselves – driven by spite, madness, shame or despair they end their own life. There are circumstances in which self-destruction is understandable, a prisoner tortured to reveal vital information might be considered worthy if his suicide prevented an enemy from securing knowledge that might turn the tide of a war. In some cultures failure in a military endeavour is deemed so dishonourable that only by taking his own life can a commander be freed from shame. Yet most suicides are not for such 'noble' reasons, they are actions born from desperation, self-loathing and depression or, occasionally, from a desire to punish those who will be bereaved. This last motive is surely an evil one,

for the grief of losing a loved one is a terrible burden to bear and how much heavier is the load if the one lost took his own life? Then there are those who take their own lives in order to escape some punishment due them.

Sometimes suicide attempts are made to impress a point upon family and friends. There is no real intent to kill themselves on the part of the 'distressed' individuals; rather they seek attention or power in some domestic situation. All too frequently such charades of self harm result in death, for the powers of the grave are not to be toyed with – life is both precious and precarious and the healthy should not spurn the gifts of existence.

Just as the waters of a tranquil pond are made choppy if a stone is hurled into their depths, so too does the suicide of a loved one send ripples through the lives of many, causing intolerable grief and setting a precedent that relatives might follow. Outward and outward the ripples go, so that even those on the periphery of one's life are affected and always for the worse. To destroy oneself and cause such sadness, such empty desperate woe, is evil. To throw away the gifts of life is despicable and an affront to the powers of heaven.

Of course, madness makes its own rules and the insane cannot be held accountable for their actions, but even

Mary sat on the bed with her knees hunched up to her chin. Beside her Kalgus slept fitfully, occasionally calling out the name of one of his lost companions. Mary hardly heard him, her attention fixed upon the book that lay upon the floor where she had discarded it.

Looking at the bite mark on her arm, Mary wondered whether she dared read more. At length she reasoned that despite her fright the only ill effect of her disturbing vision had been that single bite, 'are you a milksop girl?' she chided herself, 'knowledge and power lie there for the taking and yet you quiver like a virgin on her wedding night!'

With trembling fingers she picked up the tome once more and leafed through its despicable pages, careful not to look again upon the woodcut of the ghoul. She came to a chapter entitled '*Conversing with the Spirits of the Damned*' and began to read. Horrid were the apparitions it described, things of darkness that skulked in the shadows to leech one's life, maddened spirits which raved at the place of their death, gruesome wraiths and spectres whose wickedness in life left them trapped in the world of the living as undead terrors.

So vile and frightful were the words that Mary toyed more than once with the notion of closing the book and laying herself down beside her cash-bought lover, and yet, something in the pages lead her to read on. She swallowed her fear and read more and more. There were spells for calling up the damned and spells to control them, dweomers that could give a necromancer the same ghastly powers as the living dead, incantations to protect one from a spirit's malevolent presence and hints as to how one might become such a spirit.

'Here is power,' Mary thought, 'and I shall have it!'



the most lonely and desperate of individuals can reach out and search for succour – the clergy, a friend, relative or physician must be found. Things are always darkest before the dawn and a woe that seems unbearable in the winter may seem no more than a bad dream when the spring comes.

Physiology

The allip has no substance; it is a thing of light and shadow, of insubstantial memories. In essence it is madness and grief come to a semblance of life. Once, the allip was a living being – a man or woman who found the burden of life too great and opted to end it. The powers of heaven have refused it the choice of passing out of the material world and on to paradise and, as a punishment for throwing away the gifts the gods had given it, the allip must remain here in the material world.

Much of what the being was in life is lost and what remains is madness – the same irrationality that led it to end its own life. The nature of this madness is most malevolent, the allip seeks to spread woe and insanity

and will assail and destroy the living, imparting its own lunacy upon them.

Habitat

The allip will generally haunt the locale where it committed suicide, but this is not the only possibility. The Games Master might place an encounter with one of these living dead things in any number of places. Consider the following:

† A well where a despairing child, the victim of abuse, hurled himself to his doom. The child seeks vengeance on his tormentors but in its maddened state, the allip views all that come to the edge of the well as its abhorrent parents.

† A shop now haunted by its former owner who slit his throat when his debts built up.

† The bedchamber where a jilted woman killed herself on what should have been her wedding night. All is arrayed as a bridal chamber should be, with garlands of faded flowers hanging over the bed and trays of (now rotten) fruit and other dainties arranged nearby. The allip appears in its bridal gown, a beautiful young woman that whispers of sensual pleasures and love, seeming to regard one of the players as her beau. She soon changes to a frightful apparition of madness and death, shrieking of her shame and sorrow before assailing all nearby.

† A bridge over a babbling brook from which a condemned felon hurled himself rather than face the gallows. The spirit of the dead murderer hides in the shadows beneath the bridge, unaware that he is dead and believing every footfall from above to be caused by the passing of a posse searching for him.

Society

There is no society as far as allips are concerned. They are doomed to solitude, grief is their only companion and madness their only friend. Rarely two people will form a pact and commit suicide together. In these infrequent cases two allips might be encountered together but it is likely that they despise each other in death, each believing the other to be responsible for their sorry state.

Methods of Warfare

Although quite mad, the allip's attacks have a fiendish ingenuity. They can delay their appearance

to a timely moment, when victims will be alone or off-guard and, while they seem to be unaware of their inability to make physical attacks, they are conscious of the effects their other attacks engender and seek to use them to maximum effect. In particular it should be noted that the allip can express a *suggestion* to those that have fallen victim to its hypnotic babbling. This suggestion may be no more frightful than that the victim should flee but, in other cases, the spirit will have formulated a diabolical plan that will lead its victim into danger. An urging to enter a locale inhabited by a dangerous monster or to pull a lever that triggers a trap are but two possibilities.

Roleplaying With Allips

The allips strongest desire is to gain vengeance on whomever it deems responsible for the sadness that drove it to suicide. As already noted, the spirit is none too choosy in laying blame and it might hold all humanity accountable for its demise!

Where a single individual or identifiable group is blamed the allip will pursue and haunt them. This can lead to some interesting role-playing opportunities. The actions of a character might cause one whose mind is already unhinged to take their life. Consider the charismatic paladin who becomes the object of a delinquent young noblewoman's ardour. Gently he tells her that such love can never be – he is sworn to his church and can never take a wife. Enraged, the spurned girl decides upon a desperate and dramatic act to win his love, she takes a small dose of poison thinking that it will do no more than make her violently sick, but the substance kills her. Soon the paladin is subjected to nightly visits by the girl's insane spirit, seeking to kill him so that they can be together in death. Worse still, she holds his church to blame for her death! She attempts to kill clergymen as it was 'their restrictive doctrine' that kept the 'young lovers' apart. Clergymen surviving her assaults will be left with the impression that the paladin somehow forced the girl to commit suicide after seducing her.

The despicable actions of evil characters could very easily lead to the parents or siblings of their victims committing suicide. A Games Master frustrated by a particular character's blood lust might inflict a procession of allips upon the wicked fellow.

As allips pursue the objects of their vengeance, it is possible that a victim will approach the player for aid. In some circumstances the allips actions will be

undeserved and the party would do well to destroy the malevolent spirit, but how will the party react if they discover that their employer is a beastly fellow that really did drive another person to end their own life? Will they permit the spirit to have its way with the man or will they still protect them? Can they discover some course of action their employer could take to gain absolution?

In some ways the allip is deserving of the party's sympathy. Rather than destroying the spirit, the players might discover some means of laying it to rest. Perhaps they could track down and punish an evil doer who his responsible for the allip's grief or in some other way placate the spirit and help it pass on to the other realms beyond our world.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

General Gustav's Army

When the rebels he sought to crush trounced general Gustav's troops, the dishonoured officer could not face returning to his emperor defeated. Instead, he took a sword and drove it through his own stomach, expiring slowly and painfully within the confines of his tent.

Sometime after the battle the players come across the forlorn remains of the general's encampment. Tattered



Allip Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual allips capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life.

Creating an Allip

'Allip' is a template that can be added to any sentient corporeal creature except elementals and outsiders (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead (incorporeal)'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect). If the base creature possessed a higher flying movement rate then it retains it, the creature loses all other methods of movement that it possessed in life.

Armour Class: The base creature loses any natural armour bonus it may have possessed in life, instead gaining a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier (if positive).

Attacks: An allip has an incorporeal touch attack and loses any physical attacks it had in life. If, however, the creature had multiple attacks it now has multiple touch attacks. An allip uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength when determining the attack bonus of its touch attacks.

Damage: An allip's touch deals 1d4 permanent Wisdom drain.

Special Attacks: An allip retains all the special attacks of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ allip's HD + allip's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Babble (Su): An allip constantly mutters and whines to itself, creating a hypnotic effect. All sane creatures within 60 feet of the allip must succeed at a Will save or be affected as though by a *hypnotism* spell for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion. Opponents who successfully save cannot be affected by the same allip's babble for one day.

Wisdom Drain (Su): Those whose Wisdom is reduced to 0 by the allip become helpless until at least 1 point of Wisdom is restored.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting the allip with a mind-control or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage.

Special Qualities: An allip retains all the special qualities of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Incorporeal (Su): Can be harmed only incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Turn Resistance (Ex): An allip has +2 turn resistance.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +2, Cha +8. As incorporeal undead creatures, allip's have no Strength or Constitution scores.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Allip Characters

Allip characters must be neutral evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. A wizard or sorcerer allip character cannot summon a familiar.

There is an example of an allip in the Bestiary of the Damned.

tents flap in the wind, crows pick at the fleshy remains of the fallen and sundered weapons lie everywhere – all has been thoroughly looted and despoiled.

As the sun goes down the general appears, seemingly clad in fine armour and mounted upon a spectral steed. He regards the party as the remnants of his army and chastises them for their defeat. The general orders them into battle once more – they must assault the rebels' nearby fortress. Hypnotised characters will agree, at least for the moment, while those unaffected must choose between battling the allip or a powerful rebel force.

GHOSTS

What is it that groans so in the dark of the night? Why are the gaoler's keys always removed from his belt while he sleeps? Who is it that calls for a chamber pot at midnight from the hotel's empty suite? Why are folk found gibbering with fright on the toll road after dusk? It is because of a ghost, or rather, several different ghosts!

The ghost is the epitome of the spiritual undead, a being trapped between worlds, possessing much of what made it unique in life and yet imbued with supernatural qualities that make it quite terrifying. No two ghosts are the same, they differ just as much as two individual living creatures may differ. While studying this fearsome form of undead let us keep this in mind.

Physiology

As noted in *Core Rulebook III* aberrations, animals, beasts, dragons, giants, humanoids, magical beasts, monstrous humanoids and shapechangers can all become ghosts, so a detailed study of their physiology would require a book of this length dedicated solely to that subject! We must therefore limit our investigation to those physiological traits all ghosts share.

A ghost dwells in the border of the ethereal plane. From that place of transit it looks into the material world but sees it as insubstantial and wispy, in fact one might say that, to the ghost, beings in the material world look ghostly! Only in the ethereal plane does the ghost have a physical form, a body if you will. While the shell that contained its spirit has been left behind in the world of men, a new one is formed in the ether. While this ethereal body is both invisible and insubstantial to those in the material

world, to one who has entered the ether it appears both solid and physical, which indeed it is, for the laws of nature are different there.

As is known a ghost can make itself manifest in the world of men, for whatever reason the spirit is still tied to the material world and so it can force its essence into our realm. It cannot make a full entry, for it is dead and has no physical form here, rather it becomes a being akin to the incorporeal undead, such as the allip or wraith. Once manifest it perceives the physical world fully, no longer as a 'ghostly' place but as a substantial one. Now semi-material it can interact with our world to a higher degree.

At this point we must address the subject of the 'tie' that keeps the ghost bound to our world. By rights the spirit should have passed on at death to one of the outer planes and yet it has remained. It is important to note that, while some living dead spread a curse which traps their victims in unlife, this is not so with a ghost, nor is its presence due to the malign will of some greater spiritual entity. The ghost remains





because of some deed committed in life or because of the circumstances of its death. This is a subject we will return to in the methods of warfare section below, for solving the riddle of a ghost's existence is the key to defeating or helping it.

No two ghosts look alike. As the range of creatures that may fall victim to ghostly existence is great the apparent physical shape they assume upon manifestation, or have if seen on the ethereal plane, is varied indeed. Added to this is a fluctuation in form – a ghost may appear in differing aspects. As an example, consider the ghost of an unfortunate chambermaid raped and murdered by the lord she served. When first seen her ghost may be near indistinguishable from the flesh and blood maids that still work in her former employer's mansion and characters may not realise she is a ghost until she walks through a closed door or performs some other clearly supernatural feat. Later the same party might hear her screams at night or witness her crouched on the floor begging, with a bloodied face and her clothing and hair in disarray. Subsequent manifestations might show the poor girl as a dead being frightful to behold, with the evidence of her mistreatment clear upon her battered body. So it is with all ghosts, they might appear regularly in the same form or the nature of their appearance might alter greatly between sightings.

Can a ghost's appearance give a firm indication as to their moral inclination? Regrettably the answer to this question is no. While the ghosts of those who

were benevolent and kind in life might frequently have a pleasing, even angelic, appearance it is possible for the most malign of spirits to adopt a guise that will mislead its viewers. The warning given in *Core Rulebook III* that 'assumptions are dangerous' is true indeed, adventurers should consider themselves warned!

Consider a ghost that manifests itself as a blood-soaked, headless being carrying an axe. Is this the spirit of an executed criminal, of a victim of murder, or perhaps of a murderer? Who can say? Interactions with the spirit and divination spells are the only true guide.

What of the ghost's psyche and personality? This is usually, but not

always, dominated by whatever act or sin that has caused it to remain in the world of men. The ghost may be quite rational and capable of conversing fluently with those that it meets but this is unusual – more frequently a ghost will have a confused intellect and will express itself through actions, re-enactments, and subtle clues. Some ghosts are quite incapable of direct communication and many are unaware of their death, doomed to relive the last moments or days of their life for eternity.

In the real world, the ghost of Anne Bolyn is said to haunt Hampton Court to this very day. There are those who have seen or heard her as she runs from one end of a long gallery wringing her hands and weeping at the prospect of her upcoming execution. While the number of people who claim to have seen her is relatively low, many more report feeling a chill when they stand in that gallery. If such phenomenon were reported in one of your campaign world's palaces what might the royal ghost be trying to communicate? Perhaps it is nothing specific, merely an indication that injustice can leave a mark that lingers, or perhaps the ghost requires that her character be vindicated and has at her disposal no other means of communication save a pitiful re-enactment of her grief.

Habitat

While it is not a hard-and-fast rule, it is usual for a ghost to haunt a fairly specific locale. True enough, there are ghosts who haunt whole highways or cities

but their activities are more frequently confined to a particular building or even a single room therein. Sometimes it is a person rather than a place that is the focus of the haunting, while some ghosts only make themselves manifest at particular times of the year.

Whatever the sight of the haunting is, whether it is tied to a person, place, region or time, that sight will give a clue to the mystery of the ghost's existence.

Consider the man who gave up all he had to search the capital city for his missing daughter until he died a pauper's death in a grimy flophouse. His ghost might be met anywhere on the city's streets, calling out his daughter's name. On the anniversary of his sorry demise the flophouse becomes the focus of his supernatural activities and all hear his wracking coughs, yet at other times no phenomena are reported.

There are places that seem to have multiple haunting's. Often these are old buildings with a bloody history and the ghosts do not interact with each other, indeed they may not even be aware of each other's existence. With that said, there are structures that seem to be malevolent in and of themselves, some great evil having left them as magnets for dispossessed spirits. Here groups of ghosts may operate in concert, a fact we will consider below.

Society

Is there a society of ghosts? Maybe. Some areas have multiple ghosts haunting them, as mentioned above, and where those ghosts are aware of each other a hierarchy of sorts will exist. If the spirits are cooperative they will behave as they did in life, thus a maid is still a maid and a knight is still a knight and the spirits will observe all normal forms of decorum in regards to each others station. It is rare, however, for the spirits of the dead to be on such good terms, where the ghosts are conscious of one another it is usually because the same event has lead to their existence. Usually this event was one charged with emotion, anger, love or hate. It is rare indeed for a pleasant event to have triggered a haunting, where love is a contributing factor it has usually been unrequited or betrayed. The ghosts may be involved in re-enacting this sorry event or even exist in a state of warfare that no side can win until mortals somehow intervene.

Methods of Warfare

In addition to its ability to make itself manifest, each ghost will have between one and three of the special attack forms listed in *Core Rulebook III* and will also

possess those special attacks it had in life. Of course, not every attack form used by the ghost's mortal progenitor will be effective in undeath but many will. The reader is directed to *Core Rulebook III* for details.

Thus the ghost is versatile in combat and no sweeping commentary can be given on methods they will employ in attack or defence. This variable quality is a great boon to the Games Master, who can tailor his ghost encounters to the strengths and weaknesses of the party they will face. The ghost is a truly adaptable adversary and, with a little forethought, can be brought into play regardless of the party's current level.

The ghost of a wolf that appears outside an inn at midnight and releases a howl with the effect of a frightful moan but has no other special attack makes a good challenge for a first level party. At the other end of the spectrum, the ghost of a red dragon with a horrifying appearance is likely to test the abilities of even the greatest hero.

To destroy a ghost, the party may well need to enter the ethereal plane and run the gamut of its physical attacks as well as its special ones. It is important to remember that a ghost's spells, if any, are effective on both planes, thus a fireball or death spell can affect both its ethereal attackers and their allies on the material world.

The key to defeating a malevolent ghost, or helping a benign one, is to unravel the secret of its imprisonment in the border ethereal. By undoing whatever wrong has prevented its full departure from the world of men, performing some act left undone in life or helping the ghost atone for a misdeed, a ghost can be freed. Until that can be done the ghost is likely to return time and time again to continue its haunting.

How to solve this riddle? The ghost's appearance, actions and words must be studied intently. There will usually be a connection between the forms it presents upon manifestation, the time or place such a manifestation occur and the actions it performs or the words it speaks, and the event that caused its unhappy undead existence.

Further research might be required, if the ghost is one that has haunted a locale for ages then history books and sages might give some clue as to how it might be aided or permanently dispelled. For a more recent haunting, witnesses and relatives might need to be



questioned. If the party is lucky, the ghost might relate to them what needs to be done to set it free, but the task might not be an easy one. For example, 'I must wander this church until the false hierarch who sits on the throne in the holy city is unmasked as a sinner'.

In many cases, however, the ghost will be that of a wicked person doomed to haunt and maliciously harm all that come within its precincts. Such creatures are true monsters, and they must be destroyed for the sake of mankind.

Roleplaying With Ghosts

Of all the undead considered within the pages of this book, it is the ghost that affords one of the greatest opportunities for role-playing. The existence of a ghost almost always requires the players to involve themselves directly with it or those that it haunts. The ghost can be given a personality as complex and intriguing as the Games Master desires, its existence

can be interwoven with the history of his campaign world and made a reference point for all manner of plots and sub plots. Indeed, helping or defeating a ghost could be the mainstay of a whole campaign.

Consider the ghost of a paladin who was escorting twelve sacred items to a cathedral who was betrayed by one of the priests in his party and murdered. The sacred items have since been scattered across the world, each now in the hands of an evil non-player character that misuses them for profane ends.

The paladin's ghost can only appear on the anniversary of his murder at the spot upon which he was killed. It just so happens that the characters are camping out at this place at the appropriate time. The paladin begs them to set matters right, informing the group that his soul cannot go on its final rest until all the sacred items are taken to the cathedral. If the party agrees the ghost is empowered to appear to them once each week, at midnight, and is thus able to give them directions or clues as to where each item now resides.

Many adventures could take place while the party travels the globe, and maybe even the planes, in search of each item. When all twelve have eventually been found and the party takes them in triumph to the cathedral, they find none other than the paladin's betrayer in charge of the place. He is now a bishop and will doubtless sell the items once more if the party fail to unmask and defeat him.

For shorter-term scenarios, a ghost encounter can add colour and life to what might otherwise be a dry or routine adventure. Suppose your party is bent upon exploring some caves they know to be home to marauding orcs. Much combat is ahead but is there room for some role-playing amidst the mayhem? For certain the orcs might curse and roar with captives reluctantly divulging secrets and rescued prisoners giving thanks and aid, but the appearance of the ghost of one of the orcs' victims will turn the session into a most memorable one. The ghost need not be one that wails and laments, it could be a feisty old fellow, a dead aristocrat red faced and bumptious who insists upon accompanying the adventurers and then yells 'charge' when the party's rogue is trying to sneak up on a sentry. Have fun with your ghosts.

Haunting can be a recurring theme, something that adds continuity to the campaign. The party's favourite inn might have a ghost in the cellar; the landlady might request that brave fighters go below

to fetch up fresh casks, as her servants are too afraid. Won't the customers in the taproom laugh when the burly warriors come running up ashen-faced from below!

A ghost introduced early on in a campaign might be invulnerable to the party initially and only as they grow in confidence and power can they hope to defeat it. The ghost of a sage might be the only one who knows the answer to a perplexing mystery, or maybe the spirit of a long dead wizard needs to be sought out so that a party member can learn an obscure spell. Whole cities of ghosts might exist, their residents going about their business by night as if they still lived but by day the buildings are abandoned and silent.

An intrepid Games Master might allow the ghost of a slain character to make an appearance, particularly if the player who created him is much grieved by his loss. In a high level game the ghost might actively participate for a few sessions before leaving for its reward once the villain who caused his death is despatched. If the player in question is a good roleplayer then he can control the ghost's actions for that brief period and hopefully this will lessen his sadness at his much-loved character's demise.

The above is just a taste of what an imaginative Games Master might devise for his campaign. Whether humorous, hateful, amicable or horrifying, ghosts can add a whole new level of intrigue, terror and fun to a campaign.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Night Calls

Players kill many a foe and rarely stop to bury them. The spirit of one defeated enemy rises from the field of battle but cannot leave this plane until his corpse is laid to rest. Each night it appears to the party. On the first night it is only glimpsed, on the second it is made manifest, on the third it releases a frightful moan, on the fourth it attacks with a corrupting touch, on the fifth it possesses a corrupting gaze, on the seventh it reveals a horrific appearance and on the eighth it seeks to possess a character. These attacks will continue relentlessly night after night until the party is destroyed or they return to bury the ghost's cadaver and properly bless the grave.

SHADOWS

Creeping unseen at the edge of the party's lantern light come the shadows, gaunt insubstantial things near invisible in the pressing gloom. Their touch is as cold as the grave and they hate life. Doom comes to those that fall into their hands.

Physiology

In the Abyss Orcus plots the demise of man. He and his demonic cohorts devise ever wickeder ways to pervert life, to turn existence in on itself and create mockeries of mortal beings that will do the demon prince's will by spreading suffering and malevolence across the face of the world.





The blood pits boiled fiercely on the day the first shadows were spawned, armies of ghouls yelled in exultation and the vampire centurions grinned mirthlessly. Orcus took the souls of the damned and gave them substance, he stood them beneath the horrid light and then, in a ritual blasphemous beyond mortal comprehension, he wrested the essence of their

beings from the mortal shells he had given them and transferred it into the shadows they cast.

Silently and unnoticed did the first shadows creep into the material world. Here they have flourished and multiplied, until their like is all too commonly encountered by those who dare tread in the interdicted realms beneath the earth or brave cursed lands after sunset.

Although incorporeal, the shadow is not an evil spirit as such, nor is it the remnants of an animated corpse. No, the shadow is the negative of life, all that life is not. Quite literally it is the blackness that stains a man's soul given volition and a reality separate from its former host. All that the living being was has been absorbed and nullified by the shadow. Paradoxically, the shadow is non-existence given a form of existence. While this might seem impossible it is true nonetheless.

Habitat

Dark, gloomy or shady places can become the abode of shadows. They hate the sun, fearing its warmth and glow. The shadow might stalk subterranean labyrinths, catacombs, deep forests, dim ally ways or badly lit dwellings by day, at night it can wander freely stalking any living thing crossing its path.

While some undead are tied to particular locations, nothing constrains a shadow save its own fear of the

When in ages past the gods divided the light from the darkness and cast a barrier betwixt the two and called it twilight, the time before sunrise and that after sunset, the elves rejoiced. The partition giving them a measure of protection from the things of the dark that hunted them.

By day the elves were safe because the mighty sun gave no relief to their enemies, nowhere was darkness visible once Helios had arisen, but by night the slinking things came forth bringing with them death and terror. So it was that the elves appealed to the gods for a light to see by once the sun had returned to its house beneath the earth. The gods of radiance gave to the elves a multitude of stars to mark the night sky and added to them Luna, that great lantern who once a month gazes down with her full countenance revealed.

Yet the things of the dark had their own lords and unto them they protested, 'The night was ours,' they said, 'but now its perfect blackness has been marred. Where is the justice in this? The day belonged to the sun and the night belonged to the blackness. Now light has a home in the night sky. We demand a home for blackness in the day.'

The gods convened to judge the issue and those that espoused balance agreed with those that wore the crowns of law and decreed that a home must be found for blackness on even the brightest of days. Thus was shadow born and to this day it remains. No matter how bright the face of Helios might be there is always a spot, no matter how small, of impenetrable dark.

Excerpt from *The Book Of Dis*

sun, and even that fear is a purely psychological one – the sun’s rays do no harm to a shadow although they do make its presence obvious to anyone nearby.

As discussed below, shadows are predatory beings, compelled to hunt and kill. A ready source of nearby victims will be of paramount concern to a swarm of shadows seeking out a lair.

Society

The individual shadow is chaotic and of limited intelligence but when banded together as a swarm these beings can exhibit a high degree of cunning. Some scholars speculate that the shadow swarm creates a form of communal intellect that allows for actions apparently beyond the scope of an individual shadow.

Rarely do shadows converse with mortals, necromancers that have bound them report that they speak in a horrid whispering voice, words that sound soulless and bleak no matter what is being spoken. Adventurers have reported a near inaudible sibilant murmur in the moments prior to an attack by shadows and, on those rare occurrences when a shadow has conversed with an adventurer, it is said that the speech is like the sigh of a dying man.

Despite their chaotic nature shadows will work in conjunction with other forms of undead, even serving as ‘soldiers’ for a potent lord who can force them to his will.

Methods of Warfare

Where possible the shadows will attack in large numbers, pouring over and on to their victims, appearing out of the ground, through walls or flying down through the ceiling to launch their assault. Their flying ability makes them highly mobile adversaries; they can break out of melee easily and will do so in order to set up another ambush to spring upon their prey. The shadows are relentless and remorseless; they have no concept of mercy and will never spare a victim, doing all in their power to bring as many mortals as possible into the realm of gloomy darkness.

Roleplaying With Shadows

Shadows make good lackeys for the dark lords of your campaign world. Swift and silent they can travel unseen to act as messengers or assassins. A large group of them can be devastating against the most



potent foe and their ability to infiltrate even a stoutly guarded fortress makes them a threat even to the mightiest of knights.

Shadows might be sent to stalk a party that has been victorious in some quest against evil or a single specimen might whisper dire warnings to them as they sit about their campfire or recline at ease in an inn.

There is something macabre about a being that’s very substance is darkness, play upon your players’ fears when their characters explore dark and ominous places, hint that every dim spot, even their own shadow that trails them in the lantern light, might be a dreadful entity preparing to strike.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

The Pool of Shadow

Far beneath the ground there is a cavern where dwell beings who believe the sun to be nought but a myth. Here there is a fountain. Black are the waters that cascade from its many spouts and ghastly are the images graven into the ebony-hued rock from which it is carved.

The folk of that black subterranean realm worship at the water’s edge. They offer sacrifices to the all-

Shadow Template

This template is provided to help the Games master create unusual shadows capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life.

Creating A Shadow

'Shadow' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature except elementals and outsiders (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead (incorporeal)'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good). If the base creature possessed a higher flying movement rate then it retains it, the creature loses all other methods of movement that it possessed in life.

Armour Class: The base creature loses any natural armour bonus it may have possessed in life, instead gaining a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier (if positive).

Attacks: A shadow has an incorporeal touch attack and loses any physical attacks it had in life. If, however, the creature had multiple attacks it now has multiple touch attacks. A shadow uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength when determining the attack bonus of its touch attacks.

Damage: A shadow's touch deals 1d6 temporary Strength damage.

Special Attacks: A shadow retains all the special attacks of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ shadow's HD + shadow's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of temporary Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature of an appropriate type reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

Special Qualities: A shadow retains all the special qualities of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Incorporeal (Su): Can be harmed only incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A shadow has +2 turn resistance.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Modify from the base creature as follows: Dex +4, Int -4, Wis +2, Cha +2. As incorporeal undead creatures, shadow's have no Strength or Constitution scores.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or swarm (6-11).

Challenge Rating: +1.

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Shadow Characters

Shadow characters must be chaotic evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. A wizard or sorcerer shadow character cannot summon a familiar.

There is an example of a shadow in the Bestiary of the Damned.

seeing dark, living victims who have stumbled unknowingly into their gloomy world. When an offering enters the waters there comes a trembling sigh and the victim is transformed, becoming one with the dark as a new shadow manifests its vile presence in the world.

The newly spawned undead join with a legion of their cohorts and, in companies of ten, journey upward in search of more sacrifices. It is said that six score black opals, perfect gems of the largest size, lie submerged in the black pool that surrounds the fountain, each worth a king's ransom and bearing a terrible curse.

SPECTRES

'That noted master of genies, the Archmage Weigel, recently berated me about scholarly works reporting on the undead. He noted that current studies stress that spectre's haunt the places where they died and are most often encountered in dungeons and tombs. While this latter statement is true, for indeed spectres do favour the most desolate of places, the former theory is quite wrong, a spectre is mobile and not at all bound to the place of its demise. Indeed, the dreaded nightmare is oft found as a spectre's steed and they travel far and wide upon such mounts to spread wickedness and further the designs of whatever lord they serve.'

'The insightful Weigel claims that a bestiary of my design was improperly illustrated. He theorises that an illustration that was used to illuminate the entry describing spectres, showing a ghostly form coming through a bookcase, has left subsequent scholars with the impression that a spectre is just another form of ghost.'

—Portion of an epistle written by Zagig the Mad Archmage

Physiology

Spectres are the remains of beings that were seduced by the power of evil and lost themselves in their quest for power. Ultimately they gave up their humanity altogether, becoming wretched slaves of wickedness that hate life and the living and whose own will is subject to that of higher malevolent powers. Commonly their mortal shell was sundered in combat and their incorporeal form shows the wounds they suffered in those final moments of life.

Although easily mistaken for a ghost or other insubstantial spirit form, the spectre is quite different.



This is no being 'trapped' here awaiting a chance to leave mankind's world, nor does it have an existence on the ethereal plane with which a traveller might interact. The spectre has a strong tie to the planes of negative energy – it is from the realms of unlife that it draws its power. For this reason it exudes a detectable chill and can drain life and vitality at a touch.

The psyche of a spectre is also quite different to that of a ghost. The spectre's malevolence transcends the need for momentary spite or simple vengeance. It is conscious of its role in the multiverse – it is a piece in the endless game played by the immortals, gods, demigods, princes and lords of the infinite planes, upon which rests the future of mankind.

Despite its incorporeal nature, the spectre is capable of donning a suit of armour, riding a nightmare or otherwise manipulating physical things. It is a horror of supernatural power and, as such, has the capacity to go beyond what might otherwise be deemed impossible for a spirit.

Habitat

Although it has erroneously been reported that spectres haunt the place of their death this is not so. Indeed many spectres do not die as such – rather, their

SPIRITS OF EVIL

mortal existence fades into an undead one over a period of time.

As they hate life the spectres will often be found in forlorn and isolated locales, uninhabited save for undead things. The spectre needs shelter from the sun, for it cannot stand its life-giving rays, so dungeons and crypts are sometimes chosen as an abode although any dark and gloomy place will suffice.

Society

The spectre continues in whatever role it possessed in life. If an evil warlord becomes a spectre it will continue to marshal forces for military campaigns aimed at spreading the dominion of wickedness, so too would a dark priest continue to honour his evil gods and do their bidding. The spectre is a champion of evil's cause, a 'knight errant' whose quest it is to do the work of whatever malign agency empowered or cursed it with its undead form.

Those spectres that were spawned by another of their kind might once have been noble and good but in undeath they are the tools of their master just as he is a tool of his lord. If they are freed from subjugation to their spectral master, these spawned spectres will set out to fulfil the wishes of the dukes of hell for an infernal loyalty is inculcated at their conception.

Methods of Warfare

Unlike other incorporeal undead the spectre can directly interact with physical objects. Furthermore it can carry magical objects, weapons, potions and the like with it wherever it goes. It can use these objects against other creatures while retaining the advantages of an incorporeal creature.

This unique ability gives the spectre a number of tactical options that simply do not exist for other undead. The spectre can use tactics that a physical assailant would use (say cutting down a support post in a cavern) without any fear of personal danger. It furthermore has the mobility of the incorporeal undead, allowing it to move around and though its opponents easily.

An example of a 'mobility' oriented spectre attack is the 'phantom bull rush'. The creature charges someone and stands inside them if the bull rush succeeds. It then strikes with its weapon, doing physical damage while taking cover inside one of the character's companions. This tactic works best if the



spectre can somehow paralyse the person it uses for cover.

Another example of a 'mobility' oriented tactics commonly used by a spectre is the 'phantom grapple'. A spectre can grapple with a person, even pin him, without leaving its incorporeal state. It can then fly back and forth between two walls, slamming the pinned character without breaking its hold. As with other spirits, the spectre is not barred by physical impediments such as walls, floors or ceilings. Thus a spectre can walk upon a solid floor adorned in armour and bearing a sword and shield but, a moment later, slip free of those objects and pass through solid stone.

Most spectres will not be adorned with physical items, unless such bear a potent magic or are symbols of its status, instead preferring to attack in much the same way as other spirits do.

Spectres and Feats

Spectres retain the feats that they had in life. Furthermore they learn more feats as they continue to learn in their undead state. However the Games Master should be aware that one feat track poses particular problems when used on an incorporeal undead.

A spectre that in life had some training as a fighter or that was a sufficient level might have the Spring Attack feat line (Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack).

This would allow the spectre to move though a solid object, attack, then move back behind the solid object for cover. This allows a spectre to attack with relative impunity, inflicting massive damage on its opponents.

The proper tactical response for players is usually to ready actions so that they can strike the wraith as it appears. Groups that are not used to using this option may have trouble defeating a wraith with this feat line.

Roleplaying With Spectres

The reader will note that a different emphasis is laid herein upon the capabilities and nature of the spectre than that which is given in *Core Rulebook III*. This has been done to distinguish spectres and wraiths, which are otherwise quite similar monsters. Here the spectre is envisaged as a malevolent being still intent on furthering the goals it had in life but subject to the authority of a greater evil power. Furthermore it is given the capacity to manipulate physical things despite its incorporeal nature. Used in conjunction with the spectral undead template given below, these undead can be made into very powerful adversaries – hellish warriors who will strike fear into the heart of the hardiest adventurer.

When establishing a scenario with a spectre the Games Master must first determine both who the spectre was in life and whom it serves in death. By understanding what led the creature to its current plight the Games Master gains insight into the kinds of actions it will take. Similarly determining whom the creature serves the Games Master can determine what kinds of orders it might have.

Each spectre has personal, private reasons for taking on its dark powers. These reasons typically ground in the darker emotions of mortality: envy, fear, consuming lust, hate and rage. Whatever the reasons the once mortal creature was willing to sell its soul for them. Some element of those emotions remains to guide the creature's actions. It will act to further its original aims as far as it can.

The bargain the spectre struck with dark powers binds it to eternal service, service that may conflict with its own goals. Many beings can grant the powers of a spectre to a willing target: demons, devils, and some dark gods are all likely candidates. All of these

powers demand an oath of loyalty before imbuing the mortal with negative energies.

Each spectre strikes a unique bargain with its patron. However the broad details of the bargain remain constant. Each spectre swears to a period of absolute service, followed by an indefinite period during which the patron may command the spectre for a given number of days per year. The period of absolute service typically lasts for a century or more. During that time the spectre obeys the commands of his patron to the letter. After that time, on the days when the spectre does not owe service, it pursues its own goals.

Some evil patrons delight in torturing a spectre by forcing it to work against itself. Others demonstrate less cruelty by allowing the spectre its private interests so long as they do not interfere with the patron's plans. A rare few patrons (typically greater gods of darkness) actively enjoy allowing their spectres to work independently, in the belief that the greatest evils come from the hearts of mortal men.

When encountered a spectre may or may not be on a mission for its master. If it is the creature moves with brisk effectiveness to discharge its duties. If it is not the spectre has more time for conversation, interactions, or 'play' with mortals that bother it.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Riding Forth from the Gates of Hell

The dukes of hell's nine planes are in accord. For a brief time they have laid aside their machiavellian rivalries, disputes and wars. They wish to swell the ranks of the damned and are sending out evil reapers to bring in an ungodly harvest.

Three nightmares of the largest size and greatest ferocity have been taken from their stable in Hades. For each a rider has been formed from the blackest of Hell's imprisoned souls. One has been arrayed in black robes and given the power to cause wars, another is garbed in brown and will spread famine, while the third wears red and will bring with him a festering bag holding plagues and diseases. A fourth rider there is too, he to be mounted on Baal Shiruat's back. This one wears nothing and moves unseen; he is to spread corruption for he has been given the power to test the faith of many.

Spectral Undead Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual spectres capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life. *Core Rulebook III* states that newly spawned spectres lose any special abilities they possessed in life, the Games Master might choose to ignore that restriction or deem that such powers return should the spectre which spawned them fall.

Creating Spectral Undead

'Spectral undead' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature originating except elementals and outsiders (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'. The creature's type changes to 'undead (incorporeal)'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (good). If the base creature possessed a higher flying movement rate then it retains it, the creature loses all other methods of movement that it possessed in life.

Armour Class: The base creature loses any natural armour bonus it may have possessed in life, instead gaining a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier (if positive).

Attacks: A spectral undead has an incorporeal touch attack and loses any physical attacks it had in life. If, however, the creature had multiple attacks it now has multiple touch attacks. A spectral undead uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength when determining the attack bonus of its touch attacks.

Damage: Spectral undead have incorporeal touch attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

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

Special Attacks: A spectral undead retains all the special attacks of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ spectral undead's HD + spectral undead's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a spectral undead's incorporeal touch attack receive two negative levels.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature of an appropriate type slain by a spectral undead becomes a spectral undead in 1d4 rounds.

Spawn are under the command of the spectral undead that created them and remain enslaved until its death.

Special Qualities: A spectral undead retains all the special qualities of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Incorporeal (Su): Can be harmed only by incorporeal creatures, or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A spectral undead has +2 turn resistance.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a spectral undead at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Spectral undead are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and from it. A spectral undead caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only partial actions.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +6, +4, Wis +4, Cha +4. As incorporeal undead creatures, spectral undead have no Strength or Constitution scores.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or swarm (6-11).

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: Usually none.

Alignment: Always lawful evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Spectral Undead Characters

Spectral undead characters must be lawful evil in alignment, and some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. A wizard or sorcerer spectral character's familiar must possess this template.

There is an example of a spectral undead in the Bestiary of the Damned.

Look! The gates of Hell have opened and the spectral riders gallop forth. Death and suffering come in their wake but will any see the fourth rider, he that brings death to the soul as well as the body?

WRAITHS

Physiology

The wraith is a vile spirit that manifests itself when a truly wicked man dies. It is similar to both the shadow and the spectre – an incorporeal being brought forth by darkness and evil.

There is a definite link between wraiths and wights and some scholars suggest that a wraith can emerge from the shell of an ancient wight if the cadaver becomes so old and brittle that it crumbles altogether.

A wraith maintains only a semblance of its original form. Even a relative could not recognise a departed loved one in the blank visage of its wraith. As with many undead, only its eyes betray emotion and give its awful countenance a semblance of humanity. Those eyes are full of hatred and malice and they burn blood red when the wraith senses the presence of a living being. The wraith envies and hates those who still have life. It is a cunning creature full of spite, its twisted intellect devising ingenious ways to bring undeath to those mortals unfortunate enough to cross its path.

While most wraiths appear as black, near formless silhouettes, some manifest recognisable items of apparel, such as flowing robes, insubstantial armour, crowns and other such adornments. These items are not real. Unlike the spectre the wraith has no capacity to manipulate physical things.

Jet-black shadow-like wraiths are the ones most commonly encountered, yet there are reports of wraiths with an appearance like that of the stereotypical ghost – almost like a white sheet that flutters and moans above its victims. Others have encountered wraiths of varying hues – purple ones whose touch drains life energy as well as health, yellow ones who impart a wasting disease and red

ones whose horrid touch causes a haemorrhage in the victim's brain. These rarer wraiths are examined in detail below.

Habitat

As noted, a wraith can arise spontaneously upon the death of an evil man and devil-lords from time to time will 'reward' a wicked fellow by returning him to haunt the world of men in wraith form.

Some are spawned when a wight's corpse eventually crumbles, the evil spirit within the ungodly form is then free to go abroad and take the lives of mortals and transform them into more undead minions.

Given the many ways that a wraith can arise, it comes as no surprise to note that they are widely dispersed

across the face of the

world. They are not tied to a single locale but may haunt any area they choose to. They must have a dark place to shelter in by day and, as clerics and other foes of unlife hunt these horrors down, most are driven into isolated realms or secret interdicted places beneath a city's streets.

Society

As with the spectres the wraiths are lawful in their evilness. While those that arise spontaneously and those that are spawned from the remains of wights may have no direct tie with the Hells, the wraiths who received undeath as a 'reward' are likely to be subjects of those diabolical places. They will answer to one or more of Hell's dukes and play a role in the battle waged in the material world between the forces of good and evil.

A group of wraiths will be led by one that is stronger than the rest, often the original wraith that came into being by dint of its own malevolence or by the will of the diabolical patrons of the nether realms. The lesser wraiths will have been its victims, spawned into



unlike as wights by its dreadful life draining touch and eventually becoming wraiths over the course of time.

Methods of Warfare

The spirits of evil are terrible entities to confront in battle, they arise wailing from the shadows or out of the very ground. Their incorporeal members pass through their victim's armour, they fly above, around and below those they assault seeking only to consume the living warmth they can drain from their foes.

Certain wraiths exhibit attack forms not possessed by the majority of their kind. These unusual but deadly qualities are outlined below. A wraith augmented with one of these powers should have its challenge rating increased by half for each such ability granted. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ wraith's HD + wraith's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

† **Undeath's Dance (Su):** Two or more wraiths can perform an aerial dance, flying this way and that and creating a hypnotic effect after two full rounds of dancing. All creatures within 60 feet of the dark dancers must succeed at a Will save or be affected by a *hypnotism* spell for 3d4 rounds. Opponents who successfully save cannot be affected by the same wraith's dance for one day.

† **Swift Decay (Ex):** The incorporeal wraith flies round and round a victim's head, provoking a single attack of opportunity but thereafter becoming smaller and having a chance to fly into its victim's mouth and down into his lungs. The target must succeed at a Fortitude save or inhale the wraith's insubstantial form. Once inside its victim, the wraith's unholy presence causes decay in their lungs, inflicting 2d6 points of damage per round. The affected creature is wracked by coughs, can barely breathe and is unable to take any actions while the wraith remains within

them. Each round they can attempt another Fortitude save, with success indicating that a particularly violent coughing fit has expelled the wraith.



† **Cloak of Fear (Su):** An insidious aura of menace and death surrounds the wraith. Any living creature within a 30-foot radius of it must succeed at a Will save to resist its effects. Those who fail suffer a -1 morale penalty to attacks, armour class and saves for as long as they are in sight of the wraith. Opponents who successfully save cannot be affected by the cloak for one day.

† **Aura of Chill (Ex):** Some wraiths generate intense cold, dealing 1d8 points of damage to all living creatures within 10 feet of them. Also, creatures attacking such a wraith unarmed or with natural weapons take 1d8 points of cold damage each time their attacks hit the wraith.

As the wraiths have the power to spawn wights, it is likely that a company of such substantial horrors will accompany a large band of wraiths, adding their own malevolence to the already heady brew of spite distilled from their incorporeal master's seething hatred of life.

Roleplaying With Wraiths

When wraiths deign to talk with the living, a rare event indeed, they speak in a hollow voice, a cold sound like the rushing of the wind on a winter's day. These are bleak beings, their souls utterly lost to the dark. All traces of humanity and love are gone, they seek only to oppress and destroy.

Wraiths take pleasure from terrifying and torturing the living. Like ghouls they will capture and torture prey when they can and such tortures are usually psychological rather than physical, as the wraith cannot manipulate weapons or tools. To be kept prisoner by wraiths and have their horrid designs for you made clear by these gloating horrors is a truly terrible thing to endure.

Those whose spirits spontaneously return for death as wraiths, tend to be men and women with a strong evil character. They are those who have commanded others in life, bending their subordinates to their will. Powerful, wicked warriors are often doomed to wraithdom, but others are deserving of this form too. As with all forms of undeath, continued existence is a horrid burden to the wraith, a mockery of the everlasting life given to the souls of benevolent beings when they arrive in the planes of good.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

The Marching Dead

When Sir Eblös died after jousting with his rival, Sir Mirrus, his sergeants rejoiced. He had been a harsh and unkind task master, quick to use the lash and parsimonious when dividing the spoils of war.

Even his father was more relieved than saddened, for he had long suspected that his son plotted to end his life and inherit their estates sooner rather than later.

Sir Mirrus and Sir Eblös had not been fighting a lethal combat, their lances had not been the razor sharp weapons of war but wooden tipped sporting arms intended to unhorse rather than kill. Bishop Shemrick declared the accident that killed Sir Eblös 'an act of the gods', their righteous judgement against such a sinful man. One wooden lance point had splintered against his helm and a sharp shard of wood slipped through his visor and penetrated his left eye.

So, all are glad that the troublesome nobleman is no more. They rejoice to soon for Sir Eblös is not one to be forestalled by such a marginal thing as death. His spirit has returned and from Hell's seething pits he has recruited an



army of undead warriors. First Sir Mirrus must be punished and then he will visit his father and claim what is rightfully his. Bishop Shemrick has been forewarned of these events in a dream and is seeking worthy adventurers to banish the vile wraith before it spreads misery and death across the land.

Purple, Yellow and Red Wraiths

Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good)

AC: 16 (+3 Dex, +3 deflection)

Attacks: Incorporeal touch +8 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d6 and 1d6 permanent Constitution drain plus energy drain (purple wraith), or wasting disease (yellow wraith), or haemorrhage (red wraith.)

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

Special Attacks: Constitution drain, energy drain, create spawn

Special Qualities: Undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, daylight powerlessness

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +10

Abilities: Str -, Dex 17, Con -, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 15

Skills: Hide +14, Intimidate +12, Listen +14, Search +13, Spot +14

Feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or pack (6-11)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: 11+ HD (Medium-size)

These colourful incorporeal horrors are often found in the company of their darker brethren, so a host of wraiths might contain one or more of these more unusual spirits. When these horrors fly they leave behind them a trail of wispy colour, as if portions of their insubstantial form were breaking free and floating on the wind.

The purple wraiths are generally regarded as the most wicked of wraith kind and rise only at the behest of one of Hell's lords. The yellow wraith comes into being when a highly evil individual succumbs to a

Wraith Template

This template is provided to help the Games Master create unusual wraiths capable of using the special attacks and qualities they possessed in life.

Creating Wraiths

'Wraith' is a template that can be added to any corporeal creature except elementals and outsiders (referred to hereafter as the 'base creature'). The creature's type changes to 'undead (incorporeal)'. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good). If the base creature possessed a higher flying movement rate then it retains it, the creature loses all other methods of movement that it possessed in life.

Armour Class: The base creature loses any natural armour bonus it may have possessed in life, instead gaining a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier (if positive).

Attacks: A wraith has an incorporeal touch attack and loses any physical attacks it had in life. If, however, the creature had multiple attacks it now has multiple touch attacks. A wraith uses its Dexterity modifier instead of its Strength when determining the attack bonus of its touch attacks.

Damage: Wraiths have incorporeal touch attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the damage values in the table below. Creatures with natural attacks retain their old damage ratings or use the values below, whichever is better.

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

Special Attacks: A wraith retains all the special attacks of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and also gains those listed below. Saves have a DC of $10 + \frac{1}{2}$ allip's HD + allip's Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Constitution Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Constitution drain.

Create Spawn (Su): A creature of an appropriate type slain by a wraith becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the wraith that created them and

remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the special abilities they had in life.

Special Qualities: A wraith retains all the special qualities of the base creature (except for those resulting from, or relying on, a corporeal form) and those listed below, and also gains the undead type.

Incorporeal (Su): Can be harmed only by incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A wraith has +2 turn resistance.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it. A wraith caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only partial actions.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +6, Int +4, Wis +4, Cha +4. As incorporeal undead creatures, wraith's have no Strength or Constitution scores.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground.

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or pack (6-11).

Challenge Rating: +2.

Treasure: Usually none.

Alignment: Always lawful evil.

Advancement: Same as the base creature.

Wraith Characters

Wraith characters must be lawful evil in alignment, so some will lose their class abilities as noted in Chapter 3 of *Core Rulebook I*. Clerics suffer additional penalties; they may only rebuke, not turn, undead and they must revere an evil god, receiving domain spells and abilities as appropriate to that deity. A wizard or sorcerer wraith character's familiar must possess this template.

There is an example of a wraith in the Bestiary of the Damned.

disease, while a red wraith can come into being when a depraved being meets a violent end.

The sections above detailing the physiology, habitat, methods of warfare and society of wraiths applies equally to the purple, red and yellow wraith. A Games Master desirous of creating unusual 'coloured' wraiths can apply the normal wraith template to the base creature and then add the appropriate extra ability. The challenge rating of such undead should be raised by three rather than two.

Combat

Energy Drain (Su): (purple wraith only) Living creatures hit by a purple wraith's incorporeal touch attack receive one negative level. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 17

Wasting Disease (Su): (yellow wraith only) Supernatural disease – incorporeal touch, Fortitude save (DC 17), incubation period 1 round; damage 1d6 temporary Strength. Unlike normal diseases, the yellow wraith's wasting disease continues until the victim reaches Strength 0 (and dies) or receives a remove disease spell or similar magic. An afflicted creature that dies falls into a putrid heap of slimy flesh and writhing maggots and is forever lost unless both a remove disease and raise dead are cast on the rotting remains within 6 rounds.

Haemorrhage (Su): (red wraith only) A living victim of the red wraith's touch must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or a vein running through its brain will swell and burst, causing the permanent loss of 1d6 points of intelligence and rendering the victim unconscious for 24 hours. Furthermore, if the first save is failed a second save at DC 17 must be made immediately or the victim dies.

Constitution Drain (Su):
Living creature

hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Constitution drain.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature of the appropriate type slain by a wraith becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the wraith that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

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

Incorporeal (Su): Can be harmed only incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will and own attacks pass through armour. Always moves silently.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex): Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it.



THE LORDS OF THE LIVING DEAD

In his sleep Kalgus gave a strangled cry, the sudden noise startling Mary as she read the Book of Dis. She gazed at him lying prostrate behind her on the bed. He rolled this way and that, raised his arms as if to fend off a blow and got them entangled in the bedspread.

'What did you see that disturbed you so?' whispered Mary as she ran a hand over the warrior's sweaty forehead. Fearful that he might wake up and find her with the book she sang to him softly, a lullaby such as a mother might croon to an infant in its crib.

When he was settled once more Mary returned to her reading, captivated by the dark secrets the book revealed. She learned of those sorcerers who, by dint of dark magic and superhuman will, held on to an existence in this world after life had left their body. She read of ghastly things of power incomparable that crawled and schemed far beneath the earth and black places renowned for their evil.

Then she came upon a chapter written in ink of a faded pink hue. It described the children of the night, vampires who lived forever yet had long been dead, the brotherhood of blood who sustained themselves by feeding on the living.

Mary's breath came in short gasps as she read the words, she felt a burning and a yearning she usually experienced only when laying with a lover whose body she truly desired, a rare thing in her profession. She thought of the liberty's a vampire enjoys, the many forms it can take, the places it can go undetected, the powers it wields over mortals and then sensuous death it can give. The Book of Dis said nothing of the vampire's enslavement to the grave, of the pain a vampire denied blood endures or of the loss of such creature's humanity. Mary saw only dreams of power and bodily abandon. To her joy she read a passage that promised a mortal entry into the vampires' condition if they performed a ritual to summon a vampire lord. The wording was archaic and obscure but Mary studied the writing diligently, trying to make sense of expressions she barely understood.

At length as the moon travelled downwards towards the horizon and Mary believed that she could perform the ritual. Dare she? Could she really stand before an unearthly undead entity and crave its indulgence? What had she to lose? Life lead in bodily servitude to sweaty ugly men who cared nothing for her, a near prisoner of the rogues who oversaw her trade. If the vampire lord destroyed her then at least she was free of all that. She raised a trembling hand to her cheek and swept back the long black tresses that tumbled freely down below her neck. She would dare.

She needed blood, a great quantity of blood to give in offering to the abyssal lord. She gazed at Kalgus and brought forth the long razor she used to shave her slender legs from a cabinet. She reasoned that an empty chamber pot would suffice to catch the liquid as it spurted from the cut.

For a long while she crouched over the warrior with the razor in her hand hardly daring to move. Kalgus lay still, unmoving. 'A single stroke girl, that's all it will take,' Mary chided herself, 'the man won't even know he is dead. Quickly now, before he wakes up!'

She shut her eyes and in a single swift slice cut deep into the warrior's neck, holding the chamber pot so that it would catch the gout of blood she expected to spray forth from the awful wound she made. Yet no blood came.

Mary felt Kalgus' body and found it cold to the touch, 'By the gods man, did you die while I read? Now what use are you to me and how shall I explain your body in my bed? I'd thought to be gone on the night wind before the maid came by!'

Mary wondered whether the book had driven her to madness. What had she been thinking of? She sat on the edge of the bed and hunched her knees up under her chin. Shaking her head Mary cast the book aside. Without a quantity of fresh blood she could not perform the ritual and found that she no longer felt inclined to call upon such black magic; it was as if her mind had been clouded by driving thoughts that were not her own.

She looked back at Kalgus. 'Why you poor thing,' she said, 'whatever it was you saw scared you to death and then some slut cuts up your corpse! I'm sorry, truly I am.'

'Don't be,' said Kalgus as he sat up in the bed and clasped Mary in his cold embrace, holding her so tightly she could neither breathe nor scream.

THE LORDS OF THE LIVING DEAD

LICHES

Magic is beyond the ken of most mortals; they look upon wizards with a mixture of apprehension and awe. Truly magic is a life's work and some dweomer crafters never learn enough, their curiosity eventually drives them down a dark path, a path that ends at the gates of undeath.

Physiology

It is wizards who most commonly undertake the terrible steps required of a mortal if he wishes to become a lich, although sorcerers and clerics can also summon sufficient power, albeit rarely.

Sometimes the passage towards undeath begins innocuously enough. The spellcaster has an insatiable desire to master his craft, to learn the most eldritch of arcane secrets and to fashion items of utmost power. Such activities are time consuming indeed – learning the basics of magic requires a long period of study, mastering its esoteric law requires years beyond counting. So it is that many a wizard chooses to lengthen his life with potions and magic that stave off old age or extend the human life-span far beyond the norm. Most will reluctantly let go of life once the years weigh too heavily on their shoulders, while others suffer mishaps with their chronomancy and find the years they so carefully avoided suddenly piling upon them and they wither and die in but a trice.

Yet for some the desire to continue their existence becomes overpowering, they will not trust their future to the gods, caring not if a place is prepared for them in the outer planes and considering the prospect of reincarnation a curse.

So it is that they begin researching ways to cheat death altogether. The result for a small number of arcane and divine spellcasters is a

magical elixir – a brew made from the essence of demonic larvae. A larvae is a piteous thing resembling a maggot or worm in many respects, yet of large size (some five or more feet in length) and possessing a recognisably human face.

The larvae form on the plane of Hades from the souls of the most selfishly evil mortals. The gloom-bound night hags are their mistresses in the narrowest sense and shepherd them in flocks, tormenting them night and day. A larva is a valuable commodity, the hags trade them to the demons and devils that use them for their own fell purposes. Mortal spellcasters can brew the essence of larvae into a potion that grants undeath. So it is that the would-be lich must strike a bargain with a hag and procure a number of larvae to use in their black experimentations.

Once the vile brew has been concocted, a second step must be taken. A magical receptacle for the spellcaster's life force has to be made. This is no easy matter and takes much learning and skill to do. The receptacle usually takes the form of a phylactery, a small box containing spells scribed onto enchanted strips of parchment, that the lich would wear upon its





wrist or forehead. Sometimes the receptacle comes in the form of a talisman or item of jewellery, for it truly matters not what form it takes. This life-force receptacle is of the greatest import to a lich, for as long as it exists the lich can never be completely destroyed.

Once the potion and phylactery are prepared, the final ritual can begin. Terrible conjurations and obscure enchantments must be performed and at the climax of this magic the spellcaster drinks the potion. The liquid acts as the most potent of poisons and drives life out of the drinker's body, but its magical nature allows one with sufficient force of will to channel that life into the prepared receptacle.

It is this last consideration, the would-be lich's force of will, which is of the greatest import. They must have a total mastery of their own mind, a driving purpose to exist against all the odds and an iron resolve to live beyond death, or, to put it differently, to live with death. If all has been done correctly and

the spellcaster's determination does not waver, they will become a lich.

One wonders what the newly made lich thinks as it watches its body decay over the following years. No longer do they need to eat and the lich has no appetite for food, their cadaver becomes lean and bony, their flesh withers and skin becomes like parchment. The eyes and other fleshy parts begin to decay, eventually rotting away altogether and soon the lich resembles a wight or a mummy removed from its swathe of bandages. Is this horrid half-life what the spellcaster envisaged for himself when he researched the black art of transforming into a lich? Is immortality worth this price?

All that a sane man associates with life is lost to the lich, it can take no bodily pleasures and the normal desires of mankind no longer hold any interest for it. Only the study of magic and the acquisition of power remain.

Habitat

Liches can no longer dwell with the human race, for they have spurned humanity and become something else. What city would give them shelter? Could any human stand their unnatural presence? No, the lich must live far from civilisation in a place of solitude or make its home with other abnormal things, with the evil and malign.

The lich's abode may be quite palatial, only the richest and most powerful of spellcasters can afford to become liches and thus their homes will be sumptuously appointed. Yet the newly made lich soon loses interest in the trappings of life and, opulent though the furnishings may be, they will be left to moulder and decay, covered in dust and profusely hung with webs. Only those areas the lich might use to further its researches will show signs of use, its laboratory and library, its conjuration room and meditation chamber. It is said that some liches go beyond even their magical paraphernalia, spending their time wandering the furthest reaches of the astral realms and uncovering things best left undisturbed. Their bodily shell is left behind on such journeys and eventually even that remnant rots away into dust as the lich becomes one with the magic of the multiverse.

Society

Properly speaking the lich exists outside society; it is a pariah, a self-outcast from its own people. Now it

consorts with night hags, demons and devils. It has more in common with a wight than a human and shares its existence with lesser undead, if it shares it at all.

Many liches dwell in perpetual solitude but there are those with plans and schemes in mind that require interaction with other beings if ever those strategies are to bear fruit. Jealous of its time and paranoid that its unearthly existence will be cut short, the lich may have a number of abhorrent guards in its demesne, although some chose to rely on traps and magical wards instead.

Methods of Warfare

Whether the characters know it or not the battle with a lich begins long before the actual physical encounter. In fact the battle may have started millennia before as the lich began to layout its complex plan. When dealing with a particularly old lich the plots and dangers the characters face may well have their roots in activities that predate the character's civilization.

During the lich's planning it accounts for almost every eventuality. It calculates probabilities, establishes contingencies, and generally prepares for anything that might go wrong. The creature's plans comprise of layers and layers of deceit, each buttressed on a dozen sides by further schemes.

In order to combat a lich successfully the characters need to be creative; linear thinking simply leads the would-be attackers straight into the next trap. They must also be bold. A lich is by nature a conservative planner. It avoids risks. Feats of daring, impossible valour, and heroic spirit fall outside of its ability to plan or anticipate.

Planning and the Lich

A lich never loses focus, never hesitates, and cannot be swayed from its aims. It has centuries to plan, almost infinite intelligence, and more resources than most mortals can imagine. All of this adds up to a serious headache for the Games Master; creating plans for such a creature seems almost impossible. What could such a being want? How much does it know? How deep are its plans anyway?

Games Masters need to accept that when playing a lich they need to cheat a bit. Until the moment of the lich's single, dramatic mistake it correctly anticipates all of a party's actions. It has spent centuries thinking of every contingency; woven webs of security down

though the centuries, and cannot be stopped by anything short of concerted divine effort.

All of a lich's plans and contingencies assume that the opponent is as cautious as the lich itself. Bold moves, sudden changes in plan, and rapid action surprise the creature. This can translate into an advantage for the characters if they act quickly enough. Courage can unravel the careful work of centuries.

The Lich's Lieutenants

Although a social pariah a lich surrounds itself with capable lieutenants that attend to mortal affairs. It typically creates these lieutenants, or binds them into its service using brutal magical means. Thus a lich's servants include demons, devils, various kinds of intelligent undead, and magically dominated creatures. Each lieutenant has access to a network of contacts, resources, and powers that it uses to execute on the lich's grand schemes.

Individually each lieutenant possesses considerable power. These creatures are among the top echelons of their respective species; some are powers rivalling nations in their own right. The will of the lich holds them to their purpose. If that will were ever to waver





the lieutenants would undoubtedly fall to fighting among themselves.

Each lieutenant has a single area of responsibility in the lich's plans. They each guard their own bailiwick carefully. Any intrusion is met with extreme hostility and sometimes lethal force. So long as these petty squabbles remain subordinate to the lich's goal it ignores them.

In order to expand its subordinates' powers the lich may create for them a variety of expendable magical objects. These items assist the lieutenant in the execution of his duties. Being expendable, however, they do not represent a permanent increase in the lieutenant's power, and therefore help to maintain the status quo between the lich and his subordinates.

Use of Minions

In addition to the intelligent lieutenants that a lich uses to execute its plans it maintains a stable of minor powers for grunt work. These minions fall into four

basic categories: allies, bound outsiders, constructs, and dominated creatures. Each group has a distinct function to play within the lich's long-term goals.

Allies represent the only group not bound to the lich's plans by anything other than personal gain. These minions may be kings of the nations of men, or masters of other planar realms far removed from the mortal coil. Their loyalty and obedience come from the advantage they see for themselves in cooperation. This advantage could stem from the lich's assistance, from other resources under the lich's control, or from the benefit the allies would derive from the lich achieving its goals. Good possible allies include dragons, genie, giants, naga, slaad, and salamanders. Since they are self motivated the lich can trust them with missions that it does not personally understand, or with activities that require independent action.

Bound outsiders make up the bulk of the lich's shock troops. Demons, devils, and elementals all work well in this role. These creatures have no choice in the battle; they fight until their master releases them or they die. Even death is no release; the lich simply summons the creature back, binding it anew.

Constructs and dominated creatures act as the rank and file of a lich's forces. A lich throws away these creatures as if they were expendable resources, to be replaced when time allows. From the lich's perspective they are expendable; another monster can always be dominated, another construct manufactured in the long years of waiting.

Minions might or might not have access to expendable magical items. Any items in their possession will most likely be minor potions or one use wondrous items intended to temporarily enhance their effectiveness in battle.

Personal Confrontations

Should a lich somehow find itself in direct conflict with another person, though the layers and layers of plots and minions, it strikes with deadly force. The lich's goal is always to end confrontation as quickly as possible. It will summon minions of some kind to delay the attackers then strike with its strongest spells. It does so without regard for the minions that might be trapped in the area of effect.

A lich never retreats once engaged. In part this comes from its assurance that, so long as the phylactery survives, the lich itself cannot truly die. In truth though the lich refuses to back down because it cannot back down. The same maniacal focus that allowed it to become a lich in the first place, that which sustains its unlife, prevents it from considering retreat when faced with direct opposition to its plans.

In terms of spell selection a lich in battle uses the most powerful attack spells available to it, typically targeting other spellcasters first. It allows its summoned assistants to deal with the fighters and other weapons wielders. It expends magical items first then turns to its own selection of spells and magical abilities to finish off the attackers.

Unless defending its phylactery the lich will not use permanent magic items. Staves, rods, wands, scrolls, and potions all put in an appearance, but magical arms and armour or wondrous items do not. The creature's paranoia about inadvertently strengthening its opponents prevents it from risking its most powerful tools.

Roleplaying With Liches

Every lich has a single fixed goal. This goal could be anything from 'create the most powerful artefact ever imagined' to 'discover the lost secrets of the ancient demon kingdom'. Whatever the goal it is invariant; the creature never changes its mind, deviates from its course, or acknowledges that its goal might be unachievable.

All of a lich's activities centre on achieving its one goal. All conceptions of morality, decency, and constraint are discarded. In their place the lich accepts a kind of burning amorality that accepts any sacrifice in return for progress towards its goal. No action is too foul, no bargain too dark for a lich to hesitate committing it.

Outside of its primary focus a young lich may still exhibit some mortal mannerisms. It may be kind, polite or even gentle as the situation warrants. The older a lich becomes the fewer of these mannerisms remain, until all that is left is the burning drive to accomplish the goal. This change corresponds with a gradual decline in activities not directly related to the goal. A young lich might be willing to interact normally things that do not have a direct bearing on its goal. An older lich has trouble perceiving things that do not either have a direct bearing on the goal or threaten its existence.



A lich does not act out of malice. It does not engage in petty torment, random acts of violence, or other such 'evil' acts. The creature weighs every word, action, and thought and acts as effectively as possible. The damage that it does to other creatures is acceptable to it in pursuit of its ends not because it delights in the suffering it causes.

Successfully bargaining with a lich requires that the bargainers know the lich's goal. The lich will listen to reasonable arguments that suggest providing assistance to the bargainers will further its own ends. It will also betray its erstwhile allies in a moment if it finds a faster path. Even a lawful evil lich may betray its stated word if a better opportunity comes along.

The Lich's Fate

Assuming that the lich has a goal that can be achieved, eventually the time will come when it finally does so. Short of being destroyed nothing can really stop the creature; it will simply try and try again throughout the long ages of the world until it succeeds.

Only after the lich finally achieves its goal does the true horror of its fate reveal itself. Having sacrificed everything for its goal, the creature cannot accept that it has accomplished it. In fact it might not even realise that it has done so. Trapped in its own delusion the creature may forever attempt to accomplish something that has already been done.

A lich that has completed its task is perhaps one of the saddest and most dangerous creatures in the universe. Its picture of reality distorts more and more each day as continues to engage in actions that no longer have meaning. It becomes prey for any evil creature intelligent enough to exploit its madness. The creature may engage in repetitive behaviours (stacking spell books, pacing, etc.), go catatonic, or begin to suffer from intense visual hallucinations,

Making a deal with a lich in this stage of unlife exposes the bargainers to considerable danger. The lich cannot be trusted. It no longer sees reality in the same way as any other creature. Lost in its own madness, it could well fulfil the bargain. Or it could destroy the bargainers out of hand, perceiving them as a treat in some twisted corner of its mind.

About 'good' liches

A lich is by definition evil. It will sacrifice anyone or anything to achieve its goal. Nothing matters to it but doing what it must. This kind of evil may seem less 'bad' than the ravaging monster that murders randomly, but it is evil never the less. Nor does it feel less like evil when the character is personally the target of the lich's disregard.

A lich pursuing a 'good' goal is still evil. It uses evil means (torture, murder, enslavement, etc.) to achieve a good result. This activity taints the lich forever. In some worlds it also taints the goal, turning what would otherwise have been a great victory for the forces of good into a nightmare.

A young lich may demonstrate qualities in conversation or dealings not directly related to its goal that could be called good. It may seem to care about other beings. On rare occasions it may exhibit mercy. But the creature would happily sell the being it just spared into torment and death if it would advance the creature's cause.

There may be good creatures that resemble a lich. These creatures are typically either cursed by a good god as punishment for misdeeds or intended to act as servants to higher powers.

The Lich's Mind

This description of the lich assumes that the creature is clinically insane. It possesses an invariant idea (the goal). Its understanding of the world warps around that invariant idea. No amount of persuasion, discussion, evidence, or assistance will ever convince the lich that its idea (whatever that is) has changed or was never true to begin with. The actions that the lich takes make sense and may even seem morally correct when weighed in relationship to the fixed idea.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Apprenticed To Death

The wizard's college to which a player is indentured has been commissioned to make a potent magical item for the king's army. War is in the air and if the item is not delivered before the eve of battle the archmage will lose his head. What is the device? Maybe it is a weapon that can level whole regiments or breach castle walls in a trice, or could it be a staff of unsurpassed power that can turn the loyalty of a whole army?

Unfortunately, all attempts to make the device have failed and the archmage is becoming desperate. He has been advised that a former head of the college is now a lich, a most powerful one, and is surely capable of making the king's precious magic item if anyone is.

Thus the archmage has commanded the player to go in search of the lich. The journey will be a perilous one and the wizard is advised to bring his co-adventurers to protect him from the savage monsters that will surely cross his path.

Where is the lich's residence? Perhaps it is in a deep cavern far beneath the earth, in a ruined city on the far side of an impassable desert, on another plane altogether or something fashioned by the lich for his own security. Wherever it is, the party will have a hard task reaching it.

When at last the lich's sepulchral abode is found the wizard's task is just beginning. Somehow, without provoking the lich to violence, he must convince it to undertake the manufacture of the King's so ardently desired magical item. What could entice a lich to accept such a commission? It has no interest in monetary rewards, can manufacture the magical devices it needs for its own work, has forgotten what

loyalty it ever had to the college and the kingdom and resents this unasked for intrusion into its solitude. Whatever price the lich demands will be a high one, the performance of a Herculean task that will test the party to the limit and, given the lich's malevolent nature, will it keep to the bargain if the task is completed? Indeed, can it even make the device?

Maybe the device will be made but its performance will not be to the King's liking. A lich-wrought magical item of a power close to that of artefacts and relics is likely to be a curse rather than a blessing to the one whom wields it.

NIGHTSHADES

Physiology

The nightshade is equal parts darkness and evil, made solid and tangible. The legend related above takes little account of the nightshades' undoubted undead nature as some portion of these creatures must once have been mortal, for how else can undeath exist? There must have been life before there was unlife.

The witches of the east say that the original nightshades were knights and warriors in the service of the Abyss. Perhaps this is true. It is probably best that we do not know.

The three forms of the nightshade known are the nightwing, nightwalker and nightcrawler. Each is of a monstrous size, horrid to behold and utterly unnatural

in their composition. While their physical forms are quite different, each exudes a dreadful aura of evil, cold and death, wields strange magical powers and is itself unaffected by all save the most potent of spells.

Nightshades have a superhuman intellect and, in all respects, exceed the capacity of all but the most potent heroes. Their psyche is quite beyond our ken and we cannot know what bleak thoughts pass through their impenetrable black minds. They prey upon the living by instinct, but each is also an active participant in the endless struggle between the principles of the multiverse. They are champions of disorder and wickedness and they seek the destruction of all.

Habitat

Nightshades lair where the darkness is deep and unfathomable and, for reasons known only to themselves, they amass wealth in their gloomy abodes. The nightshades regard the umbrata and penumbra as mortals might look upon a work of art or bed of flowers while light, even starlight, is deemed a thing hateful and vile. Shadow cannot exist without light but if the nightshades are conscious of this paradox, they do not acknowledge it.

The nightwings will take up abode in a high place, perhaps a system of caves on a mountainside or the steeple of a ruined church. It is said that in the far north of the world there is a temple fashioned from black ice, with precipitous walls and many high

When first The Lord of Darkness Eternal beheld the coming of the sun and the rise of man he closed his hands together and envisaged the end which will come and saw ahead of himself an aeon of suffering. 'The dark, the beautiful dark, has been sullied,' he said. 'The purity of the void has been lost. I shall endure that which I must endure, I shall suffer solitude so that non-being can return, I shall suffer imprisonment so that all that is can be undone, I shall suffer so that all suffering, all being, can be made no more and then I shall remember it not and it will be as if it had never been.'

Then He Who is Lost turned his head and beheld the festering pits of the Abyss and said, 'this too shall not be, but first let us take something so that all can be made nothing,' and he called into his presence Orcus and commanded him to hand over a portion of undeath. Orcus obeyed.

In his right hand The Lord of Darkness Eternal held undeath and with his left hand he plucked forth from his being a piece of the endless dark and he melded the two into one, making something so that all things could become nothing.

From the dark-undeath he had formed The Hidden One fashioned things and called them Nightshades. To them he said, 'you shall be my children and I shall be your lord. Though you will not see me I shall be with you for I am in you. Unto the time of the end, the time that will come and has come before, you shall be and I shall be and then we shall be no more as the perfect dark you usher in closes over all.'

Excerpt from *The Book of Dis*

towers. The interior of this fane is large and airy and the broad winged horrors glide from perch to perch while singing blasphemous songs to their evil lord.

The nightcrawlers who burrow beneath the earth choose caverns of sombre darkness for a home, in the gloomy recesses of their subterranean manses they curl and twist, unable to rest for they know that the living still walk above them on the world's bright surface.

The nightwalkers like the blackness found in a forest's heart where what light there is comes tinged with green and muted by the canopy of leaves. They will journey far on their hunting expeditions and set up encampments in forgotten dungeons and abandoned tombs.

Society

Creatures of chaos, the nightshades vie with each other for dominance so that a flock or gang of these horrid things will have the most cunning and ferocious as its captain. When nightshades of a different species share a common locale they may fight or co-operate and it is hard to fathom their intentions or motivations. They hate all things, even themselves, and regard each other with no loyalty or sense of commonality, if co-operation will further the end that they seek then joint endeavours will be made.

The incorporeal undead, the evil spirits men call wraiths, shadows, spectres and ghosts, are in awe of the nightshades and answer to their summons if called. Why this is so is unclear, for the wraith and spectre are usually deemed to be Hell's servants. That the shadows should answer is understandable for they are of the same stuff as the nightshades and clearly their subordinates. It has been suggested that a shadow can, over time, grow so powerful that it becomes a nightshade. Sages who study the undead would pay much for evidence that confirmed this theory.

Methods of Warfare

Each nightshade is a powerful being with potent attacks and defences at its disposal. They always attempt to attack with surprise, the nightwing swoops down silently from a black sky, the nightcrawler erupts from the earth at its prey's feet while the nightwalker skulks in the shadows until the time is right for it to come forth and kill.

The nightwing will send summoned spirits against its foes so it can gauge their defences and decide which magical items it will drain before itself entering the fray, as with all nightshades it can sense magic and its attention is drawn to the most powerful of its adversaries' items.

The sinister nightwalker, shielded by evil spirits, will weaken its foes with its cursed glare before snatching their weapons and crushing them so it might find the battle all the easier to win.

The dreaded nightcrawler will gobble up its foes, imprisoning them in its life-draining innards and possibly burrowing back down through the earth to regurgitate and torment them at its leisure.

Roleplaying With Nightshades

The nightshades are undead of stupendous power and even the highest-level heroes should fear them. The Games Master can introduce these horrors into play over a period of time with the players hearing tales of them or reading short descriptions in dark tomes they unearth. As the party becomes stronger they will encounter a single nightwing, then a pair of those winged terrors, in time perhaps individual walkers or crawlers will be faced and eventually multiple nightshades, perhaps of different species, will be encountered together.

These gloomy beings might serve as warriors in some dark lord's schemes or they themselves might be the source of some demonic plot. As noted in *Core Rulebook III* the nightwings, nightwalkers and nightcrawlers are but the known forms a nightshade might take – an innovative Games Master will certainly develop other variations of this undead creature to challenge his players as their characters advance in power.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

The Garden Of Shadow

There is a place where He of Darkness Eternal once walked. It is hidden from the eyes of man so that only the chosen can find it. Beyond a waterfall of cascading black water there is a door, beyond the door there is a labyrinth, beyond the labyrinth stands a high wall with no gate and beyond the wall is the garden of He Who is Lost.

Here shadows bloom and grow. They are beautiful to those who can perceive them. Darkness spreads from sconces mounted on the inner side of the wall and the very breeze has a dark shade to it. The place is colder than an arctic wind, darker than a madman's nightmare and is warded by nightshades of every kind.

Those who would return darkness's king seek the garden out for there are patterns to the shadows that grow there. One who has the power to solve the shadows' riddle can glean arcane knowledge and learn the answers to mysteries older than man.

VAMPIRES

Grim stalker of the night, hunter of man, dead yet not dead, a feeder upon blood, a parasite that is never sated – the vampire is a truly bleak and inhuman foe. The lich may be mightier, yet the vampire is surely a thing viler. It puts its own existence above that of all others, treats mortals as cattle and cares nothing for the misery and fear it leaves in its wake.

Physiology

Vampires are commonly created by others of their breed, in other words, an existing vampire will accidentally or deliberately infect other mortals with vampirism. The first and greatest of their kind chose to become vampires and were granted that status by Orcus himself. They were mortals who had come to despise the gods of light and worthy things, and sought to spite the beneficial powers by becoming agents of the dark.



In appearance vampires vary greatly one from another. Most are as horrid to behold as their hearts are black and evil with a demonic, wild look about them. Their flesh is clearly dead, their countenance is one of wickedness and they can be likened best to rabid wolves. Some manage to keep a semblance of

humanity and a few are downright beautiful – this beauty is only skin deep of course and is used by the vampire to full advantage when confronting mortals prone to judging a book by its cover.

Legends tell of a vampire of unsurpassed beauty and power that lies imprisoned in a golden sphere far beneath the earth. In some tales she is given the name Rezelna and it is said that she is the daughter of The Mother of Witches. If ever this vampire were to gain her freedom the world would suffer because of it.

There are those who have mistakenly taken pity on the vampire, viewing it as an unfortunate victim of disease. Some go so far as to admire the blood-draining vermin and seek to emulate them in style and dress. How foolish these folk are! If ever they came across a true vampire their delusions would swiftly be dispelled. The vampire exists to shed blood, spread its curse and undo good works. One might pity the man who falls prey to a vampire and rises as one of its kindred but that pity should express itself as a desire to destroy the wretched thing as swiftly as possible, before more innocent people fall victim to the curse of undeath.

Habitat

There is no glamour to a vampire's existence and by the light of day it skulks in a coffin, hidden away in a noisome tomb or secret chamber. It lives like a rat, scuttling in the dark, and its only joy comes from the act of murder, bloody and filthy murder at that.

Perhaps to compensate for this squalid existence the vampires have taken to adorning themselves with fine clothes, but in all except a handful of cases the fine garments reek of death and decay.

Similarly, some amongst their caste dwell in seeming opulence, in fine castles or lordly manors, yet such luxuries only serve to mask the vile condition vampirism has reduced them to.



As its coffin is of such importance to a vampire it will take steps to hide it. Guards will be stationed if at all possible and traps lain to kill the unwary, for a vampire is at its most vulnerable while recovering in the dust of its grave. The most powerful of such undead creatures will have two or more coffins in which they can abide, thus providing themselves with alternate sanctuaries and giving them greater safety from those brave mortals who hunt and slay them.

Society

Vampires do much for show, seeking to convince each other that their burdensome half-life is something to be envied and sought after. Wild parties full of orgiastic indulgence and bloody entertainment are thrown by the greatest of their kind. They form secret lodges and occult societies so as to gather together unnoticed and entice gullible mortals into their grasp.

That some sort of precedence exists amongst them is known, with the oldest and greatest demanding subservience from those they perceive as being beneath them, but being chaotic creatures a 'lesser vampire's' subservience will be lip service at best.

Most vampires are fully occupied by the rigours of survival and have no time to enter into rivalries with others of their kind. Finding fresh victims while avoiding detection is a hard enough task without feuding with their 'kin'.

The vampire elite, those that have held their status for centuries and are well established, seek to gain dominance over their kind, dreaming of a day when they will unite all vampires and lead them to world domination. Humans would be reduced to the level of cattle and each village would have a vampire as its master and resident butcher. Thankfully, the vampires are too busy avoiding those who hunt them and fighting each other over who will take on this mantle of leadership, so the world will not need to contend with such a plague for a while yet... we hope.

Methods of Warfare

A vampire represents one of the greatest tactical threats that an adventuring party can face. It has the intelligence of mortal races, the powers of the undead and the heart of a rabid hunting animal. As a predator it is nearly perfect; ruthless, savage, swift and silent.

A vampire's weakness lies in its inability to plan for the future. Once it meets its basic needs for food, shelter, and pleasure it becomes, like other predators, essentially lazy. A secure vampire gives no thought at all to the future. It exists for the moment, for the thrill of the next hunt. Any threat must be dealt with immediately or forgotten in the primal pleasure of the kill.

On an instinctive level a vampire functions in one of three basic modes: hunting, fleeing, or fighting. When hunting he focuses completely on stalking his prey. When fighting he seeks to cause the maximum amount of bloodshed possible. When fleeing he moves like the wind seeking to escape from whatever put him into flight.

Hunt

When hunting prey the vampire is at his most dangerous. His senses flare into supernatural sharpness with the thrill of the hunt. The closeness of his prey drives him into frenzy. Being intelligent he can predict the actions of civilised creatures, using their habits against them.

The hunting vampire's intense focus on the hunt becomes an exploitable weakness in the hands of skilled hunters. The creature disregards anything that does not directly impact either the hunt or access to the prey. So long as the hunters do not impede the creature until they can strike decisively, they can hunt

and plan without interference, or most likely even being noticed.

The Single Vampires

A lone vampire moves with stealth. It relies on his abilities to spider climb, shape shift, and assume gaseous form to escape detection. Buildings, trees, and rooftops conceal a shadowy form, almost undetectable to the untrained eye.

A hunt may last for hours or days. The vampire savours the experience, building bloodlust in its heart with each passing moment. It taunts its victim, letting itself be seen sometimes, or slipping just close enough to allow its foul scent to fill the target's lungs. Once the victim is isolated from help the creature strikes, rendering the target helpless as swiftly as possible. It then toys with the victim for some length of time, using an obscene parody of mortal flirtation and courtship rituals to torture the prey.

When hunting alone the vampire chooses prey that either cannot threaten it or that destroying would generate some kind of perverse satisfaction. For example a vampire might choose to stalk a popular local beauty not because she could possibly threaten the creature, but because her death would engender pain and suffering in others. It avoids beings of obvious power, or creatures that might escape.

A hunting vampire uses all of its weapons to the fullest extent possible. Whatever skills it possessed in life turn to the task of rendering the prey helpless. This somewhat limits their choice of tactics; a hunting vampire never uses lethal force until the prey lies helpless at its feet.

If confronted during a hunt the vampire attempts to remove the impediment as quickly as possible. If it comes under serious attack it immediately retreats, intending to continue stalking the victim at a later time.

Vampire Pairs

A hunting pair of vampires can be more lethal than any single vampire. The two creatures feed off one another's blood lust, straining the bounds of their restraint. Gratuitous mutilations, horrendous defacement of bodies, and random murder are all possibilities when two vampires hunt together.

When two of these creatures hunt together they use tactics much like their single hunting tactics. They work together to herd the single target away from

any help, then strike as quickly as possible to render the prey helpless.

Although the two creatures in theory co-operate they also compete with one another. Each uses their powers of stealth, domination, and manipulation to subtly 'trip up' the other hunter. They do this to demonstrate their dominance over the other creatures; such activities also add zest to an otherwise limited hunt.

If confronted during a hunt the vampire pair will fight together to the best of their abilities until the battle turns against them. At that point the 'bond' between the two creatures breaks. They flee in opposite directions, potentially hindering one another in the process. As predators, each vampire realise that if whatever attacks it can make a kill it is less likely to continue pursuing it specifically. The death of another of its kind can be avenged later.





this is if the vampire dominates the encounter; in that case the vampire frenzies killing everything in its path.

A fleeing vampire will use its formidable powers to escape. It uses its charming powers to negate opponents. It uses its shape shifting powers to assume the form of a bat or wolf, or that of a mist, so that it can evade though narrow passages. If need be it uses its children of the night ability to call up a horde of expendable creatures whose sole purpose

Hunting Packs

A hunting pack of vampires (typical a vampire and his spawn) moves and fights like a destructive horde. The bloodlust in their hearts cannot be contained when so many of them gather. The careful hunting patterns of the solitary or paired vampire give way to far more brutal and direct tactics.

The pack quickly finds and isolates victims, usually in a matter of minutes rather than days or hours. They feed in an orgy of blood, reducing the body of the victim to so much tattered flesh. Many times the spawn use their charm person abilities to steal people right from amidst a crowd; the pack feeds no further than twenty feet from where the victims friends stand.

On the rare occasions that a hunting pack uses anything resembling stealth it will generally use either luring or beating tactics. Luring involves a single creature exposing itself to a victim and enticing it to follow. Beating involves several creatures working to start a panic, driving a mob of mortals into a 'killing field'. Most hunting packs do not start out intending to execute a beat; it is a result of a sudden surge of killing passion.

Flight

Despite its fearsome powers a vampire is fundamental a cowardly creature. When suddenly confronted by an equal foe during a hunt a lone vampire or even a group of vampires is most likely to retreat. The creature hunts for sport and easy kills, not pitched battle. Similarly a vampire will always seek to escape if forced to fight in its lair.

Generally a vampire will only engage for two rounds before attempting to escape. The only exception to

is to slow pursuit.

A group of fleeing vampires represents as much of a danger to its members as it does to anyone caught between it and freedom. Each creature attempts to ensure that one or more of the others falls to appease their pursuer's hunger for blood. The creatures hope that by capturing one of their number (not them specifically of course) the pursuers will delay long enough for the individual creature to escape. This can create a chaotic mess during any protracted chase of a vampire pack.

Fight

If a vampire can somehow be cornered and forced to fight, it is a cunning and deadly foe. It fights will all of the powers at its command, dominating the strongest opponents and destroying the weakest as food for its hunger. A vampire forced to fight will often go hunting immediately afterwards, seeking some way to settle its roused lust.

The Single Vampire

A single vampire fights only so long as it takes to reduce his attackers to the point where it can flee from them. It attempts to dominate one or two weaker targets, weakens creatures by using its level draining slam attack, and used the children of the night ability to generate a screen from which to attack.

A vampire uses the powers that it possessed in life as well as its undead abilities. A vampire sorcerer is likely to pair nasty attack spells with its level-draining slam. One with fighting abilities will use its feats to the fullest possible advantage. A cleric will cast inflict spells on itself to boost its healing rate, or throw *unholy smite* to blind good attackers.

A vampire does not attack a single foe until the foe dies. As soon as the target weakens it moves on to the next always searching for a way out of the conflict. Its goal is to spread as much chaos among the attackers as possible, weakening their resolve enough for it to escape.

Vampire Pairs

A vampire pair does not fight as a coherent unit. At best they fight back to back to prevent flanking manoeuvres. Otherwise they range freely, each one looking for an individual escape route.

Unlike a lone vampire a vampire pair has a 10% chance per round of flying into frenzy. If this happens the vampires cease attempting to escape and focus their attention on killing and consuming as many of their attackers as possible. The two begin attacking together, co-ordinating their assaults so as to take out the strongest opponents first. They hunt down anyone who attempts to escape, taunting their former attackers with the sudden reversal in the situation.

Hunting Packs

A hunting pack fights as a single unit, dominated by the will of the lead vampire. So long as the pack members survive they obey the command of the lead vampire without question.

In any conflict with a vampire pack the lead vampire stands clear of the direct conflict for as long as possible. It spends time co-ordinating the activities of the rest of the pack. If it has spellcasting abilities he uses those to support his spawn. Only if the spawn seem to be having difficulty with the encounter or if it comes under direct threat does the lead vampire use its own physical powers.

The vampire spawn isolate the strongest members of the party first, focusing on heavily armed fighters or barbarians. As many spawn as possible swarm a single target with a 'screen' of one or two swarm protecting the lead vampire from direct assault. If the lead vampire comes under ranged assault (by weapon or magic) the spawn immediately swarm the most powerful attacker. The goal of the spawn's attack is to weaken each target as quickly as possible thereby enabling the lead vampire to escape unharmed.

There is a 30% chance per round that a hunting pack will go into frenzy. When that happens the lead vampire joins the fray decisively, and the spawn attack to the death. The frenzied vampire might or might not escape depending on how badly it is wounded during the fight.

Note on Social Hunters

Few vampires can disguise themselves well enough to pass for human. This disguise typically involves the use of an *alter self* spell, but may also involve the use of the Disguise skill. In either case, vampires who can 'pass' as mortals seek out crowded locations in which to hunt. The creatures stalk pubs, inns, and festivals looking for mortals to consume. They use standard hunting tactics to isolate their prey then assault them very near or even within the bustle of the crowds.

Roleplaying with Vampires

The vampire represents a study in contradictions. It possesses the heart of a rabid beast, yet retains the will of an intelligent being. Its soul is as black as the darkest night, yet once it might have been a truly noble creature. These contradictions make the vampire a compelling villain in many stories.

The Predator

A vampire that has control of the situation moves with assurance. It speaks to its victims with casual malevolence, describing their death in almost erotic terms. Something within it keeps the creature in constant motion, as if nervous energy pulsed though its withered limbs.

While hunting the creature takes on a more animalistic aspect. It crouches low to the ground. Its form becomes fluid, changing from man to beast to mist as need dictates. Although still capable of speech it growls like a beast or mumbles nonsense words over and over again.

When thwarted a hunting vampire seems to fly into a rage. Its eyes bulge out and a red glow flares up in the pupil. The creature snarls and growls while attempting to circumvent the obstacle. Should the obstacle prove obstinate or dangerous the creature howls with unholy rage, viciously attacking with the intent to mangle or mutilate rather than kill.

The Prey

When the tables turn and the vampire becomes the prey its visage transforms. The veneer of civilisation falls away to reveal the animal within. The creature's nervous energy explodes though its frame, driving it to seemingly impossible feats of agility and strength. The thing constantly casts about looking for a way to escape.

THE LORDS OF THE LIVING DEAD

A vampire fleeing for its life does not stop to talk with its pursuers. It might pause for a moment to use its domination ability to force one or more of its attackers to impede the pursuit, but such contact does not construe actual communication.

If cornered the vampire flies into a rage as described above. It attacks in the most vicious fashion possible, seeking to inspire fear in its attackers. No tactic is too dirty, underhanded, or foul for a cornered vampire to use.

Should the creature be faced with overwhelming force and unable to flee it's insane rage seems to cool slightly. It cowers before its attackers, begging for its existence. A vampire in this situation turns its charm and persuasion abilities to good use, while relying on its fast healing ability to restore it to full health.

Contrary to popular opinion no vampire will willingly hunt down a group of attackers that already dispatched it. A defeated vampire attempts to escape the area at the first opportunity. It has no interest in facing foes on equal terms.

At Rest

After a kill or during idle hours a vampire becomes almost mortal again. The bestial side of the creature subsides for a short while, allowing the mortal to peer though. In this state it may even take time to communicate with mortal beings outside of its ordinary predator/prey approach to life.

This period of rest typically lasts for a few hours before the creature's hunger returns.

SCENARIO HOOKS AND IDEAS

Death's Puppet Play

Long ago the prince of a mountain kingdom was found to be a vampire. He had infected many courtiers and officials with his curse and was poised to seize the kingdom. A great battle was fought as the grief-stricken king led soldiers against his son.

In time the conspirators were driven into the dark and secret places below the capital city's streets and the access ways to those gloomy realms were sealed up. The populace heaved a sigh of relief and, over the succeeding generations, the vampire prince became nothing more than a bedtime tale grandfathers would tell to frighten the young.

Yet down in the gloom far below the prince and his cohorts lived on. A black crown was forged and laid upon the prince's brow and he was dubbed the king of the dark. The lightless realms were explored and expanded, contact was made with the denizens of those realms and a slave trade was begun. Eventually the wards that sealed them below the ground were broken and the vampires were once more free to come and go as they wished. However, wisdom had come in the passage of years and the king of the dark acts prudently. No corpses are left in the sunlight realm - vagabonds and travellers are taken by night and brought down into the gloom.

The vampire king's realm is a sumptuous one full of evil delights. Foremost amongst these is his puppet theatre, where life size manikins dangle from strings and perform shows for his subjects. The manikins are magical and armed with sharp blades, nasty hooks and stabbing needles. The vampires like mortals to act on their stage and they hoot with delight each time one is cut, open their mouths in the hopes of catching a spray of blood and lick the stage clean of gore once the show is done.



HYBRID UNDEAD

The templates given in this book allow the Games master to create a multitude of new undead adversaries for his players' characters to face. Here we will briefly consider the options the Games master has to make special combined undead, hybrids if you will, with the qualities of two distinct undead forms.

It is good to keep one's players on their toes, to surprise them and catch them off guard. As the various types of undead are often similar to each other players need to be cautious when dealing with them, if combined 'hybrid' undead also enter play then the difficulty of identifying what kind of foe is faced increases all the more.

How might hybrid undead rise? Some might gain their form at the whim of Orcus or some other malevolent entity, while others might develop or degenerate into a new form. What happens to a ghoul when its physical body eventually wears away? Perhaps it becomes a spectral ghoul, doomed always to hunt for flesh it cannot eat!

When crating a hybrid undead, the Games Master should first chose the two kinds of undead he intends to combine. In most cases the weaker of the two forms, the one with the lowest challenge rating, should be used as the base creature. The template of the stronger form is then applied to it. For example, if the Games Master were to create a ghoul-wight, the wight template would be applied to a ghoul.

As noted in the section 'What Should and Should not be Undead – A Guideline for the Games master', combining an incorporeal undead form with a corporeal one presents some difficulties but no more than arise from the usual application of a spirit template to a material being. One thing is important to note though, the corporeal undead must always be the base creature regardless of the relative challenge rating of the two forms. Thus, if one were creating a wraith-nightwing, the wraith template would be applied to the nightwing's usual form.



THE ART OF TERROR

The typical d20 campaign is one of heroic fantasy. While the characters in horror roleplaying games struggle against foes they cannot best by physical means, sword and spell can best the undead creatures of a heroic fantasy campaign. Doing so might not be easy and the experience should be frightful, yet in the end humanity and its allies stand triumphant against the darker forces of the cosmos.

With that said, the heroes of fantasy fiction often experience fear when confronting such supernatural foes. If we wish to make our roleplaying sessions a truly engrossing experience, we must try and frighten our players when they confront creatures that their characters would surely fear.

After all, a hero is only behaving heroically if he faces up to and overcomes something lesser men would flee from. If we want to give our players a chance to be truly heroic, to vicariously live the life of their character, we must confront them with situations that they would rather avoid.

How might we engender a sense of horror in our players? The gaming table is not conducive to such feelings. Here sits a group of good friends, playing a game they love, swapping tales and having fun. How might we heighten their enjoyment of the session by scaring them?

First let us consider the ambience of the room in which the game is played. Normally we keep our

HYBRID UNDEAD

gaming tables well illuminated but why not turn the lighting down a little so the edges of the room are in darkness? Candlelight adds an appropriate degree of spookiness but be sure that no clumsy player accidentally sets fire to his character sheet!

Sinister music played very quietly so that its melody goes half unheard can have an unsettling effect, as can such tricks as walking behind your players as you talk. If you are aiming to scare your players, make no jokes during the session, keep a deadpan expression even when the others are laughing, you may be surprised at how readily the others follow your lead. Remember that we are attempting to create a tense and terrifying atmosphere, such an atmosphere is self-feeding and once one player is unnerved it spreads to the others.

As the session continues you should build unease. The best way of doing so is to make it clear that something bad is going to happen but not to reveal when or where it will occur. If the players know that whatever it is will put the lives of their characters in genuine jeopardy, then anxiety will begin to build.

The fonder a player is of his character the greater is their fear of losing him. Consider how attached we are to our own lives. We do not throw our lives away on a whim and yet many players have a very cavalier attitude to the lives of their characters. This leads to a rather unrealistic state of affairs. Partly this is the fault of too many Games Masters allowing players to create characters at relatively high levels. Where players are forced to begin their character's careers at level one, and higher levels are rarely, if ever, granted to newly created heroes, then the players will tend to nurture and cherish their campaign personas.

By allowing slain characters the chance to be resurrected the Games Master will give his players sufficient time to form a genuine attachment to their gaming alter ego. As the bond between player and character grows over the years so too does the level of roleplaying, for the player creates more and more details for his persona

and brings them into play. Homes are built, children are born and the character begins to take on a life of its own. As one can never be certain that one's character will be revived in the event of an untimely death, the Games Master can be sure that a player confronted with the possibility of losing their beloved and long played character will treat the situation as it deserves to be treated. Tension, even fear, will arise naturally.

The actual mechanics of play can be used to impress upon the players the horrific nature of their undead foes. Do not use undead as 'throw away' encounters designed only to weaken the party before they face stronger challenges – make undead encounters challenging. In this way your players will come to respect the undead, knowing that any conflict with them will be hard. If you also give the players a chance to avoid those undead you include in your adventures, then over time their routine response to encountering the undead will be to stay away from them and this will make any confrontations that do occur all the more unsettling.

Similarly, do not make the reversal of energy drain attacks too easy. Unlike earlier editions of the game, d20 gives players a chance to regain levels lost to an energy draining attack without recourse to magic. When levels are truly lost, be sure to make the magical means of regaining them difficult to acquire. If the players know that energy draining attacks can leave them permanently reduced in level, they will do their best to avoid fighting the horrors that can rob them of their hard won experience.

How else might we stir up feelings of fright and horror? For certain the descriptions we give of the places the characters explore and the people they meet can go a long way to scaring them. Reading the works of respected authors of horror fiction should give some ideas of how to paint an unsettling picture. Note that there is a difference between horror and revulsion, describing a bloody death in great detail might sicken rather than frighten your players. True horror is usually quite subtle.



THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

The Peak of the Nightlord is an adventure for 4-5 characters of levels 9-11 with a minimum of 40 total levels in the party. It is essential that one of the adventurers be a cleric of 10th or greater level. To conserve space only scant information is given for the communities of Unska and Bogran, the Games Master can flesh them out as he desires or simply wing any player interactions taking place there. Those with access to the Internet may wish to visit www.mongoosepublishing.com where a web enhancement for this adventure is available. To further save space, no 'read aloud' text is provided, as sufficient details are given in the area descriptions for the Games Master to be able to describe each person and place to the players.

CHARACTER HOOKS

Drawing adventurers into this scenario is a fairly simple matter. You might place the village of Unska in any remote mountainous region the party is planning to traverse and have the band stumble upon the adventure by 'accident.' Alternatively one or more of the following suggestions might be used:

- † While relaxing in their favourite inn the party hears an elven bard relate the tale of the Nightlord (see Common Knowledge below.)
- † Sister Tremereus of Asclepius's temple calls for help, when the party next needs clerical aid the price demanded is that they travel to Unska and assist her.
- † A friend of the party moves to Unska planning upon establishing a business there or retiring to enjoy their old age. A frantic letter soon arrives at the party's home asking for them to travel to the community as quickly as possible.

HISTORY OF THE NIGHTLORD

Common Knowledge: The black mountain that rears over the village of Unska was once home to a



powerful warlock who styled himself as the Nightlord. He was a malevolent tyrant who made pacts with the black lords of Hades, hell and the abyss. Many centuries ago the warlock was killed by a paladin determined to end his evil reign and since then his castle has been a haunted ruin inhabited by ghosts and other undead things. Folk shun the place for it is exceedingly dangerous, yet adventurers are drawn there from time to time in search of the treasures the warlock was said to possess. To this day horrid undead *things* creep down the mountainside at night to prowl the countryside around Unska and wayfarers had best be indoors before sunset.

Hidden Lore: The warlock was called Emandrel Capathar, he raised an army of living dead soldiers and subjugated the land for leagues about. No one was safe, for his army fed upon the blood and souls of ordinary folk, and Emandrel needed people for his experiments and unholy sacrifices. Outraged by his many blasphemies the gods of light appointed a champion, a young woman named Estania, who led a revolt amongst the oppressed peasants, rallied the surviving gentry and eventually crept into the Nightlord's black keep and slew him. Leaderless, the undead army was driven back to their former master's forlorn mountain and many were destroyed. Estania

THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

was killed in the fierce fighting and, without her stout-hearted guidance, neither common folk nor aristocrats were willing to brave the grim interior of the Nightlord's fortress. So the castle was bombarded by siege engines and then left alone.

True History: Emandrel Capathar, known as the Nightlord, was a lich. Estania, the 'paladin' who slew him was actually a vampire, the Nightlord's chief captain and a terror to all living beings. After looting the temple of a Good-aligned war god, she donned a great helm she discovered – one that radiated magical power. To her loss, but mankind's gain, this was a *helm of opposite alignment*. Convinced of the error of her formerly evil and chaotic ways, she swiftly destroyed the undead that had participated in the attack on the temple and set forth to rally the land against Emandrel. Estania's campaign lasted three months and during that time she welded commoner and aristocrat into a capable fighting force. Knowing that her army could not stand against the Nightlord's magic, she used her knowledge of his fortress to gain access secretly on the eve of their final battle.



During her confrontation with Emandrel Capathar the lich cast a *wish* spell, wording it to undo the work of the magical helm. Estania was returned to her normal outlook but not before she had destroyed the Nightlord's undead body by driving a *holy sword* through its chest as she crushed the talisman he wore. Astounded by events, Estania retreated to the dark depths of the fortress while outside her erstwhile troops destroyed the Nightlord's minions. In the catacombs underneath the castle the vampire found an odd tank in which floated the Nightlord's *clone*. Overjoyed, she expected it to emerge but the clone did not continue to develop – it remained inert. Throughout the following centuries Estania has bitterly reflected on the unhappy course of events that lead her to destroy her sovereign.

Current Situation

For generations the vampire has dominated the village of Unska. To prevent her coming in fury the village elders provide her with sustenance. Slaves are bought from brigand gangs and herded up the mountainside, those committing crimes suffer a

similar fate and if no other source of victims is forthcoming the villagers themselves will abduct passing travellers and send them to a grisly fate. In the minds of the villagers this is not evil, it is a necessity – this is the way it has always been. Recently a band of adventurers, a depraved lot lead by certain Sons of Dis, came to Unska seeking to locate the Nightlord's fortress. The villagers informed Estania of what was afoot and thus the vampire was well prepared when the necromancers arrived at her door.

The Crisis

Rather than destroy the interlopers, Estania sought to recruit them, believing that such learned folk could help her revive the Nightlord's undead clone. This task the Sons of Dis were initially happy to do, being in possession of *The Book of Dis* and thus knowing the appropriate ritual, thinking that they would profit greatly when the lich arose. However, it soon became apparent that their lives were imperilled. In order for the clone to come to 'life' fully a great quantity of blood and souls were required, so Estania turned upon her living allies and began to sacrifice them. The vampire wanted no rival where the lich's gratitude was concerned.

When the party arrives at the peak a fierce battle has recently been fought which ended in stalemate; the Sons of Dis are scattered throughout the castle's catacombs unable to escape while Estania's forces are so decimated she cannot fully defeat them. The party will be courted by both groups, each full of lies and blandishments.

1. A Crossroad at Sunset

The adventure begins. It is late in the day and the weary adventurers are looking for a place to rest. They have come to a crossroads, a wooden signpost points in two directions – northwards to the Village of Unska (2 miles) or Northwest to the hamlet of Bogran (1 mile.) If the party thinks to look about, a Spot check (DC 15) reveals a second marker, one hidden amidst the foliage to the east of the road. It is fashioned from stone and heavily laden with moss, it reads 'Peak of the Nightlord' and an engraved arrow points off towards the glowering mountains dominating the eastern horizon. No distance is given but someone has crudely scratched the image of a skull beneath the words. The track leading off into the peaks is faint and hard to follow, a party taking it must go afoot and will travel no more than one mile per hour so rugged and precipitous is the terrain.

2. Bogran

Bogran (hamlet): Non-standard; AL N; Gold piece limit: 64 gp.; Total wealth: 1,088 gp.; Population: 339; 100% human; Authority figure: Taness Bulgen the wise-woman; Others: 19-strong militia commanded by a 3rd level fighter.

2.1 Old Tower: Bogran gets few visitors; most travellers spend the night in Unska. The only place available for accommodation is the Old Tower, a circular fortification about 70 feet tall and 50 feet broad that stands a short way to the east of the hamlet. The upper stories of this place are used for storing grain, for the innkeeper is also the village miller; his windmill is on a low hill near the tower. Guests congregate about a large fireplace where a spit pig roasts; those spending the night are offered a pile of straw and a blanket for the modest sum of 2 silver pieces.

The innkeeper is Slobjan Munsk (4th level commoner), a balding and thin man who walks with a stoop. His wife Bromda sees to cooking, cleaning and bossing Slobjan about. He knows both the common and hidden history of the Nightlord but will not discuss it. Persistent questioners will be directed to

Taness Bulgen the wise-woman. Guests know the common history and are likely to discuss it and the Games Master is encouraged to embellish their tales with spurious legends.

If the party lodges here they are awoken in the small hours by the sounds of scratching at the heavy oaken door, a mewling voice pleads, 'Let us in, oh do let us in'. Slobjan urges the party to ignore the sounds and return to sleep forbidding them from opening the door. If the adventurers do not heed his warning and go outside they are confronted by 2d6 ghaunts and 1d6 tr'ouls (see *Core Rulebook III* and page 39 of this book) from the ghoulish pits in the mountains. If the party destroys these wretched things it will make a favourable impression with Taness and word of the deed will reach Sister Tremerues in Unska too.

2.2 Taness Bulgen: The only resident of note in Bogran is the wise-woman Taness Bulgen (4th level adept). Taness knows both the common, hidden and true history of the Nightlord and if the party wins her confidence she will relay this information to them.

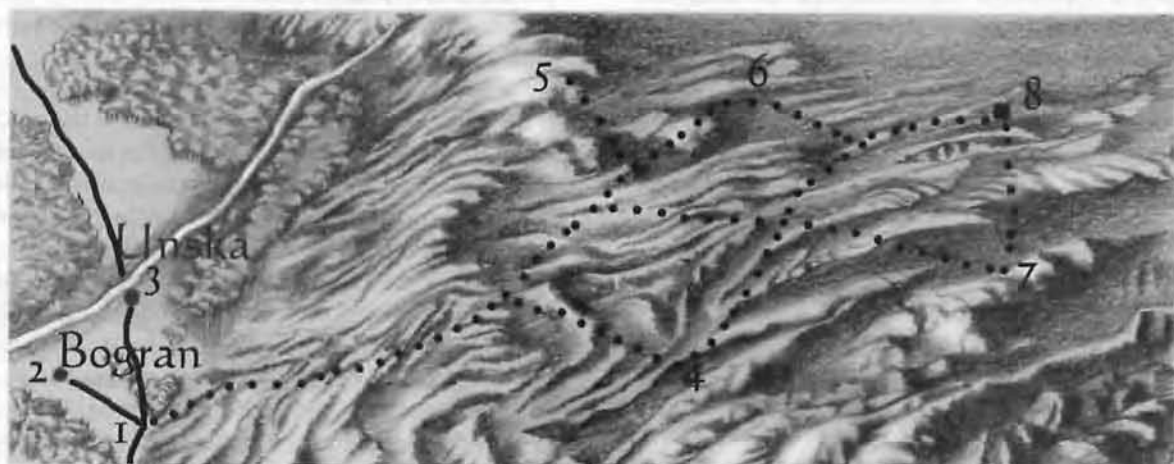
If the party seeks her out (perhaps after speaking with Sister Tremerues in Unska) suspicious and surly villagers will direct them to a tumbledown hut surrounded by crocuses and with several scrawny chickens sitting on its roof. Here they find a seemingly ancient old woman (Taness is over 80) wrapped up in ragamuffin clothes and leaning on a staff for support.

Taness is neutral in alignment. She does not approve of the pact the elders made with the vampire but accepts it. If she were to be convinced that the party was capable of destroying Estania she would tell them all she knows. A bumptious or aggressive group will be told nothing, but a thoughtful and courteous group will be set a challenge. Taness explains that a young witch, Miriam by name, took her life after her little brother, Edud, disappeared one night, doubtless a victim of the prowling undead. The lass became insane with grief and drowned herself in a pool just to the west of the hamlet. Her tortured soul now haunts the place. Will the party lay the unquiet spirit to rest? If the party accepts this task and succeeds in it they will have gained the wise-woman's confidence.

2.3 Miriam's restless spirit: The party finds a grove of tall ash trees surrounding a pond tinted green with waterweed. Red crocuses blossom all about the place. The pond is roughly circular, 60 feet in diameter, about 1 foot deep at the edge and shelving down

OVERLAND MAP

— = 1 Mile



steeply to a depth of 11 feet in the centre. If an adventurer peers into the water the reflection of a girl can be seen, her face is beautiful but sad. As they look the girl's eyes open and become tinted with a red-rage, the water froths and out of its dark depths emerges a frightful ghostly form. Use the witch-allip statistics from the Bestiary of the Damned to represent Miriam.

Although insane with grief, Miriam's madness is of the fiendish sort, she behaves intelligently and uses her spells and powers effectively. When not casting a spell she cries continuously about her lost brother, it is as if several voices speak, one feminine and sad, the others bestial and full of wrath. Even though she was of a benign nature the folk of the hamlet shunned her in life, forcing her to live at the outskirts of the community. Her brother was returning to their shack when he was taken by ghouls and Miriam's tormented spirit reasons that if the villagers had welcomed them her brother would not have had so far to walk, and would have been safe from the prowling undead.

Initially Miriam floats above the centre of the pond, 30 feet distant from the bank, and unleashes offensive spells. If seriously harmed she retreats beneath the water and, while hidden in its murky depths, casts *clairaudience/clairvoyance* and observes the party's actions. She then makes an illusion of herself floating above the water to draw the adventurers' fire, hoping they will expend valuable spells and magical items. Once the party gets wise to this ruse she activates defensive magic and returns to the surface, again making magical attacks. When her stock of spells is about half depleted she makes flyby attacks, if she can scatter the party she will choose one victim to cast *bestow curse* upon and then make a concerted attack against that unfortunate fellow. If necessary

she will break off any melee by flying straight upward and return to making magical attacks or fleeing back beneath the pond to recast her abjurations and/or more illusions.

Like many spirits, Miriam does not know she is dead. If the party talks to Miriam's spirit they might be able to persuade it to depart in peace. Miriam must succeed in a Will saving throw (DC equal to the player character's charisma score) if addressed by a party member, or else cease combat and listen. Thereafter the player can attempt to persuade the spirit to leave the world, he must make a Diplomacy check against a DC set by the Games Master – this could be as high as 25 or as low as 20 depending on how well the situation is role-played. If the character tells Miriam she is dead and that by leaving the world she can rejoin her lost brother the DC might be as low as 15.

3. Unska

Unska (village): Non-standard; AL: NE; Gold piece limit: 170 gp.; Total wealth: 7,055 gp.; Population: 834; 100% human; Authority figure: Milo the mayor; Others: 49-strong militia commanded by 7th level warrior

Unska is a lonely community; its houses are huddled together behind an 11-foot high fieldstone wall. The gates are locked shut as sunset and remain so until dawn. The houses are single story affairs of wattle and daub thatched with browning straw and winding between them are narrow, muddy streets choked with refuse, where chickens, pigs and goats roam. Two places are available for accommodation – Rachel's Guesthouse and the Sunrise Inn.

3.1 Rachel's Guesthouse: This is one of the few two storey buildings, it is built of wood and the ceilings are low. Rachel is an old crotchety woman missing one eye (2nd level commoner) – she lost it to a cockerel when she was trying to wring its neck. Rachel knows the common history of the Nightlord and chooses to know nothing else; questioners will be directed to Sister Tremerues at Asclepius's temple. A room here costs 5 silver pieces per night. Rachel is something of a gossipmonger and if the characters talk freely in front of her the whole village will soon know their business.

3.2 Sunrise Inn: This is a large single storey building with a red tiled roof. It offers stabling facilities in an attached barn. A room here costs 2 gold pieces per night; the landlord is one Gunt Remdon (5th level expert) a rotund, bearded and jolly fellow who is in cahoots with Mayor Milo. While he knows the common, hidden and true history of the Nightlord, he pretends to know little and will give out misinformation when possible. If questioned he attempts to learn all he can of the party's plans and then informs Milo of all he has discovered. Gunt's sullen daughter and a hired lad help out at the inn.

3.3 Temple of Asclepius: The god of healing is honoured in a circular stone built church which doubles as a hospital for the sick and injured.

Presiding over this holy place is Sister Tremerues (7th level cleric), a young ecclesiastic who came to the village last year after her forerunner's mysterious disappearance (he was murdered by Mayor Milo when he started to ask too many questions.)

Sister Tremerues has learned both the common and hidden history of the Nightlord and is happy to discuss all she knows with adventurers paying their respects here. She suspects that

villainy is afoot in the village and distrusts Milo. She will recommend that the party seek out Taness Bulgen in the hamlet of Bogren if they wish to learn more saying, *'She is the village wise-woman, close-lipped and suspicious. She refuses to discuss these matters with me but I believe she knows much'*.

The good sister has long raven hair, deep blue eyes and very pale skin. She dresses in a hooded black robe and wears a white tabard sewn with the image of a red serpent wrapped about a sword.

3.4 Mayor Milo: Ever since the dark day long ago when the village elders made their pact with the vampire the mayors of Unska have served Estania, procuring victims to slake her bloodlust. As the current mayor, Milo has inherited these duties from his predecessors, but unlike most he relishes the evil acts he does and profits from them too. If he hears village gossip or receives a report from Gunt Remdon indicating that the adventurers are about to depart for the peak he will intervene to stop them. After he informed Estania about the Sons of Dis she ordered him to prevent any other interlopers from travelling to the castle, as she wanted to be undisturbed when dealing with those potent necromancers. As things stand she would be glad to have other living beings come to her, but she has not been able to inform Milo of this.



THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

Initially Milo will accost the party in the village, ideally at the Sunrise Inn, and tell them not to go to the castle, *'All you'll do is stir things up. Then we'll likely have a pack of ghouls or even worse will be howling outside the village wall. Leave things well alone or evil will come of it'*.

If this does not deter the party, Milo will arrange to ambush them while they are on the road between Unska and Bogran. Estania has given him the services of a ghulaz and a small pack of ghouls that he keeps secreted in a cellar beneath an abandoned farm a short distance from Unska. Additionally the evil commander of the village militia will join in the assault.

Milo is a short stocky man with thin brown hair cut short. He is in his early thirties and dresses in goatskin leggings, leather overcoat and a red cap.

Mayor Milo, 6th level rogue

Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 6d6+12 (34 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+3 Dex, +1 leather +2)

Attacks: Shortsword +8 melee or shortsword +6 melee and dagger +5 melee; shortbow +7 ranged

Damage: Shortsword 1d6+4, dagger 1d4+3; shortbow 1d6

Special Attacks: Sneak attack +3d6 damage

Special Qualities: Uncanny Dodge (retain Dex bonus to AC, cannot be flanked), evasion

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

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +1

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 15

Skills: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +11, Hide +12, Innuendo +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Spot +8, Sense Motive +3

Feats: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting

Challenge Rating: 6

Alignment: Neutral evil

Possessions: *Shortsword +1, leather armour +1, potions of blur, glibness, sneaking and cure moderate wounds*

Enkol, Militia Captain, 7th level warrior

Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 7d8+3 (40 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 17 (+3 Dex, +2 leather armour +2)

Attacks: Longsword +7/+2 melee; longbow +12/+7 ranged

Damage: Longsword 1d8; longbow 1d8+1

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

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +9, Intimidate +8, Move Silently +7

Feats: Iron Will, Skill Focus (hide), Toughness, Weapon Focus (longbow)

Challenge Rating: 6

Alignment: Neutral evil

Possessions: +1 longbow, +2 leather armour

Enkol is a tall, slender man with a well-groomed beard and dark piercing eyes. He is arrogant and cruel and would be delighted to capture one of the player characters alive.

Ghulaz (1): See page 57.

Ghosts (3): See *Core Rulebook III*.

Milo and Enkol stand behind some trees 30 feet back from the road and ply their bows, gaining three-quarters cover. The ghulaz and ghouls engage the party directly, while the ghouls enter into melee the ghulaz spits, aiming at any clerics in the group that can be distinguished by their vestments or symbols.

If the undead are turned swiftly or otherwise destroyed Milo and Enkol run away. Otherwise Enkol continues to shoot while Milo closes to make sneak attacks against characters he can flank. Both these villains will target clerics or other spellcasters if possible.

If captured or tracked Milo or Enkol might reveal the whereabouts of the abandoned farmhouse. In addition to the noisome cellar where the ghulaz and ghouls were hidden the party will find manacles attached to the walls and a large wooden chest containing valuables stolen from the unfortunate victims sent to feed the vampire, it holds 1,400 gp., two amethysts each worth 100 gp. and a slender golden bracelet worth 70 gp.

If Milo is slain Unska is leaderless. In such case a little diplomacy on the party's part could bring Sister Tremere and Taness Bulgen into accord. Between them these two ladies could unite their communities behind the adventurers and rally the militia to fend of

wandering ghouls and other undead. If Milo escapes he will eventually flee to his mistress's castle in the mountains.

Into The Wilderness

Sooner or later the party will head off in search of the Peak of the Nightlord. A prudent band will have learned something of the place's occult history, a more gung-ho troupe may have departed knowing no more than the commonly accepted history of the place.

As previously noted progress along the track, which can be found at area 1, is slow – the party will cover only 1 mile per hour. While any villager can tell the party where to find the trail only Milo has ever followed it. Unless Milo is captured and forced to talk, the party must explore the mountains until they reach area 8, the Peak of the Nightlord itself. Four wilderness lairs are indicated on the map (areas 4, 5, 6 and 7) and the Games Master might wish to detail encounters for these areas using creatures from the Bestiary of the Damned chapter, otherwise the locales could be left empty.

The Games Master should roll a d10 once during each hour of travel and on a result of '1' consult the following table:

Daytime Encounter Table

- 1. Rockfall:** One character in direct path so unless a Reflex saving throw (DC15) succeeds, the unfortunate individual will be struck and suffer 6d10 damage.
- 2. Lightning strike:** A fierce storm blows up darkening the sky above the mountains. Each character in the party must be checked for proximity to where a massive lightning bolt hits. A d20 roll of 1 indicates the individual suffers 10d10 electrical damage, a result of 2 equals 8d10, 3 equals 6d10, 4 equals 4d10, 5 equals 4d10, 6 equals 2d10, and 7 or higher indicates no proximity to the discharge. Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage.
- 3. Torrential rain:** A downpour makes further progress impossible for 2d6 hours. The party must find shelter by succeeding in a Wilderness Lore check (DC 13) and locating an overhang, cave or similar refuge. Failure to locate such a place might expose the party to environmental damage, lightning strikes, hypothermia etc. (see *core rulebook II* page 86.)
- 4. Swollen Stream:** A Swollen stream blocks path for one day before the waters subside; the party must



wait and undergo four more encounter checks before proceeding or attempt to swim across the swift running waters (DC 18)

- 5. Path blocked:** A rock fall has blocked the trail; climb checks (DC 15) are required to progress further.
- 6. Trail lost:** The track is faint and hard to follow; a Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) must be made before the party can proceed further, one check allowed each hour.
- 7. Behirs:** A pair of behirs slither towards the party (see *Core Rulebook III*).
- 8. Hydra:** A hungry ten-headed hydra attacks the party (see *Core Rulebook III*).
- 9. Giants:** Two stone giants wander down the path (see *Core Rulebook III*).
- 10. Xorns:** A pair of elder xorns burrow out of the ground near the party (see *Core Rulebook III*).

At night three encounter checks should be made, at dusk, midnight and one hour before dawn; roll d10 and on a result of 1-2 consult the following table:

Night-time Encounter Table

- 1d4+1 wraiths (see *Core Rulebook III*).
- 1d2 spectres (see *Core Rulebook III*).
- 2d4 ghouls and 2d4 tr'ouls (see *Core Rulebook*

THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

III and page 39 of this book).

4. Colossal skeleton (see *Core Rulebook III*).
5. 1d3 mohrgs (see *Core Rulebook III*).
6. 1d3 bodaks (see *Core Rulebook III*).
7. 2d6 ghouls, 1d3 ghulaz and 1 gholle (see *Core Rulebook III* and page 56 of this book).
8. 3d4 wights (see *Core Rulebook III*)

THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

So, the party has reached their goal and their most fearsome challenges. This mountain is the highest in its region, a glowering black peak easily visible from Unska and Bogran; however once the party is on the trail variations in topography make it impossible to view the peak from many locations, it is impracticable to 'guess' which track leads to the peak at the many places where the path forks. It is quite likely that the party will have many excursions before arriving here.

The remains of massive earthwork ramparts surround a castle on the bleak mountainside. At one time they were topped by wooden fortifications with barracks, storehouses and other dwellings situated between them and the central keep. Now only a small fortress

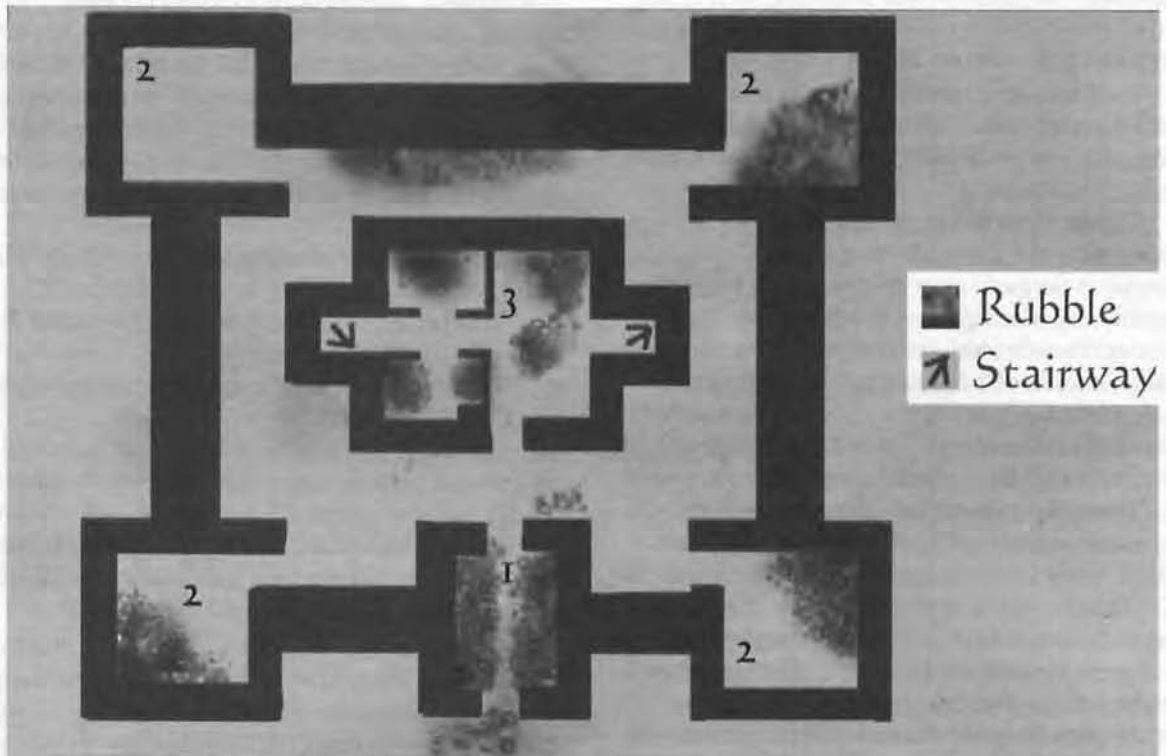
remains at the centre of the formerly mighty defences. Estania's undead minions normally guard the upper works but the situation in the dungeon beneath is such that the vampire considers it prudent to concentrate her forces down below.

1. Gatehouse: The upper portions of this stone structure have long since been destroyed and the gates lie shattered and useless. The interior is choked with rubble but a narrow path has been cleared and winds its way through to the courtyard beyond.

2. Towers: Each of the towers is roughly 40 feet square and 60 feet tall. The floors are strewn with rubble, undoubtedly the remains of the upper floors, which have completely rotted away and left these once magnificent structures mere hollow shells. The towers are home to a pack of 2d6 hungry ghouls and there is a 10% chance of the characters encountering them if they enter one of the towers at night. During the day this chance increases to 50%.

3. The Keep: The interior of this roughly square structure is strewn with debris and is home to a pack of 4 ghoulish dire rats. Poking what remains of the ceiling or casting area effect spells (such as *fireball* or

KEEP OF THE NIGHTLORD



THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

a height of 4½ feet, granting one-half cover to those behind it. This bonus applies to both sides if a melee is being conducted across the barrier.

Four members of the Sons of Dis are holed up here – Brother Makab, a cleric, as well as Dendrin, Mulg and Hansk, all fighters. They are desperate, having become separated from their party. If the characters are fighting in areas 6 or 8 this unfortunate band come to their aid and offer to join forces with them. Considering their evil alignment, this truce is liable to last only as long as it benefits the Sons of Dis.

Brother Makab, 8th level cleric

Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 8d8 (39 hp (currently 21))

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 18 (+1 buckler +1, +1 chainmail +5)

Attacks: Heavy mace +8/+3 melee

Damage: Mace 1d8+2

Special Attacks: Rebuke undead, death touch

Special Qualities: Spells

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

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +8

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 11

Skills: Bluff +5, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +11, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +4, Spot +4

Feats: Alertness, Blind Fight, Brew Potion, Combat Casting

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: Lawful evil

Cleric Domains: Death, Evil

Cleric spells per day: (Note that Makab has cast over half of his prepared spells, those that remain are listed hereafter): DC 12+spell level; 0-level: *create water*, *guidance* x2; 1st level: *random action*, *remove fear*, *shield of faith*; 2nd level: *augury*, *lesser restoration*, *remove paralysis*; 3rd level: *negative energy protection*, *searing light*; 4th level: *divine power*

Possessions: Heavy mace +1, buckler +1, chainmail +1

Brother Makab wears a lime-green robe and a red skullcap. He has dark skin and brown eyes. He talks in a clipped military fashion and will attempt to recruit the party into making a foray against Estania with the objective of reaching his trapped companions. He lies freely, claiming that their intent is to prevent the vampire resuscitating the Nightlord.

Dendrin, Mulg and Hansk, Soldiers of Dis, 6th level fighters

Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 6d10+12 (hp 45 (currently 30, 27, 12))

Initiative: +4 (improved initiative)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 15 (breastplate +5)

Attacks: Guisarme +10/+5 melee or shortsword +8/+3 melee or heavy crossbow +8/+3 ranged

Damage: Guisarme 2d4+5; shortsword 1d6+2; heavy crossbow 1d10+2



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

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +8, Jump +3

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Focus (guisarme), Weapon Specialisation (heavy crossbow), Weapon Specialisation (guisarme)

Challenge Rating: 6

Alignment: Neutral evil

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, masterwork heavy crossbow, *guisarme* +1

These men have been provided with a uniform – a black cape sewn with a death's-head insignia and black skullcap. They are frightened and fed up, if Brother Makab falls they immediately attempt to reach area 4 and escape.

8. Throne room: Five pillars support the domed ceiling of this large chamber, each exuding darkness so deep that light sources are reduced to one-quarter of their normal effectiveness. Close inspection of the walls reveals macabre ornamentation – leering images of ghoulish faces, monstrous snakes, skulls and other horrid motifs. A zombieified fighter stands on the south side of the central pillar.

A throne stands against the southern wall. It is built from stone, cold to the touch and radiates both evil and magic. One sitting in the throne and placing their hands upon the skulls adorning its armrests has a frightful vision; the chamber seems to darken even more while the many gruesome engravings on its walls stand out in lurid relief coloured a phosphorescent purple, pink and green. A living being must immediately make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or gain one negative level (DC 15 to remove). Thereafter the character sees that the skull on the left-hand arm glows with a silver light while the right-hand one emits a greenish luminosity. If they lift their right hand and leave the other on the left arm they are instantly transported to Hades and lost there unless able to return magically or somehow rescued by their companions.

Alternatively if they lift their left hand and leave their right on the green glowing skull they will immediately discern the whereabouts of each creature, living or undead, in the dungeon complex and have a firm impression of its layout.

9. Spiders Lair: Characters entering this 30 foot chamber see the place festooned with webs, hanging from them is the huge yet spindly body of an apparently dead spider, withered and whitened. The spider is dead but still has volition; it is an undead wight spider. Unless attacked first, it will play dead until a character comes into close proximity so it can attack and feed.

10. Old nest: Old webs heavily laden with dust hang from the ceiling of this chamber, as do the emaciated corpses of two huge spiders killed long ago. A zombieified fighter stands in the southeast corner of the room and will be prepared for combat if sounds of battle came from area 6.

11. Irregular chamber: This apparently empty and unguarded chamber contains a secret door leading to the chamber where Estania keeps her coffin and treasures. The door has a larger than normal crack at the bottom, allowing the vampire to pass beneath it in gaseous form, and so the DC to find it is only 18. Opening the door is another matter and finding the well-concealed stud that triggers it requires a successful Search check at DC 25. The door slides upward but any attempt to force it triggers a mechanical trap affecting everyone within 15 feet.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 10; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25). Burnt othur fumes (DC 18); Damage 1 point permanent Constitution/2d6 temporary Constitution.

Beyond the secret door is a 10-foot room guarded by a zombieified fighter. A secret door in the west wall, identical to the one above but with no trap, provides access to a 20-foot square room where the party will discover Estania's treasure and coffin.

The coffin is fashioned from wood, covered with black lacquer and decorated with grinning skulls. A trap protects it and is triggered by any attempt to raise the lid from the outside:

Hail of Needles: CR 6; five attacks at +20 ranged, 2d4 damage from each successful attack; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

The following valuables have been placed in the Southwest corner of the room. 5,300 gp in a wooden chest inlaid with silver and ivory (600 gp), 1,700 gp in a large porcelain urn (2,000 gp), eight bloodstones (50 gp each) in a small silver box worth

THE PEAK OF THE NIGHTLORD

200 gp, a gold death's-head face mask worth 4,000 gp, a *wand of daylight*, a *scroll* (containing *burning hands*, *magic weapon* and *mage armour*), a *ring of warmth*, a *potion of cure light wounds*, a *+1longsword* and a *rod of cancellation*.

A set of stairs lead off from the east wall of the main chamber, heading down 10 feet to area 12.

12. Cloning chamber: This room appears to be empty save for the zombie guard standing diligently in an alcove on the southern wall. The zombie is silhouetted by a hellish red glow coming from an odd-looking crystalline tank containing an emaciated corpse suspended in a blood-red liquid. The zombie will attack as soon as the characters enter this chamber. Should the characters choose to investigate the strange tank after dispatching the zombie, they see several disembodied heads floating on the surface of the liquid, their mouths opening and closing and their eyes gazing about in fear. This tank contains the inactive *clone* of Emandrel. A two-foot diameter steel plug is screwed into the top of the tank and requires a successful Strength check at DC 30 to remove it. The tank is magically enchanted to be highly resistant to damage and has an AC of 20, hardness 15, 30 hit points, spell resistance 10 and a +9 bonus to all saves. Additionally, any attack that hits the tank makes a reverberating gong-like noise that alerts any remaining creatures in the complex to the characters' presence. Estania will come to investigate the noise with the gholles from area 16, arriving in 1d4+1 rounds. Should the characters shatter the tank, or remove the plug and dismember the corpse contained therein, all hope of reviving Emandrel is lost.

Since his destruction on the material world the essence of Emandrel Capathar has wandered the lower and ethereal planes sustaining itself by consuming the life force of beings it waylays. The Nightlord is now a devourer (see *Core Rulebook III*). It has eagerly waited for the time when it might return into the world of men and resume its path of conquest and the extinction of the clone draws it instantly forth from the ethereal plane to attack those that have thwarted this desire.

13. Square chamber: Three zombie guards stand in the passageway to the north of this chamber, which is empty apart from two eviscerated bodies clad in the same uniform as the fighters in area 7. The zombies do not leave the passageway and will only

attack the characters if they attempt to move past them, as their standing orders forbid them from doing anything else.

14. Combat chamber: The blasted remains of several undead litter the floor here and a barricade similar to the ones in area 7 blocks off the Southeast corner of the room. The Sons of Dis trapped in area 15 are keeping a careful eye on this area and will attempt to parlay with the characters once they have been identified as not being some of Estania's undead minions. If the other members of the Sons of Dis are with the party, they may attack if they believe they can overpower the party. Otherwise they maintain the illusion of a truce and suggest they attempt to take Estania out together.

15. Last stand: Trapped within this chamber are the three remaining members of the Sons of Dis. They are keeping a close watch on area 14 and will initiate contact with the characters once they are sure they are not Estania's undead minions.

Vendoo, 12th level wizard (necromancer) Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 12d4+12 (44 hp)

Initiative: +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 13 (-1 Dex, +4 *bracers of armour*)

Attacks: Dagger +6/+1 melee

Damage: Dagger 1d4

Special Qualities: Spells

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

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 15

Skills: Alchemy +12, Bluff +5, Concentration +16, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (undead) +18, Listen +9, Spot +9, Spellcraft +18

Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery (*cat's grace*, *halt undead*, *stone skin*)

Challenge Rating: 12

Alignment: Neutral evil

Necromancy specialist, no access to the school of enchantment

Wizard spells per day: (Note that Vendoo has cast over half of his prepared spells, those that remain are listed here): DC 13+spell level; 0-level: *disrupt undead* x2/; 1st level: *detect undead*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd level: *daylight*, *cat's grace*; 3rd

level: *halt undead* x2; 4th level: *wall of fire*; 5th level: *all spells of this level have been cast*; 6th level: *disintegrate, flesh to stone*

Possessions: *Bracers of armour* +4, *wand of acid arrow*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *potion of larval essence*

Vendoo is a senior member of the Sons of Dis and the leader of this ill-fated expedition. He showed Estania how the Nightlord might be revived, assisted in the sacrifice of several of the vampire's prisoners and brewed a special potion that would awaken the clone if administered at the same time as certain rituals contained in the *Book of Dis* were performed.

Once the potion was brewed and Estania understood the process of revivification she turned on Vendoo, intending to use him and his cohorts as sacrifices to Orcus. In the struggle the wizard wounded the vampire enough that she was forced into gaseous form and fled to her coffin, but to his dismay Vendoo lost both the *Book of Dis* and his spell book. He still has the potion and knows it is only a matter of time before Estania launches another attack.

He will tell the party he is here to stop Estania from bringing her dark master back into the world and ask for an alliance to destroy her and recover a certain grimoire containing spells that will destroy the Nightlord forever.

Vendoo is a small man with bright eyes and very bushy eyebrows. He has lost all his teeth due to a sweet tooth and munches on a small supply of honeyed biscuits. He wears gold dentures (worth 40 gp)

Seranya and Lenreth, 7th level Monks of Dis

Medium-Size human

Hit Dice: 7d8 (32 hp each (currently 21 and 17 hp))

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 18 (+2 Dex, +3 Wis, +1 bonus, +2 *bracers of armour*)

Attacks: Unarmed +5/+2 melee or siangham +7/+4 melee or javelin +8 ranged

Damage: Unarmed 1d8, siangham 1d6+1, javelin 1d6

Special Attacks: Flurry of blows, stunning attack (DC 16)

Special Qualities: Evasion, still mind, slow fall (30 ft.), purity of body, wholeness of body, leap of the clouds

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

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +4, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Jump +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Tumble +12

Feats: Deflect Arrows, Great Fortitude, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (siangham)

Challenge Rating: 7

Alignment: Lawful evil

Possessions: *Siangham* +1, *bracers of armour* +2, three masterwork javelins

Special note: Both Seranya and Lenreth have recently been *energy drained* by Estania, they suffer a -2 penalty to all skill and ability checks, attacks and saving throws until the negative levels are removed.

Dark-skinned and beautiful, these devoutly evil young women are keen to gain the benefits of *restoration* and *healing* spells, having already used their wholeness of body ability. They introduce themselves to the party by tumbling over the barricade and taking up a fighting stance before relaxing it and bowing.



16. Gholle lair: Three gholles lurk in this plain chamber, munching on the organs torn from the bodies in area 13. If combat occurs anywhere in areas 12, 13 or 14, these horrors move west and attempt to trap the party in area 15.

A massive pair of granite doors sits in the centre of the eastern wall. They have been barred on the opposite side (Break DC 28). A leering, skull-like horned head has been engraved into the stone. Note that Estania can move beneath the doors in *gaseous form*.

17. Prison: Several sets of manacles line the walls of this chamber and the floor is bloodstained. Close inspection reveals graffiti scratched into the stonework, examples include 'A curse on Milo' 'Let me die' 'May the gods take pity' and various dates and names. A single zombie guard stands in the short passageway between this area and area 18.

18. Estania's study: Tapestries cover the walls of this comfortably appointed chamber and thick rugs are strewn across its floor. A leather couch and several thickly padded armchairs surround a low table where Estania sits studying an aged tome. She has only recently returned from her coffin, having been defeated by Vendoo's magic. On the table are two heavy books, one is Vendoo's spell book and the other, which she is currently perusing, is a copy of the dread *Book of Dis*.

Presently Estania is toying with different strategies for destroying the remaining Sons of Dis although she hopes to capture at least three of them alive. Experience has made the vampire cautious, having been thwarted once she has concluded that her foes are more powerful than they actually are. When she encounters the party she seeks to recruit them to her cause, claiming that she is bent on preventing the Night lord's return.

'I am Estania, have you not heard of me? Long ago I destroyed Emandrel Capathar but as he fell he cursed me with vampirism. Throughout the succeeding generations I have stood sentinel here to prevent that vile lich from being revived. Join me and we will strike down these wicked necromancers and take from them a vial of chemicals that will render the Nightlord's clone forever inert.'

Estania will lie freely to cover the holes in her story. If her ruse does not work she will attempt to *dominate* the characters. Should the party enter this area in the

company of the Sons of Dis, however, she will immediately go on the offensive.

Estania looks as vile as any vampire can, her skin is sallow and shot through with bloated varicose veins, her hair is long and untidy, her teeth protrude two inches from her blue cracked lips and her tongue slips out like viper's when she talks. Her words come as a sinister hissing most unpleasant to hear. The breastplate armour she wears has a baroque design, ornamented with many skulls and other horrid symbols.

Vendoo's spell book contains the following spells. 0-level – all from *Core Rulebook I*. 1st – *Cause fear, chill touch, detect undead, magic missile, protection from evil, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement, shield*. 2nd – *Bull's strength, cat's grace, darkness, daylight, ghoul touch, knock, protection from arrows, web*. 3rd – *Dispel magic, fireball, halt undead, phantom steed, protection from elements, tongues, vampiric touch*. 4th – *Fireshield, improved invisibility, phantasmal killer, enervation, stonewall, wall of fire*. 5th – *Animate dead, cloud kill, dismissal, magic jar, telepathic bond, summon monster V*. 6th – *Circle of death, disintegrate, flesh to stone, globe of invulnerability*.

Concluding the Adventure

A wise party will play one faction off against the other and then destroy both vampire and Sons of Dis when they are sufficiently weakened. Both sides aim to be in possession of both the *Book of Dis* and the *potion of larval essence*. Should one side obtain both of these they need only sacrifice three humans and pour their blood, along with the potion, into the clone tank while reciting certain blasphemous passages from the book and the Nightlord will return. Should this sorry event come to pass the Games Master might want to use the statistics given for Simon Trimagestus on page 121 to represent the fearsome undead lord. Of course, if the characters destroy the *clone* then they can claim to have put a final end to the Nightlord, a task worthy of heroes such as themselves. Naturally, not everyone will be pleased with the news and some may seek vengeance upon the players, this could lead on to greater adventures as the players attempt to track down the one's sending assassins and various extraplanar and undead forces after them.

BESTIARY OF THE DAMNED

Allip Treant

Huge Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 7d12 (45 hp)

Initiative: +3 (-1 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

AC: 11 (-2 size, -1 Dex, +4 deflection)

Attacks: 2 incorporeal touches +2 melee

Damage: 1d4 permanent wisdom drain

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Animate trees, babble, wisdom drain, madness

Special Qualities: Undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +6

Abilities: Str 0, Dex 9, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 19

Skills: Hide -9 (+16 bonus to Hide checks made in forested areas), Intimidate +11, Knowledge (any one) +8, Listen +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9

Feats: Iron Will, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any forest

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral evil

Advancement: 8-16 HD (Huge); 17-21 HD (Gargantuan)

When its sacred forest was destroyed by marauding orcs this treant became mad with rage, when it realised that no matter how many orcs it killed the woodlands would not return, the treant exposed itself to fire and burned away. All that remains now is the shade of its insanity and wrath, wandering the woodlands seeking 'orcs'. In its madness it views all humanoids as orcs and will thus turn upon and destroy man, elf, halfling, gnome and dwarf alike. If a half-orc is in the party they will be subjected to the full extent of the allip treant's ire.

It appears as a skeletal tree with a grief-stricken man-like face upon its trunk; it flies on the wind, swooping down from above to flail with its insubstantial limbs. A nimbus of fire seems to enshroud it, a legacy of its self-immolation.

Combat

Animate Trees (Sp): The allip treant can animate trees within 180 feet at will, controlling up to two trees at a time. It takes a full round for a normal tree to uproot itself. Thereafter it moves at a speed of 10 and fights as a treant in all respects. Animated trees lose their ability to move if the treant that animated them is incapacitated or moves out of range. The ability is otherwise similar to *liveoak* as cast by a 12th-level druid.

Babble (Su): The allip treant constantly mutters and whines to itself, creating a hypnotic effect. All sane creatures within 60 feet of it must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or be affected as though by a hypnotism spell for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting compulsion. Opponents who successfully save cannot be affected by the babble for one day.

Wisdom Drain (Su): Those whose Wisdom is reduced to 0 by the allip treant become helpless until at least 1 point of Wisdom is restored.

Madness (Su): Anyone targeting the allip treant with a mind-control or telepathic ability makes direct contact with its tortured mind and takes 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage.

Undead: The allip treant is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Incorporeal: Only incorporeal creatures, those armed with +1 or better magical weapons, or beings utilising magical powers can harm an allip and even then there is a 50% chance that all harm from a corporeal source will be avoided. The allip can pass through solid objects at will and its own attacks pass through armour. As it is insubstantial it always moves silently.

The following special attack forms and qualities have been lost:

Trample (Ex): As the allip treant no longer has a physical form this special ability is lost.

Double Damage against Objects (Ex): As the allip treant no longer has a physical form this special ability is lost.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): Dead and insubstantial the allip treant need fear fire no longer.

Half Damage from Piercing (Ex): As the treat is now a spirit this quality no longer applies.

Allip, 7th-Level Witch

Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 12d12+7d4 (84 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

AC: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 deflection)

Attacks: Incorporeal touch +10/+5 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d4 permanent Wisdom drain

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

Special Attacks: Babble, wisdom drain, madness, spells

Special Qualities: Undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +13

Abilities: Str -, Dex 13, Con -, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 19

Skills: Concentration +10 (+14*), Hide +14, Intimidate +13, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +9, Search +9, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9

Feats: Combat Casting*, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning reflexes, Mobility

Challenge Rating: 13

Alignment: Neutral evil

Witch spells per day: DC 14 +spell level; 0-level (6 per day): dancing lights, daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, resistance; 1st-level (7 per day): cause fear, command, doom, endure elements, silent image; 2nd-level (7 per day): enthrall, minor image, scare; 3rd-level (5 per day): bestow curse, clairaudience/clairvoyance

The result of a potent spellbinder taking their life is an unusual and powerful allip rising. Note that to underscore the flexible nature of the undead we created the allip treat by applying the template found in this book while adding class levels to an ordinary allip created the allip-witch. When creating undead non-player characters the template method offered in this book is quicker and produces a more satisfying result in most cases.

Bodak Dragonne

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 9d12 (58 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 20 ft (poor)

AC: 20 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +7 natural)

Attacks: Bite +13 melee, 2 claws +8 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+5, claw 2d4+2

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

Special Attacks: Death gaze, roar

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+1, silver, fire and acid resistance 20, electricity immunity, sunlight vulnerability, flashbacks, undead, scent

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +4

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 19, Con 0, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5

Feats: Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: none

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: 10-12 HD (Large), 13-27 HD (Huge)



Bodak dragonnes have lost much of their colour, many of the brass scales have fallen off showing pale grey flesh beneath and the great mane of hair is gone, lending the creature a dishevelled aspect. The bodak dragonne now hunts men, not to kill but to curse with unlife.

Combat

Bodak dragonnes have an additional special attack:

Death gaze (Su): Death, range 30 feet, Fortitude negates DC 15. Those who die from this attack are transformed into bodaks in one day.

Sunlight Vulnerability (Ex): The bodak dragonne loathes sunlight; each round of exposure to the direct rays of the sun inflicts 1 point of damage to the creature.

Flashbacks (Ex): 5% chance each round the bodak notices something about an opponent that causes it to recall its life causing it to take no action for 1 round and thereafter suffer -2 penalty to all attacks directed at that opponent.

Undead: A bodak dragonne is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Devourer Ethereal Marauder

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 2d12 (13 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 19 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +9 natural)

Attacks: Bite +7

Damage: Bite 1d6+7

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

Special attacks: Energy drain, trap essence, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Ethereal jaunt, undead, spell deflection, SR 21

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 12, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 16

Skills: Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Spot +8

Feats: Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral evil

Advancement: 3-7 HD (large); 8-15 HD (Huge)

Cursed with unlfe at the whim of Orcus, the devourer ethereal marauder's lizard-like skin is cracked and

shrivelled, trapped in its chest cavity is its most recent victim wailing to be released from its torment.

Combat

The undead marauder slips in and out of the prime material plane, draining energy to heal its wounds and releasing powerful spell-like effects to confound its prey.

Ethereal Jaunt (Su): An ethereal marauder can shift from the Ethereal to the Material Plane as a free action, and shift back again as a move-equivalent action (or as part of a move-equivalent action). The ability is otherwise identical with ethereal jaunt cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the undead marauder devourer's bite attack or spectral hand ability receive one negative level, the Fortitude DC to remove it is 14.

Trap Essence (Su): The victim must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 19) or die. The slain creature's essence is trapped within the marauder's ribcage, providing it with enough power to use five spell-like abilities per HD or level of the trapped creature.

Spell-Like Abilities: *Confusion, control undead, ghoul touch, lesser planar ally, ray of enfeeblement, spectral hand, suggestion, and true seeing* (save DC 13 + spell level).

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

Spell Deflection (Su): The following spells affect the imprisoned essence rather than the marauder: *banishment, chaos hammer, confusion, detect thoughts, dispel evil, dominate person, emotion, fear, geas/quest, holy word, hypnosis, imprisonment, magic jar, maze, suggestion, trap the soul*, or any form of charm or compulsion.

Ghoulish Dryad

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 2d12 (13 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural)

Attacks: Bite +3 melee and paralysis; 2 claws +0 melee and paralysis; or dagger +3 melee

Damage: Bite 1d6+1, claw 1d3; or dagger 1d4+1
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Paralysis, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Symbiosis, undead
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +7, Will +7
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 19, Con 0, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 23

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Craft (any one) or Knowledge (any one) +7, Escape Artist +9, Hide +9, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +9 (added due to heightened intelligence: Climb +3, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +3, Search +4)

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or pack (7-12)
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Advancement: 3-4 HD (Medium-size)

The ghoulish dryad's once exquisitely beautiful features have been corrupted by undeath – horrible yellowed fangs protrude from blue lips and her milk-white skin now has a purple sheen and is marred by decay.

Once solitary, the undead dryad will join with a ghoulish pack to seek out fresh flesh to eat.

Combat

Ghoulish dryads have an additional special attack:

Paralysis (Ex): Those hit by a bite or claw attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or be paralysed for 1d6+2 minutes. Elves are immune to this attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: The ghoulish-dryad's increased charisma, a reflection of her determination and force of personality now that she has a driving hunger for human flesh, improves her chance to succeed in opposed charisma rolls when using her *Charm Person* power – handsome men will be lead away to a most horrid fate.

Undead: A ghoulish dryad is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Symbiosis (Su): Supernaturally linked to the ghoulish dryad is its massive oak tree, this is now skeletal and warped, its bark peeling and blackened. Destroy the oak and the undead dryad falls, never to rise again.

The Ghoulish-Knight, 8th-Level Fighter

Medium-Size Undead
Hit Dice: 2d12+8d10 (56 hp)
Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 improved initiative)
Speed: 30 ft.
AC: 22 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 *chainmail* +5, *ring of protection* +1)
Attacks: Bite +12/+7 melee; 2 claws +0 melee
Damage: Bite 1d6+3 and paralysis; claw 1d3 and paralysis
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Paralysis, create spawn
Special Qualities: Undead, +2 turn resistance
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +7
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 14, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17
Skills: Climb +7*, Escape Artist +8*, Hide +8*, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +1*, Listen +13, Move Silently +5*, Search +8, Spot +10, (*includes -5 armour check penalty)
Feats: Blind Fight, Improved Critical (bite), Improved



Critical (claws), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Specialization (bite)

Challenge Rating: 9

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Possessions: +2 *chainmail*, *ring of protection +1*, *brooch of shielding*, *necklace of fireballs (type I)*

As with the allip-witch above, this undead monster has been created by adding class levels to a standard ghoul. A non-player character ghoul created in this fashion must have gained its fighting prowess *after* it became a ghoul. If it were a fighter that had become a ghoul while retaining its knowledge of weapons and warcraft, then the ghoulish undead template from this book would have been applied to the non-player character directly.

Giant Bodak-Eagle

Large undead

Hit Dice: 4d12 (26 hp each)

Initiative: +5 (Dex)

Speed: 10 ft., fly 70 ft. (average)

AC: 20 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +6 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +8 melee, bite +3 melee

Damage: Claw 2d6+5, bite 1d8+2

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

Special Attacks: Death gaze (range 30 feet, Fortitude negates DC 15)

Special Qualities: Evasion, damage reduction 15/silver, fire and acid resistance 20, electricity immunity, sunlight vulnerability, flashbacks, undead

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +4

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 21, Con --, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 11

Skills: Listen +6, Sense Motive +9, Spot +12,

Wilderness Lore +9

Feats: Alertness

Challenge Rating: 4

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: 5-8 HD (Huge); 9-12 HD (Gargantuan)

The eyes of the bodak-eagle are pitch black, its feathers are largely moulted and the skin shows lifeless and grey beneath.

Mohrg Satyr

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 5d12 (32 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural)

Attacks: Gore +7 melee, dagger +2 melee, tongue touch +2 melee; or shortbow +4 ranged

Damage: Gore 1d6+5, dagger 1d4+5, tongue paralyzes; or shortbow 1d6

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

Special Attacks: Pipes, improved grab, paralyzing touch, create spawn

Special Qualities: Undead

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +5

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 15, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +9, Hide +14, Listen +15, Move Silently +14,

Perform (dance, pan pipes, plus any two others) +9, Spot +15

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-4), or mob (2-4 plus 5-10 zombies)

Challenge Rating: 4 (without pipes) or 5 (with pipes)

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: 6-10 HD (Medium-size)

Once an enchanting faun, this beast betrayed its own kind and allowed its passionate lusts to degenerate into dark perversions. Unwilling to atone in life it now stalks the dark waylaying those it meets. The fur of its lower limbs is mangy and the flesh of its upper body is desiccated, with yellowed bones showing beneath splits and rents in the greying skin.

Combat

Pipes (Su): The tunes a mohrg satyr plays on its pan pipes are eerie and horrid to hear, all creatures within a 60-foot spread (except satyrs) must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or be affected by *fear*, as if the spell was cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. A creature that successfully saves against the pipe's effect cannot be affected by the same set of pipes again for one day.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the mohrg satyr must hit with its gore attack, it being assumed that success brings it into close proximity with its foe.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): A satyr mohrg lashes out with its tongue in combat. An opponent the tongue touches must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or become paralysed for 1d4 minutes.

Create Spawn (Su): Creatures killed by a satyr mohrg rise after 1d4 days as zombies under the satyr's

control. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life unless the Games master is seeking a truly potent ally for the mohrg satyrs in which case the zombiefied undead template can be applied to the victim.

Mummified Dark Naga

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 9d12 (58 hp)

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 18 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural)

Attacks: Sting +10 melee, bite +5 melee

Damage: Sting 2d4+5 and poison, Bite 1d4+2 and mummy rot

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft. (coiled)/10 ft.

Special Attacks: Despair, detect thoughts, mummy rot, poison, spells

Special Qualities: Charm resistance, damage reduction 5/+1, fire vulnerability, guarded thoughts, resistant to blows, undead

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +10

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 13, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 21

Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +15, Listen +12, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9, Spot +12

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes

Climate/Terrain: Any desert and underground

Organisation: Solitary or wardens (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Lawful evil

Advancement: 10-13 HD (Large); 14-27 HD (Huge)

Beware the dark naga swathed in bandages and long dead, it slithers through the passageways of black and haunted crypts seeking unwary adventurers to destroy.

Combat

Already formidable the mummified dark naga now has additional special attacks:

Despair (Su): Those seeing a mummified dark naga must make a Will save (DC 15) or be paralysed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether the save is successful or unsuccessful that creature cannot be affected again by the naga's despair ability for one day.

Mummy Rot (Su): A supernatural disease inflicted by the mummified dark naga's bite, with a Fortitude

save (DC 20) to avoid. Refer to page 138 of *core rulebook III* for full information.

Resistant to Blows (Ex): Physical attacks deal only half damage to the mummified naga. This effect is applied before damage reduction.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): Fire attacks inflict double damage unless a save is allowed for half damage in which case a successful save halves damage while a failure doubles it.

Undead: A mummified dark naga is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Shadow Harpy

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 7d12 (45 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 80 ft. (good)

AC: 15 (+4 Dex, +1 deflection)

Attacks: 2 incorporeal claw touches +6 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6 temporary strength drain

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

Special Attacks: Captivating song, strength damage, create spawn

Special Qualities: Undead, incorporeal

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +5

Abilities: Str 0, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 17

Skills: Bluff +9, Listen +7, Perform (buffoonery, chant, epic, limericks, melody, ode, storytelling) +10, Spot +6

Feats: Dodge, Flyby Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or swarm (6-11)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic evil

While most creatures might fear the awful transformation into shadowstuff a harpy is quite content at the prospect, already vicious and malign it regards its new form as a superior one as far as the spreading of misery and woe is concerned.

Combat

Captivating Song (Su): When a shadow harpy sings, a dreadful sibilant melody, all creatures (other than shadow harpies) within a 300-foot spread must

succeed at a Will save (DC 15) or become utterly captivated. This is a sonic, mind-affecting charm. If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by that shadow harpy's song for one day. A captivated victim walks toward the shadow harpy, taking the most direct route available. If the path leads into a dangerous area, that creature gets a second saving throw. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of the shadow harpy stands there and offers no resistance to the monster's attacks. The effect continues for as long as the harpy sings. A bard's *countersong* ability allows the captivated creature to attempt a new Will save.

Strength Damage (Su): The shadow harpy's incorporeal claws deal 1d6 points of temporary Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow harpy dies.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow harpy becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 rounds.

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

Incorporeal: The shadow harpy can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. It can pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armour. The shadow harpy always moves silently.

Simon Trismagestus, 18th level sorcerer, 2nd level cleric

Medium-Size lich

Hit Dice: 20d12 (130 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 30 (+5 Dex, +5 natural, +5 ring of protection, +5 robe of the archmagi)

Attacks: Touch +10/+5

Damage: Touch 1d8+5 and paralysis;

Special Attacks: Fear aura, paralysis, spells, rebuke undead, spell penetration +2 (from robe)

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+1, +4 turn resistance, immune to polymorph, mind-affecting, cold and electricity attacks, undead, spell resistance 17 (from robe)

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

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +17

Abilities: Str 8 (10), Dex 14 (20), Con 0, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 21 (25)

Skills: Concentration +20, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Knowledge (undead) +20, Listen +7, Scry +9, Spellcraft +9, Spot +7

Feats: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Quicken Spell

Challenge Rating: 22

Alignment: Neutral evil

Sorcerer spells per day: DC 17+spell level (19+spell level for necromantic magic); 0-level (6 per day); 1st-level (8 per day); 2nd-level (8 per day); 3rd-level (8 per day); 4th-level spells (7 per day); 5th-level spells (7 per day); 6th-level spells (7 per day); 7th-level spells (7 per day); 8th-level spells (5 per day); 9th-level spells (3 per day);

Possessions: *Ring of protection* +5, *gloves of dexterity* +6, *black robe of the archmagi*, *cloak of charisma* +4, *ioun stone (pale blue rhomboid)*, *eyes of doom*, *wand of unholy blight (8th-level caster)*, *oil of slipperiness*, *potions of gaseous form*, *hiding*, *sneaking*, *vision*, *jump and spider climb*, *scrolls of inflict critical wounds*, *spell immunity*, *speak with dead*, *invisibility purge*, *water walk* and *inflict moderate wounds*.

Simon Trismagestus is one of the greatest of lich-kind. Well known to any reader of *The Book of Dis*, Simon still plays an active role in the order of the same name. What spells Simon actually knows has been left to the whim of the Games Master. He is a truly exceptional being, has knowledge of the rarest of magic and should be able to confound even the most learned of player character magicians.

Skeletal Undead Athach

Huge Undead

Hit Dice: 14d12 (91 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 16 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +3 hide armour, +4 natural)

Attacks: Huge club +12/+7 melee, 2 huge clubs +12 melee, bite +14 melee; or claw +12/+7 melee, 2 claws +12 melee, bite +14 melee; or rock +5/+0 ranged, 2 rocks +5 ranged

Damage: Huge club 2d6+8, huge clubs 2d6+4, bite 2d8+4 and poison; or claw 1d8+8, 2 claws 1d8+4, bite 2d8+4 and poison; or rock 2d6+8, 2 rocks 2d6

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks: poison
Special Qualities: Undead, immunities
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +10
Abilities: Str 27, Dex 13, Con 0, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills: Climb +16, Jump +16, Listen +7, Spot +7
Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Multidexterity, Multiweapon Fighting

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organisation: Any
Challenge Rating: 6 (base athach challenge rating reduced from 7 due to lower hit point total and armour class)
Treasure: ½ coins, double goods, standard items
Alignment: Always evil, often chaotic evil
Advancement: 15-28 HD (Huge)

Skeletal undead athachs are lighter on their feet and no longer have such a noisome smell, although their presence is even more disturbing than that of a living athach.

Combat

In addition to its poisonous bite special attack the skeletal undead athach now has certain special qualities:

Undead: A skeletal undead athach is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Immunities (Ex): Skeletal undead athachs have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh and most internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Spectral Hulk

Large Undead
Hit Dice: 8d12 (52 hp)
Initiative: +4 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft., Fly 80 ft. (good).
AC: 15 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +2 deflection)
Attacks: 2 incorporeal claw touches +9 melee, incorporeal bite 'touch' +7 melee
Damage: Claw 1d8 plus energy drain, bite 1d8 plus energy drain
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Confusing gaze, energy drain, create spawn
Special Qualities: Undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, sunlight powerlessness

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +8
Abilities: Str 0, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 17
Skills: Listen +13
Feats: Multiattack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or swarm (6-11).
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: None (possibly standard)
Alignment: Lawful evil
Advancement: 9-12 HD (Large); 13-24 HD (Huge)

A spectral drow cavalier has spawned these monstrosities to guard the entrance to his subterranean castle. Now subjects of the Nine Hells, the hulks are bound by law in their wickedness and make disciplined soldiers for the undead drow.

Combat

Confusing Gaze (Su): Confusion as cast by an 8th-level sorcerer, 30 feet, Will negates DC 15.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the spectral hulks incorporeal claw or bite attacks receive two negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 17.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by a spectral hulk becomes a spectre in 1d4 rounds.

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

Incorporeal: The spectral hulk can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. It can pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armour. The undead hulk always moves silently.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a spectral hulk at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Spectral hulks are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a daylight spell) and flee from it. A spectral hulk caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only partial actions.

Tremorsense (Ex): Despite their incorporeal nature spectral hulks can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Spider-wight

Huge Undead

Hit Dice: 10d12 (65 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

AC: 17 (-2 size, +4 Dex, +5 natural)

Attacks: Bite +10 melee or webs +5 ranged touch attack (as net)

Damage: Bite 2d6+7 and poison and energy drain

Face/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Energy drain, poison (DC 22, 1d8 Str initial and secondary damage), web x8 per day (escape DC 28, break DC 34, hit Points 14)

Special Qualities: Undead, vermin

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +17, Hide +3, Jump +5, Spot +8 (+8 competence bonus to Hide, Move Silently and Spot checks when in web)

Challenge Rating: 6

Alignment: Neutral

The horrid undead spider can drain life energy through its webs and by biting. The fortitude save to remove the negative level has a DC of 13.

Vampire, 12th-Level Fighter

Medium-Size vampire

Hit Dice: 12d12 (84 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 21 (+3 Dex, +3 breastplate +5)

Attacks: Longsword +21/+16/+11 or slam +19/+14/+9 or longsword +19/+14/+9 and slam +17/+12

Damage: Longsword 1d8+10 (+2d6 to targets of 'good' alignment); slam 1d6+7

and energy drain (2 negative levels)

Special Attacks: Domination (DC 16), energy drain (2 negative levels), blood drain, children of the night, create spawn

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+1, +4 turn resistance, cold and electricity resistance 20, gaseous form, spider climb, alternate form, fast healing 5

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

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +6

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 17, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Bluff +15, Hide +14, Jump +11, Listen +18, Move Silently +14, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +18

Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialisation (longsword), Whirlwind Attack

Challenge Rating: 14

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Possessions: *Unholy longsword +1, breastplate +3*



Vampire Wyvern

Huge Dragon (undead)

Hit Dice: 7d12 (31 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 improved initiative)

Speed: 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

AC: 25 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +14 natural)

Attacks: Sting +12 melee, bite +7 melee, 2 wings +7 melee; or 2 claws +12 melee

Damage: Sting 1d6+7 and poison and energy drain, bite 2d8+3 and energy drain, wing 1d8+3 and energy drain; or claw 1d6+7 and energy drain

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, improved grab, snatch, domination, energy drain, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn

Special Qualities: Scent, damage reduction 15/+1, +4 turn resistance, cold and electricity resistance 20, gaseous form, spider climb, alternate form, fast healing 5,

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +7

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 16, Con 0, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +9, Hide +3, Listen +22, Move Silently +19, Search +7, Sense Motive +10, Spot +22

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Winter Wolf Wraith

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12 (39 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., Fly 60 ft. (good)

AC: 15 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +2 deflection)

Attacks: incorporeal bite +9 melee

Damage: Incorporeal bite 1d4 plus 1d6 permanent Constitution drain

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

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, constitution drain, create spawn

Special Qualities: Scent, undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, daylight powerlessness

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +3

Abilities: Str 0, Dex 18, Con 0, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14

Skills: Hide +6*, Listen +11, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +3*

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Solitary, gang (2-5), or pack (6-11).

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: None

Alignment: Lawful evil

Advancement: 7-9 HD (Large); 10-18 HD (Huge)

A see-through snow-white spirit that flies on the arctic air to kill and spawn more of its horrid kind, the undead wraith winter wolf is a horror freed from Hell. Winter wolves can speak Giant and Common.

Combat

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold, 15 ft., every 1d4 rounds; damage 4d6, Reflex half DC 16. Winter wolves can use their breath weapon while making bite 'touch' attacks.

Constitution Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Constitution drain.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by a wraith wolf becomes a wight in 1d4 rounds.

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

Incorporeal: The wraith wolf can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. It can pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armour. The undead hulk always moves silently.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a wraith wolf at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Wraith wolves are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a daylight spell) and flee from it. A wraith hulk caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only partial actions.

Skills: Wraith winter wolves receive a +1 racial bonus to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus to Hide checks. *Their natural colouration grants winter wolf wraiths a +7 racial bonus to Hide checks in areas of snow and ice. A winter wolf wraith has a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Trip (Ex): Now incorporeal the winter wolf wraith can no longer utilize this extraordinary ability.

Cold Subtype: The winter wolf wraith is now one of the undead and has no benefits from its former 'type'.

Young Gold Dragon Wight

Large Undead

Hit Dice: 14d12 (91 HP)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 60 Ft., Fly 200 Ft. (Poor), Swim: 60Ft.

Armour class: 22 (-1 Size, +13 Natural)

Attacks: Bite +21 melee, 2 Claws +16 melee, 2 Wings +16 melee, Tail Slap +16 melee

Damage: Bite 2d6+8 and energy drain, Claws 1d8+4 and energy drain, Wings 1d6+4 and energy drain, Tail Slap 1d8+12 and energy drain.

Face/Reach: 5 Feet by 10 Feet / 10 Feet

Special attacks: Breath fire for 6d10 damage (DC 20) in a 40-foot cone, weakening gas, energy drain, spells (as first level sorcerer)

Special qualities: Fire immunity, water 'breathing' (irrelevant save for certain effects to breath weapon etc see *core rulebook III*), polymorph self three times per day

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +13

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 11, Con 0, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 20

Skills: Listen +18, Spot +18, Search +17, Bluff +14, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +14, Escape Artist +9, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dragons) +11, Knowledge (undead) +11, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (nine planes of hell) +11, Move Silently +8, Scry +11, Spellcraft +17, Jump +22

Feats: Flyby, Snatch, Wingover

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

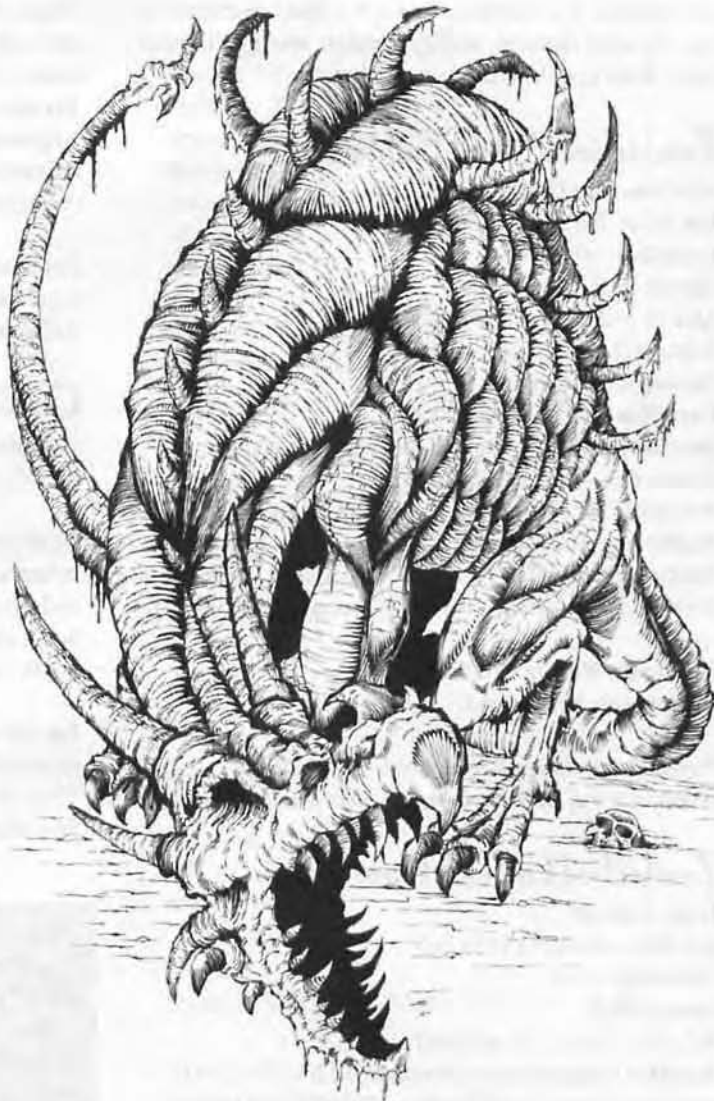
Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: none (or double standard if the Games master desires)

Alignment: Lawful Evil

Advancement: 15-16 HD

Once majestic and beautiful this gold dragon is now withered, its limbs thin and bony, ribs showing through the partly shed scales along its skinny flanks.



Hatred burns in its eyes and murder is its sole occupation.

Combat

Awesome draconic abilities are now enhanced with the following special attacks:

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by the dragon receive one negative level. The *Fortitude* save to remove the negative level has a DC of 22

Create Spawn (Su): living beings slain by the dragon's energy drain attack become wights themselves in 1d4 rounds. Such spawn are under the command of the dragon until its destruction.

Undead: the gold dragon wight is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning

and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Zombified 7th level Fighter

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 7d12+3 (48 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 21 (+2 natural, +2 half plate +7)

Attacks: Slam +12/+7 melee

Damage: Slam 1d6+6

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

Special Qualities: Undead, partial actions only

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 0, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 1

Skills: Jump +7, Spot +5, Listen +4

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam)

Challenge Rating: Medium-size 7

Alignment: Neutral evil

Possessions: *Half plate armour +2, cloak of resistance +1, potions of haste, blur and invisibility*

Zombified Undead Titan

Huge Undead

Hit Dice: 20d12+3 (133 hp)

Initiative: +/- 0

Speed: 90 ft.

AC: 21 (-2 size, +13 natural)

Attacks: Gargantuan warhammer +32/+27/+22/+17 melee; or slam +32/+27/+22/+17 melee; or Huge javelin +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged

Damage: Gargantuan warhammer 4d6+20; or slam 2d6+14; or huge javelin 2d6+14

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Undead, damage reduction 15/+1, SR 25, partial actions only

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +17

Abilities: Str 39, Dex 10, Con 0, Int 21, Wis 20, Cha 9

Skills: Bluff +22, Climb +22, Concentration +23, Craft (any one) +27, Jump +37, Knowledge (any one) +28, Knowledge (religion) +28, Listen +30, Perform +22, Sense Motive +28, Spot +30, Swim +37

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Expertise, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organisation: Any

Challenge Rating: 20 (base Titan challenge rating reduced from 21 due to lower hit point total and partial actions restriction)

Treasure: Triple standard

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: 21-30 HD (Huge); 31-60 HD (Gargantuan)

Zombified undead titans are wicked beings, full of rage and all too willing to kill any mortal crossing their large path.

Combat

Zombified undead titans have additional special qualities:

Undead: A zombified titan is immune to mind influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Furthermore it is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Partial Actions Only (Ex): Zombified titans have poor reflexes and can perform partial actions only. Thus they can move *or* attack, but can only do both if they charge.

The Book of Dis

This dark work is a minor artefact and while several copies exist they are rare indeed. It takes one week to read the tome. An arcane spellcaster in possession of this book can prepare all the arcane necromantic spells from *core rulebook I* as though they were in his spell book, while an evilly aligned divine spellcasters can activate their necromantic magic at caster level +2. Any reader gains a +6 competence bonus to Knowledge (arcana), a +6 bonus to Knowledge (the planes), and a +12 bonus to Knowledge (undead) as long as they can refer to the book at the time of skill usage. A non-evil reader must make a Will saving throw (DC 15) immediately after reading the tome and once each week or change their alignment one step closer to evil (good to neutral, neutral to evil.) Only the initial check need be made if the book is disposed of thereafter.
Caster level: 19th; *Weight:* 4 lb.

INDEX

A

Allip Template 66
Allip Treant 115
Allips 63
Animate Skassassin 23

B

Bodak Dragonne 116
Bodak Template 28
Bodaks 25

D

Devourer Ethereal Marauder 117
Devourer Template 32
Devourers 29

G

Gholl 58
Gholle 56
Ghosts 67
Ghoulish Dryad 117
Ghoulish Undead Template 37
Ghouls, Ghosts and Lacedons 34
Ghul 59
Ghulaz 57
Giant Bodak-Eagle 119

H

History of the Nightlord 101

I

Intelligent Skeletal Undead Template 15
Intelligent Zombiefied Undead Template 19

L

Liches 85

M

Mohrg Undead Template 43
Mohrgs 41
Mummies 44
Mummified Dark Naga 120
Mummified Undead Template 50

N

Nightshades 91

P

Purple, Yellow and Red Wraiths 81

S

Shadow Harpy 120
Shadow Template 74
Shadows 71
Simon Trismageustus 121
Skassassin 22
Skeletal Undead Athach 121
Skeletons 12
Spectral Hulk 122
Spectral Undead Template 78
Spectres 75
Spider-wight 123

T

The Book of Dis 126
The Ghoul-Knight 118
The Peak of the Nightlord 108
Tr'oul 39

V

Vampire 123
Vampires 93

W

Wight Template 54
Wights 52
Winter Wolf Wraith 124
Wraith Template 82
Wraiths 79

Y

Young Gold Dragon Wight 125

Z

Zombiefied Undead
Zombies 17



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